



the **GOSPEL**PROJECT.

FROM ONE NATION TO ALL NATIONS

YOUNGER KIDS LEADER GUIDE

VOLUME 11





THE GOSPEL PROJECT FOR KIDS: YOUNGER KIDS LEADER GUIDE

VOLUME 11 • FROM ONE NATION TO ALL NATIONS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Unit 31: The Church Is Opposed

Why did Jesus become human? Jesus became human to obey His Father's plan and rescue sinners.

- 6** SESSION 1: The Apostles Were Arrested (Acts 5)
- 16** SESSION 2: The Church Handled a Problem (Acts 6)
- 26** SESSION 3: Stephen Was Arrested (Acts 6–7)
- 36** SESSION 4: The Church Spread Out (Acts 8)
- 46** SESSION 5 (Big Truth Session): Jesus Suffered for Us (Philippians 2)

Unit 32: The Church Grows

What is the church? The church is all Christians everywhere, who gather together in their communities to worship and serve God.

- 56** SESSION 1: Peter Performed Miracles (Acts 9)
- 66** SESSION 2: Peter Learned That Jesus Is for All (Acts 10)
- 76** SESSION 3: Gentiles Became Part of the Church (Acts 11)
- 86** SESSION 4: Peter Was Rescued from Prison (Acts 12)
- 96** SESSION 5 (Big Truth Session): We Are Part of One Church (1 Corinthians 12)

Unit 33: The Church Goes

Who can be saved? Anyone who trusts in Jesus can be forgiven of their sins and be right with God.

- 106** SESSION 1: Paul Became a Christian (Acts 9)
- 116** SESSION 2: Paul Became a Missionary (Acts 13–14)
- 126** SESSION 3 (Big Truth Session): Jesus Can Forgive Anyone (2 Corinthians 5)

SESSION AT A GLANCE



PREPARE

- **Read the Leader Bible Study and Bible story** including the Christ Connection. For additional help, read the Leader Blog Post and listen to the Leader Training Episode. Both can be found at www.gospelproject.com.
- **Familiarize yourself with the session content**, noting which activity options will work best in your context.
- **Gather and prepare session supplies**, including posters, videos, and activity printables as needed.
- **Contact families and pray for your kids** during the week.



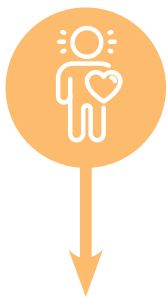
WELCOME

- **Greet kids** as they arrive, **build relationships**, and **help new kids** connect to the group.
- Guide kids to complete the **Activity Page**, and choose one of the **Session Starter Activities** to introduce this week's story.



LEARN

- **Help kids understand the Bible story** and how it relates to God's big story of Scripture. During this portion of the session, focus on what the kids should believe—what God wants our kids to know about the Bible story, Big Picture Question and Answer, and Key Passage.



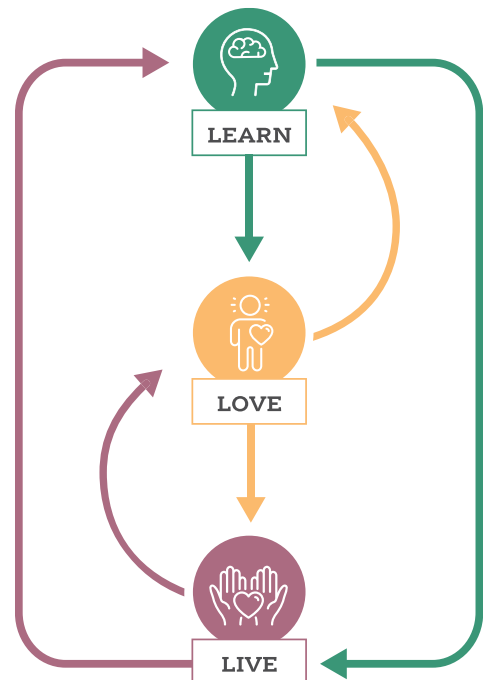
LOVE

- **Help kids respond appropriately to the Bible story** by growing in their love for God and considering how to apply it to their own lives. During this portion of the session, focus on what the kids should feel—how God wants our kids to respond based on what they believe.



LIVE

- **Help kids find ways to live on mission** and make much of God in response to the Bible story. During this portion of the session, focus on what the kids should do—how God wants our kids to be different based on what they know about God and their growing love for Him.



NOTABLE FEATURES

Suggested Times

Each session is designed to be completed in 60–75 minutes but can be shortened or lengthened as needed.

Missions

The missions content is designed to help kids understand God’s ongoing mission to rescue sinners around the world. This content can be customized or replaced with your church’s own missions efforts if desired.

Big Truth Sessions

Each unit ends with a Big Truth Session that goes into more depth of the unit’s Big Picture Question and Answer. These sessions use a Bible story that best helps illustrate the Big Truth covered. Think of these sessions as a time to reinforce and clarify what the kids have been learning in the unit.

Make it fit

Each session provides flexibility for customization based on the needs and structure of your kids ministry. The Learn portion contains most, or all, of the videos and music, making it ideal for a large group gathering with the Welcome, Love, and Live portions working well for small groups. Alternatively, the entire session can be completed in small groups or as one large group.

QUICK REFERENCE

Printables, Videos, and Music

Here is where you will be able to find all of the resources you will need:

	Additional Resources GospelProject.com	Ministry Starter Kit			Digital Subscription
		DVD	Files Disc	Music CD	
Activity Printables	✓		✓		✓
Posters			✓		✓
Videos		✓	✓		✓
Music				✓	✓
Activity Pages	Purchase at www.gospelproject.com				✓
Big Picture Cards	Purchase at www.gospelproject.com				✓



VOLUME 11 - FROM ONE NATION TO ALL NATIONS

Amidst persecution, the early church held firm to the truth of the gospel and the sure hope we have in Christ. Living in light of our returning King changes our perspectives and motivations as we seek to spread the hope that only Christ can bring.

UNIT 31: THE CHURCH IS OPPOSED: Jesus had promised that His followers would face opposition just as He had, and it didn't take long for that to happen. The church was opposed by outsiders as it also experienced conflict from within. But just as God had used the opposition of Jesus for good, He would use opposition of the church for good too.

Why did Jesus become human? Jesus became human to obey His Father's plan and rescue sinners.



**THE APOSTLES WERE
ARRESTED**
Acts 5



**THE CHURCH HANDLED
A PROBLEM**
Acts 6



**STEPHEN WAS
ARRESTED**
Acts 6-7



**THE CHURCH
SPREAD OUT**
Acts 8



**JESUS SUFFERED
FOR US**
Philippians 2

UNIT 32: THE CHURCH GROWS: As opposition to the church grew, the church grew along with it. Just as Jesus had said it would, the church began in Jerusalem, had grown into Judea, and was about to expand into Samaria and toward the ends of the earth. First, God needed to help believers understand that as the church grew, they were one church united in Jesus.

What is the church? The church is all Christians everywhere, who gather together in their communities to worship and serve God.



**PETER PERFORMED
MIRACLES**
Acts 9



**PETER LEARNED THAT
JESUS IS FOR ALL**
Acts 10



**GENTILES BECAME
PART OF THE CHURCH**
Acts 11



**PETER WAS RESCUED
FROM PRISON**
Acts 12



**WE ARE PART OF
ONE CHURCH**
1 Corinthians 12

UNIT 33: THE CHURCH GOES: Paul had been one of the leaders persecuting the church, but when he met Jesus on the road to Damascus, all of that changed. Paul became a follower of Jesus and would spend the rest of his life on mission, telling others about the One he used to persecute. Jesus can truly save anyone.

Who can be saved? Anyone who trusts in Jesus can be forgiven of their sins and be right with God.



**PAUL BECAME
A CHRISTIAN**
Acts 9



**PAUL BECAME
A MISSIONARY**
Acts 13–14



**JESUS CAN
FORGIVE ANYONE**
2 Corinthians 5



UNIT 31 | SESSION 1

THE APOSTLES WERE ARRESTED

ACTS 5

KEY PASSAGE:

Isaiah 53:5

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

Why did Jesus become human? Jesus became human to obey His Father's plan and rescue sinners.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

Jesus calls His followers to be faithful and tell others about Him, even in times of trouble. Just as Jesus experienced rejection and suffering, so will His followers. We can have joy in suffering, knowing God uses our suffering, like Christ's, for His glory.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION



LEADER Bible Study

In Acts 5, we find the apostles performing many signs and wonders through the power and grace they received from the Holy Spirit. The healing power of the Holy Spirit displayed through Peter, in particular, was so compelling that people laid the sick in the path of his shadow. United in purpose, the apostles also continued their mission to share the gospel with those around them, and as a result, they filled Jerusalem with their teaching! However, with the favor of their community came the opposition of the Jewish leaders who grew jealous of the apostles' ministry.

How did the early church navigate the ups and downs of their ministering experiences? What choices did they make when faced with rejection and suffering?

Instead of cowering to the demands of the religious leaders to stop sharing the gospel, the apostles rejoiced in being counted worthy of mistreatment in Jesus' name. They continued to be faithful to Jesus' command to share the gospel and, leaving directly from the presence of the Sanhedrin, they made a daily practice of preaching and teaching the good news of Jesus Christ in the temple and from house to house.

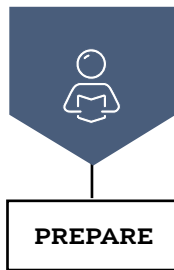
Even when the apostles experienced persecution and shameful mistreatment, the

power of God at work was evidenced in their boldness to continue to preach the name of Jesus. Amidst many uncertainties and challenging circumstances, they remained steadfastly assured of the power of the gospel to save anyone who believes. On this truth they placed their hope as they rejoiced in their suffering.

As you prepare to teach this session to your kids, consider all that the apostles endured as they sought to share God's Word so that people might hear and believe in the name of Jesus. If you find yourself in a difficult circumstance, thank God for their example of endurance despite times of trouble. Help the kids you teach understand that when we face rejection and suffering, Christ remains near to us, just as He did to His church so long ago. We, too, can count it all joy as we face trials and trust that Jesus is worth giving our lives to.

PEOPLE TO KNOW

Gamaliel: Gamaliel I, a highly regarded Pharisee who was a member of the Sanhedrin and teacher of Paul (Acts 22:3)



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper, Allergy Alert.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- “From Jail to the Temple” activity page

Session Starter (Option 2)

- hardcover books, 1 per kid
- small plastic balls or marbles, 1 per kid



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- countdown video

Big Picture Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- “The Apostles Were Arrested” video
- Bible Story Picture Poster

Questions from Kids

- “Unit 31, Session 1” questions from kids video

Missions Moment

- world map
- “Overview of Europe” missions video

Key Passage Activity

- Key Passage Poster
- “By His Wounds (Isaiah 53:5)” song
- worship song of your choice (optional)
- sticky notes, 1 per kid



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- “Europe Photos” printable
- large sheet of bulletin board paper
- yarn
- painter’s tape

Activity Choice (Option 2)

- Gospel Plan poster
- wax paper, 1 piece per kid
- play dough, 1 canister per kid

Reflection and Prayer

- Bible Story Coloring Page (optional)



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

SAY “ Have you ever had to tell someone a message several times before he or she understood it? What were you saying? Why was this message important for you to tell? ”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “From Jail to the Temple” activity page.

SAY “ Today, we will learn how Jesus’ followers obeyed His command to go and share the good news even when they were arrested. ”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: GONE!



Lead kids to sit in a circle. Tell kids that they will need to close their eyes and when you tap one kid on the shoulder, he will step outside the room with another leader or hide somewhere in the room where kids cannot see him. Prompt kids to close their eyes. Then quietly tap one kid and escort him to a hiding place. Remind the kids to keep their eyes closed and remain quiet. Direct kids to open their eyes and guess which kid is now gone. Play as time allows.

SAY “ Each time we opened our eyes, someone was gone. Today, we will learn how the apostles were arrested, but when the religious leaders’ servants came to get them, the apostles were gone. Let’s learn why the apostles were no longer in the jail. ”

OPTION 2: BALANCING ACT

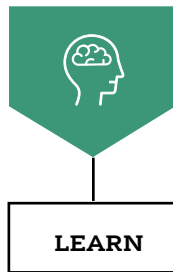
Provide each kid with a hardcover book and a small plastic ball or a marble. (A marble will be more challenging.) Tell kids that they must walk from one side of the room to the other while balancing the ball or marble on the book. Explain that if the ball or marble falls off they must begin again. Repeat as time allows and challenge kids to see how quickly they can walk while balancing the ball or marble.

(Tip: For an additional challenge, provide kids with more than one ball or marble and lead them to balance them on the book while they walk.)

SAY “ It was a challenge to balance the ball or marble, wasn’t it? But you kept trying even though it wasn’t easy. Sometimes we’ll have moments in life when we have to keep going even though it’s difficult. Today, we will learn how the apostles kept sharing the gospel even when it was hard. ”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “ Welcome, kids! I am so glad you are here! My name is [your name], and I am looking forward to sharing a story from God’s Word with you today. If you have your Bibles, will you take them out? [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.]

Our Bible story today can be found in the book of Acts. The book of Acts is in the New Testament. Today, we will learn how Jesus’ apostles, the men sent by Jesus, obeyed His command to go and share the good news—even when it was hard. The apostles wanted to share the gospel because it is how people can know and believe in Jesus. ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

SAY “ We have a new big picture question to learn: **Why did Jesus become human?** The answer we will learn is, **Jesus became human to obey His Father’s plan and rescue sinners.** Jesus’ perfect obedience to His Father is good news! We all need to be rescued from sin and without Jesus becoming a man, we would be dead in our sins.

The Bible tells us that Jesus obeyed God in every way, even dying on the cross for our sin. Jesus loves us and came to earth so that we can be saved. Today, we will learn how the apostles wanted everyone to know Jesus and trust in Him. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “ After Jesus returned to heaven, the apostles went out into Jerusalem and shared the good news. Because of this, the early church began to grow as many people believed in Jesus and were saved from their sin. But as the church grew, the religious leaders tried to stop them from sharing Jesus. The Jewish leaders hurt believers and made threats against them, all because they shared about Jesus. Even still, the apostles obeyed the command to go and tell, and God used their obedience to help even more people trust in Jesus. Today, we will learn how the apostles didn’t stop sharing the gospel even when they were arrested. ”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Acts 5. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “The Apostles Were Arrested.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

THE APOSTLES WERE ARRESTED

“ Peter and John had been arrested and released, yet they did not stop telling people the good news about Jesus. **The apostles were doing many signs** and wonders among the people at the temple, **and more and more people believed in the Lord.**

People carried those who were sick into the street. They hoped that when Peter walked by, his shadow might fall on the people and heal them. Crowds of people came, bringing those who were sick or suffering. **All of them were healed.**

The high priest and other religious leaders were very jealous, so they arrested Jesus’ apostles and put them in jail. **But that night, an angel of the Lord opened the doors of the jail and brought out the apostles. The angel told them, “Go and stand in the temple, and tell the people all about this life.”** So the next morning, the apostles went into the temple and began to teach.

That next day, the high priest and other religious leaders met together. They ordered their servants to go to the jail and bring the apostles to them. When the servants got to the jail, the jail doors were locked and guarded. **But** when they went inside, **the apostles weren’t there.** The leaders were confused.

Then someone came to them and said, “The apostles are teaching in the temple!” So the religious leaders brought the apostles before them and **said, “Didn’t we tell you to stop teaching about Jesus? Everyone in Jerusalem has heard!”**

Peter responded, “We must obey God rather than people. God raised Jesus to life after you killed Him on the cross. Jesus is our Ruler and Savior. He came to change people’s hearts and forgive their sins. The Holy Spirit, whom God gives to everyone who believes, proves this is true.”

The Jewish leaders were angry and wanted to kill Peter and the other apostles. But one of the religious leaders, Gamaliel, told them, “Men of Israel, you have to be careful. Other men have claimed to be important, but their plans failed. If these men are lying and you leave them alone, their plans will fail too. **But if their words are from God, you won’t be able to stop them.”**

The Jewish leaders agreed with Gamaliel. Instead of killing Jesus’ apostles, **they beat them and told them to stop talking about Jesus.** Then they let them go free. **The apostles left, praising God for being counted worthy to suffer for the name of Jesus.** Every day, in the temple and in people’s homes, **the apostles continued to**

STORYTELLING TIPS

Display emotion: Show the emotions of the different people in the story as you tell it. Emphasize the great joy the apostles had as they delighted in being counted worthy to suffer for Jesus.

Use movement: Walk from one side of the room to the other as you teach how the apostles were rescued from jail and went to the temple.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

preach about Jesus. They told people the good news that Jesus is the Messiah.

Christ Connection: Jesus calls His followers to be faithful and tell others about Him, even in times of trouble. Just as Jesus experienced rejection and suffering, so will His followers. We can have joy in suffering, knowing God uses our suffering, like Christ's, for His glory. ”

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ As the apostles obeyed Jesus’ command to share the good news, they began to face hardships. But they never stopped sharing the gospel. Many people were coming to the apostles for healing and the religious leaders became jealous. So they arrested the apostles and put them in jail. What happened the night the apostles were arrested? **[Allow responses.]** God sent an angel to rescue them! The angel told the apostles to go to the temple and teach about Jesus. The apostles continued to share the good news even though others tried to stop them.

The religious leaders were very angry when they heard that the apostles continued to preach about Jesus. They told them not to teach about Jesus ever again. But Peter said they must obey God rather than men. Then the religious leaders beat the apostles. What did the apostles do after being beaten? **[Allow responses.]** They rejoiced that they were worthy to suffer for their obedience to Jesus. Even though the religious leaders told the apostles to stop teaching, they continued to obey God and share the good news in the temple and house to house.

The apostles shared the good news even when they faced challenges because they wanted to obey God. Jesus wants all His followers to tell others about Him, even in times of trouble. He is worthy of our obedience because He is our Lord. ”

3 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY “ Jesus calls His followers to be faithful and tell others about Him, even in times of trouble. Just as Jesus experienced rejection and suffering, so will His followers. We can have joy in suffering, knowing God uses our suffering, like Christ’s, for His glory. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 31, Session 1” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. How can you be brave even when you are scared?
2. Why can we praise God at all times, even when we feel scared?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Display a world map as you tell kids about the continent of Europe.

SAY “ Europe is the second smallest continent and contains over 40 different countries such as the United Kingdom, France, Italy, and Finland. **[Point to different European countries on a world**



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

map.] Europe has a rich history of arts, music, and many famous attractions such as the Eiffel Tower in France and the Colosseum in Italy. It is even home to many beautiful church buildings, including the world's largest cathedral called St. Peter's Basilica. Yet even with many beautiful cathedrals, many people have not trusted in Jesus as Savior and Lord. ”

Play the missions video. Explain that while many European countries have many beautiful attractions, Christians need to pray that the people of Europe will see Jesus as most beautiful and trust in Him for salvation. Pray that new churches will be started in Europe and more people will be willing to learn more about Jesus.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Isaiah 53:5 together.

SAY “ Our key passage reminds us that Jesus suffered to save us from our sins. He became a man to die on the cross and rescue us from sin and death. ”

Form kids into groups of four. Assist groups in looking up Isaiah 53:5 in their Bibles. Provide each kid with a sticky note and a pencil. Assign kids in each group words from the key passage to write on their sticky notes. Then lead kids to close their Bibles and place their sticky notes in order of the key passage.

Lead kids to sing “By His Wounds (Isaiah 53:5).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

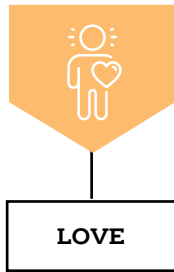
7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “ Thank You, Lord, for saving us from our sins and giving us good news to share with others. Help us obey You even when we face hardships. In Jesus' name, amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the New Testament Israel Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Acts 5. Remind kids that the book of Acts begins with Jesus' promise to send the Holy Spirit right before He went back to heaven. Explain that the book of Acts records the beginning of the church. Share how the early church began to grow as the Holy Spirit empowered the apostles to share the gospel.

Consider pointing out the location of Jerusalem (H4) on the New Testament Israel Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Acts 5:29.

SAY “ Obeying God can be hard, especially when obeying Him means we might face challenges. But the apostles understood that it was more important to obey God and please Him than it was to obey the religious leaders who wanted them to stop sharing about Jesus. God is more important than anyone, and His way is always best. God loves us and when we obey Him, we show that we love Him too. Like the apostles, we must share Jesus, even if it is hard. God gives us joy even in suffering. ”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY “ How did God show He is greater than the religious leaders' plans? ”

Discuss how God sent His angel to free the apostles in prison and that He gave them boldness to keep preaching. Remind kids that the apostles also rejoiced even when they suffered, showing that God is greater and better than any hardship.

SAY “ How can we trust God during hard times? ”

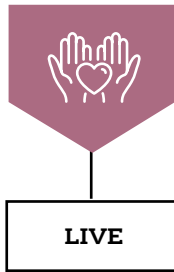
Prompt kids to think about how the gospel helps us trust God because we know that no matter what happens in this life, we have the hope of life forever with Jesus. Discuss how God's promises are always true, and He promised that He would be with us no matter what we face. Tell kids that God also gives us the Holy Spirit to help us trust Him.

SAY “ Should you ever stop sharing the good news about Jesus? Why not? ”

Remind kids that Jesus not only commanded His followers to share the gospel, but that telling others about Jesus is how they will hear and believe. Encourage kids to remember that even if others make fun of us or tell us to be quiet or don't understand, we are honoring God and taking part in His plan to help people trust in Jesus.

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: EUROPE MURAL



Explain that Europe has many popular historical sites that attract tourists from all over the world. Lead kids to create a mural of some of these popular landmarks using the “Europe Photos” printable. Direct kids to create the mural by assisting you in taping a large sheet of bulletin board paper on a wall using painter’s tape. Then tape the map of Europe from the “Europe Photos” to the center of the bulletin board sheet.

Form kids into five groups and provide each group with a photo from the “Europe Photos” and a piece of yarn. Direct each group to locate the country where their photo is found as indicated on the printable. Then lead kids to tape the photo to the bulletin board and tape the yarn from the photo to the location on the map.

SAY “ Over the next few weeks, as we learn about Europe, we can use our mural to be reminded to pray for the people of Europe. We can pray that the people who live in Europe will trust in Jesus. ”

OPTION 2: BUILD IT!



Lead kids to better understand the gospel message and how to share it with their friends by reviewing Gospel Plan poster. Direct kids to sit around tables and distribute a piece of wax paper and some play dough to each kid. Go through each step of *The Gospel: God’s Plan for Me*. Challenge kids to use their dough to make a shape for each point. For “God Rules” challenge kids to mold a crown, for “We Sinned” a X, for “God Provided” a cross, for “Jesus Gives” a gift box, and for “We Respond” hands. If time allows form kids into pairs and challenge them to walk through each step together.

SAY “ The apostles obeyed God and shared the gospel with others. God calls us to share about Jesus as well. Sometimes, we might be nervous or even afraid to share. We can trust that God will help us, and we can pray that others will hear and believe. ”

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask the kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids.

If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.



UNIT 31 | SESSION 2

THE CHURCH HANDLED A PROBLEM

ACTS 6

KEY PASSAGE:

Isaiah 53:5

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

Why did Jesus become human? Jesus became human to obey His Father's plan and rescue sinners.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

The apostles believed that everyone in the church had an important job to do to serve God's people and help spread the gospel. Jesus wants us to serve others so that the message of His death and resurrection can be heard and believed all over the world.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION



LEADER Bible Study

Acts 6 relays a time when a complaint within the church led to an opportunity for delegation and good deeds. As the apostles continued spreading the word of Jesus and His resurrection, more people began to believe the good news and the church grew in number. Amid this growth, the task of caring for the Hellenistic widows was being neglected.

How did the apostles handle this complaint between the different groups of believers in their church? How did they choose to pursue unity despite the different needs and giftings of those in their community?

In this chapter, we witness how the apostles chose not to ignore the critiques of the Hellenistic Jews. Instead, the members of the Twelve sought to bring more individuals into service opportunities for God’s glory—a proposal that pleased the whole church. From this newfound service initiative came the deacon ministry!

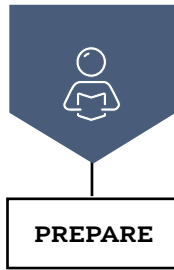
The apostles’ approach to this complaint was rooted in their desire for unity within the body of Christ and the proclamation of the gospel. They instructed the church to select seven men of good character, sound wisdom, and obedience to the Holy Spirit to care for the widows in need of help. With

this delegation of duties, the disciples could continue their work of prayer and preaching the Word. As the deacons served and the apostles preached the Word, the gospel reached even further, and a large group of priests came to faith in Jesus.

Help kids see how they can serve within their church—even now as children! Explain how your work as a Bible study leader is fulfilling the Great Commission in this moment! We all have the important job of sharing God’s Word with others. God is pleased by our obedience and service and may choose to use it to take the gospel even further.

TERMS TO KNOW

Deacon: a servant or minister (not a pastor); The noun form comes from a verb which means “to serve.” Many interpreters believe the account in Acts 6 describes the selection of the first deacons.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- “Serve One Another” activity page

Session Starter (Option 2)

- baskets, 2 per team
- pretend foods, 1 per kid



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- countdown video

Big Picture Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- “The Church Handled a Problem” video
- Bible Story Picture Poster

Questions from Kids

- “Unit 31, Session 2” questions from kids video

Missions Moment

- “Jones Family Photo” printable
- world map

Key Passage Activity

- Key Passage Poster
- “By His Wounds (Isaiah 53:5)” song
- worship song of your choice (optional)



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LIVE

Reflection and Prayer

- Bible Story Coloring Page (optional)



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

SAY “What do you do when you don’t agree with someone about something like who gets to go first or what to eat? Why do you respond this way?”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Serve One Another” on the activity page.

SAY “Our story today reminds us that it is important to serve others so people can hear the good news and be saved.”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: WHAT’S MISSING?



Tell kids that you are going to describe several activities and they must determine what is missing. For example, to wash dishes you need dirty dishes, a sponge, and dish soap. Then ask, “What’s missing?” Kids would respond by saying “water.” Consider using the examples below or create your own:

- “To make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich you need peanut butter and jelly. What’s missing?” (bread)
- “To brush your teeth you need a toothbrush and water. What’s missing?” (toothpaste)
- “To grow a plant you need a seed, dirt, and water. What’s missing?” (sunshine)

SAY “These activities need every part so they can be completed. Today, we will learn how some people in the early church saw that something was missing. We will learn that some widows were not getting what they needed. Let’s get ready to learn more.”

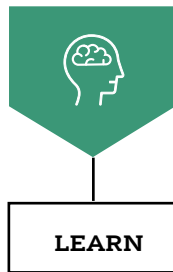
OPTION 2: PASS THE FOOD

Form kids into at least two teams. Use a piece of tape to create a starting line. Across the room from the teams, place one large empty basket or bucket. Direct each team to line up behind the starting line. Then provide each team with a basket filled with pretend food for each member of the team. Challenge kids from each team to take a piece of food from their basket, run across the room and drop the food in the large basket, and then race back to their team. The first team to get all of their food into the large basket across the room wins.

SAY “Each team did a great job working together to complete the relay. Jesus wants us to serve His people and spread the gospel. Let’s learn how the early church worked together to solve a problem so that everyone’s needs could be met.”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “ Hi, kids! I’m glad you’re here! My name is [your name], and today we are going to learn more from the book of Acts. If you have your Bible with you, will you take it out? [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.] The book of Acts is in the New Testament and teaches us about the work of the Holy Spirit through the early church.

The apostles taught others in Jerusalem about Jesus and the church grew as people trusted in Jesus. Today, we will learn how the early church solved a problem and how every believer has a way they can serve others in the church. ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

SAY “ Does anyone remember the big picture question we learned last week? [Allow responses.] Our big picture question is, **Why did Jesus become human?** What is the answer we learned? [Allow responses.] **Jesus became human to obey His Father’s plan and rescue sinners.**

God wants to use His church to share the good news of Jesus with the world. We can tell people about why Jesus became human. We can help others understand that only Jesus can save them from their sins. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “ Last week, we learned that the apostles were arrested for sharing the gospel. However, we also learned that God is bigger than any problems they faced. Even the religious leaders could not stop God’s church from sharing the good news. The apostles rejoiced because they suffered for the name of Jesus. They continued to preach the gospel, no matter what, and the church grew. Today, we will learn how the apostles solved a problem within the early church so telling others the good news of Jesus could continue to be their focus. ”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Acts 6. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “The Church Handled a Problem.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

THE CHURCH HANDLED A PROBLEM

“ In the time after Jesus’ resurrection and return to heaven, more and more people believed in Him. But some of the believers complained. The Jews who spoke Greek complained about the Jews who spoke Hebrew. **The Greek-speaking Jews thought the widows were being overlooked when the daily food was given out.** In the Old Testament, God told His people to take care of widows—women whose husbands had died.

The twelve apostles gathered all the believers together. (Matthias had been chosen to replace Judas.) They said, **“It isn’t right for us to stop preaching about God to take care of all these daily concerns. So, brothers and sisters, choose seven men to take care of this.”**

The apostles said that the men should be men of good character—men who are wise and full of the Holy Spirit. These men should be obedient to God and be able to make good choices. **These seven men would take care of the daily business of the believers. Then the apostles could devote themselves to prayer and to preaching. Both jobs were important,** but the apostles should not stop teaching God’s Word because hearing the Word was how people believed.

Everyone agreed that this was a good idea. So they chose seven men: Stephen, Philip, Prochorus (PRAHK uh ruhs), Nicanor (nigh KAY nawr), Timon (TIGH mahn), Parmenas (PAHR mih nuhs), and Nicolaus (nik uh LAY uhs). **These men stood before Jesus’ apostles, who prayed for them and laid their hands on them.**

So the twelve apostles kept preaching about God. More and more people heard the truth about God, and more and more people in Jerusalem believed in Him. The church in Jerusalem grew as more disciples were made.

Christ Connection: The apostles believed that everyone in the church had an important job to do to serve God’s people and help spread the gospel. Jesus wants us to serve others so that the message of His death and resurrection can be heard and believed all over the world. ”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Pretend it: Pretend to pass out food to half the class when you teach how the widows were being overlooked.

Change up seating: As you tell the story, invite kids to join you on the floor, in the hall, or sitting on a blanket.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ In today’s story, we saw that there was a problem within the early church. What was it? [Allow responses.] As the apostles taught the gospel more people believed and the early church grew. The believers tried to meet the needs of the people within the church, but some thought the Greek widows were not being taken care of because they weren’t getting the food they needed. The apostles and believers within the early church came up with a plan to solve this problem.

The apostles knew it was important for them to focus on prayer and sharing the good news with those who had not heard, so they knew they needed help from other believers within the church. What kind of men did the church choose to serve and meet the needs of the believers? [Allow responses.] The church chose men of good character who were filled with the Holy Spirit to care for widows, other believers, and help with serving in the church.

These men had an important job and helped serve where there was a need. The apostles were able to keep praying and preaching the gospel. What happened as everyone served where they were needed? [Allow responses.] God grew the church as many more people were able to hear the good news through the apostles’ preaching.

God has given every believer the job of serving God’s people and spreading the gospel. God gives us different opportunities to serve both believers and also people who do not yet believe. In whatever way we serve, we can share the gospel and lead others to the Lord so they can be saved. ”

3 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY “ The apostles believed that everyone in the church had an important job to do to serve God’s people and help spread the gospel. Jesus wants us to serve others so that the message of His death and resurrection can be heard and believed all over the world. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 31, Session 2” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. Are some jobs in the church more important than others? Why?
2. Why should you serve people in your church?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Print a copy of the “Jones Family Photo” printable and display it as you tell the kids about the missionary family. Display a world map and point to Germany.

SAY “ Casey and Amy Jones are missionaries in Leipzig, Germany. Leipzig is known for having the largest railway station in Europe. Around 150,000 passengers travel through the train station each day. Other tourist attractions within driving distance of the area are castles, fortresses, and museums. ”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

Tell kids that Casey and Amy have been church planters in Germany for over four years. Explain that the Joneses work with local churches to start new Bible studies and new churches. Share how they work primarily with the German people but also with people who have moved to Germany from America and Canada. Tell kids that Casey and Amy have also helped support refugees from Ukraine, who came to Germany to escape war in their country. Explain that very few people attend a gospel believing church. Share how the Joneses want to tell the people in Germany the good news about Jesus. Pray for Casey and Amy and other missionaries in Germany to find ways to build relationships with the people so they can tell them about Jesus.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Isaiah 53:5 together.

SAY “ Our key passage reminds us of the price Jesus paid when He died on the cross for our sins. Jesus’ death and resurrection is the good news that all believers must go and share. ”

Direct kids to listen carefully as you say the key passage aloud. Say the key passage but leave out one word and clap in place of that word. Challenge kids to shout out the word you left out. For the first round, display the key passage poster. For additional rounds, remove the key passage poster and challenge kids to shout the missing word without the poster. Repeat as time allows leaving out different words.

Lead kids to sing “By His Wounds (Isaiah 53:5).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

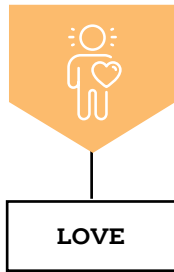
7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “ Thank You, Lord, that you give each believer a job to do to serve others and honor You. Help us be obedient to serve in our church and share the gospel with those who have not heard. In Jesus’ name, amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the New Testament Israel Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Acts 6. Explain that the New Testament is made up of 27 books. Remind kids that the first four books of the New Testament are the Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Tell kids that after the Gospels is the book of Acts.

Consider pointing out the location of Jerusalem (H4) on the New Testament Israel Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Acts 6:4-6.

SAY “ Just as the seven men chosen and the apostles had important jobs in the church, so does God call us to serve our church. We may serve by encouraging other believers to trust Jesus, or help our leaders pass out Bibles, or even help distribute snacks. We all have ways we can serve the church and honor God. ”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY “ What job does God give all believers? ”

Prompt kids to think about Jesus’ command in Matthew 28:19-20. Remind kids that Jesus commanded all of His followers to share the gospel and make disciples. Encourage kids to think of people they can share the good news with this week. Invite kids to discuss how they can share the gospel with people they know.

SAY “ Are some people’s jobs in the church more important than others? Why not? ”

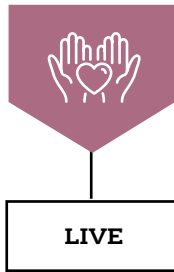
Tell kids that some people may have jobs that might make them more front-and-center like preaching or leading worship, but no job is more important than another. Discuss how God gives us all jobs that are needed and are used to serve the church. Tell kids that each job is a way to love others and love God.

SAY “ How do we, as Christians, serve people differently than those who are not Christians? ”

Discuss how any person, believers or unbelievers, can serve other people and help others. Point out that when believers serve, we want to help others and point them to Jesus. Remind kids that serving and meeting people’s needs is a way to demonstrate the gospel, but we also want to speak the truth of the gospel as well. Challenge kids to think about how they can serve others this week while also sharing the good news of Jesus.

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: ALL ABOARD!



Tell kids that a popular way to travel in Europe is by train. Remind kids that the Central Station in Leipzig, Germany, has around 150,000 people traveling through it each day.

Create a line of chairs in the center of the room, using one less chair than the total number of kids. Designate the chair at the front of the line as the “engine” and the last chair as the “caboose.” Direct kids to circle the chairs but when you say “All aboard!” they must quickly sit in a chair. Tell kids that whoever does not find a seat is out. Explain that whoever sits in the “engine” chair automatically moves on to the next round and gets to sit in the “caboose” while the other kids walk around the chairs. Be sure to remove a chair each round. Play until there is a winner.

SAY “ Many people travel to or live in Leipzig, Germany. Let’s remember to pray the Joneses will have opportunities to share the gospel with those they meet in Leipzig. ”

OPTION 2: INVITE A DEACON



Before the session, speak with a deacon serving in your church and ask him to come speak to your group about his job in the church. Ask him to provide a list of names kids could create “care cards” for such as widows, people who are sick, or homebound members.

Explain to kids that you have a special guest here to speak with them. Tell kids that in Acts 6, the seven men chosen to serve the church are believed to be the first deacons. Direct kids to listen as the deacon shares about his job and how he serves the church. Then assign each kid a name from the list and invite them to draw a picture showing God loves them. Provide papers, markers, and any other helpful art supplies.

SAY “ All believers have an important job in the church. We can all serve other believers in many different ways. Even now, your cards will be a way to encourage other believers and cheer them up. We honor God when we serve each other. ”

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask the kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids.

If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.



UNIT 31 | SESSION 3

STEPHEN WAS ARRESTED

ACTS 6-7

KEY PASSAGE:

Isaiah 53:5

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

Why did Jesus become human? Jesus became human to obey His Father's plan and rescue sinners.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

Jesus told His followers that they would be persecuted—hated, hurt, or even killed—for loving Him. Jesus also said that those who suffer for Him would be blessed. We can face suffering in this life because Jesus suffered first. He died and then rose again, and He is waiting for us in heaven.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION



LEADER Bible Study

Acts 6 and 7 detail the story of Stephen, the first follower of Jesus martyred for his unwavering boldness in proclaiming Jesus as Lord. Despite the rejection Stephen faced, he remained firm in his gospel witness to those in the Sanhedrin. Recounting the stories of the Old Testament, Stephen declared God’s faithfulness to bring the Messiah into the world, even through the rebellious nation of Israel.

How was Stephen able to boldly declare the gospel and endure persecution? What parallels can we make between Jesus and Stephen that encourage us in our faith?

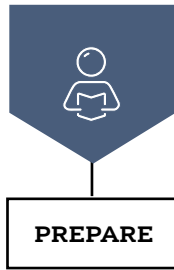
When asked for confirmation of the accusations against himself, Stephen’s response was to walk the high priest through the Old Testament’s accounts of God’s promises. Stephen made known the rebellion of the Jewish people—how they rejected God’s Word and resisted the Holy Spirit. He spoke of what God declared back then and how God’s promises came to completion in the death and resurrection of His only Son, Jesus. Stephen believed the promises of God and had faith in the Righteous One who died for the sins of the world. Stephen was able to face such terrifying persecution and death because he was filled with the Holy Spirit.

As Stephen stood among the Jewish leaders, Scripture tells us that “his face was like the face of an angel.” While the leaders’ countenances only displayed anger and outrage, Stephen mirrored the ways of Jesus on his face, in his boldness, and through the forgiveness he prayed over the Sanhedrin members’ sins. As Jesus’ followers, we also will face opposition from others. Yet, while we await the return of Christ, we can reflect His love and truth to those around us.

Consider what it looks like for followers of Jesus to be so filled with the Holy Spirit that they remain on mission for the gospel no matter the cost. How could God use our faithful witness of the gospel to save even those most hostile to the good news? Explain to your kids that when we find our comfort and hope in Jesus, we can withstand rejection we may face, as we exchange the momentary approval of man for the eternal favor and blessings of God.

TERMS TO KNOW

Martyr: the transliteration of a Greek word meaning “witness,” in particular one who gives his life for a cause. It is used to describe those who died because of their faith in Christ rather than recant.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- “What’s the Order?” activity page

Session Starter (Option 2)

- dry erase board
- dry erase marker



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- countdown video

Big Picture Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- “Stephen Was Arrested” video
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Small Group Timeline (optional)

Questions from Kids

- “Unit 31, Session 3” questions from kids video

Missions Moment

- “The Jones Family in Germany” missions video

Key Passage Activity

- Key Passage Poster
- “By His Wounds (Isaiah 53:5)” song
- worship song of your choice (optional)
- ball



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- pretzels in various shapes (mini twists, sticks, snaps)
- paper towels, 1 per kid

Reflection and Prayer

- Bible Story Coloring Page (optional)



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

SAY “ Do you know what the word reject means? Explain it to me. How does it feel to be rejected? Why? ”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “What’s the Order?” on the activity page.

SAY “ Today, we will see how a follower of Jesus named Stephen shared the gospel by showing how the stories from the Old Testament point to Jesus as the Messiah. ”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: WHAT DO YOU REJECT?



Invite kids to form a large circle. Tell kids that you will say two items and they need to reject one over the other option. Remind kids that reject means to choose not to accept or believe something or someone. Lead kids to stay seated in the circle if they reject the first option or stand up if they reject the second option. Consider using the examples below or create your own:

- Popcorn or ice cream cone
- Video game or board game
- Riding a bike or rollerskating
- Pizza or hot dog
- Pool or beach

SAY “ This game showed us that we rejected something over a different option. Today, we’ll learn how the religious leaders rejected the truth about Jesus over their own unbelief. Our Bible story helps us understand how a man named Stephen shared the gospel, but the religious leaders rejected him and refused to believe his words. ”

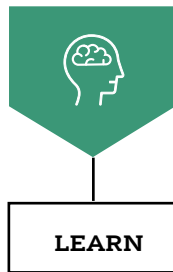
OPTION 2: PICTURE THIS!

Direct kids’ attention to the dry erase board and explain that they will have an opportunity to create a picture. Invite a volunteer to draw a sun and then return back to her seat. Choose another kid to draw a mountain. Continue inviting kids to draw the following elements one at a time: rocks, sand, bush, and fire on the bush. Direct kids to look at the picture and have them describe it to you.

SAY “ The picture you helped create illustrates a scene from the Bible. Does anyone remember a Bible story about a bush that was on fire but the fire didn’t burn the leaves? **[Allow responses.]** God spoke to Moses through a burning bush and called Moses to rescue His people from Egypt. Today, we will learn how a man named Stephen used Old Testament Bible stories to create a picture of how God was working to bring the Messiah—Jesus—into the world. Let’s get ready to learn more. ”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “ Welcome, kids! My name is [your name]. I’m so glad you are here to learn more about Jesus and how He died to save you. God’s Word is full of good news, but it can also have some sad news. Today, our Bible story has some sad news as we’ll learn about a man who died because of his faith in Jesus. But there’s good news too! As we’ll also learn, death is not the end for those who trust in Jesus.

Did you bring your Bible today? Will you please take out your Bible if you brought it? [**Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.**] The Bible teaches us that even though followers of Jesus will face suffering, we can trust that Jesus is with us. He understands our suffering because He suffered on the cross for our sins. As we read our story, give thanks to God for Jesus’ sacrifice. ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

SAY “ Our big picture question is, **Why did Jesus become human?** What is the answer? [**Allow responses.**] The answer is, **Jesus became human to obey His Father’s plan and rescue sinners.** Let’s repeat the answer together: **Jesus became human to obey His Father’s plan and rescue sinners.**

God’s plan for His Son, Jesus, wasn’t easy. Jesus was arrested, beaten, mocked, and crucified for our sins. But Jesus went through all that pain so that we could be saved from our sin. Jesus believed following God was worth it, no matter how hard. Even if we have hard times, we can have hope knowing that those who trust in Jesus will live with Him forever. In our story today, we will be reminded that Jesus is waiting for us in heaven and that one day there will be no more suffering for those who trust in Him. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “ The apostles preached the gospel and thousands of people trusted in Jesus. The church continued to grow. But as the church grew, they faced trouble. Many apostles were questioned, arrested, and beaten for trusting in Jesus. A couple of weeks ago, we learned that Peter and John were told to never preach the gospel again. Did they stop? [**Allow responses.**] No! They obeyed God rather than men.

Last week, we learned that believers also faced problems within the church. But God gave the church wisdom to choose men to serve the needs of the church, and the church continued to grow. Today, we will learn about a follower of Jesus named Stephen who preached the gospel with boldness in front of a group of angry Jewish leaders. ”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Acts 6–7. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Stephen Was Arrested.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

STEPHEN WAS ARRESTED

“ Stephen was one of Jesus’ followers. God blessed Stephen and gave him power to do great wonders and signs. **One day, some Jews began to argue with Stephen. The Holy Spirit helped Stephen speak with wisdom,** so no matter how hard the Jews tried, they could not win the argument.

But the Jews lied about Stephen; they said he had spoken against God. The people dragged Stephen to the Sanhedrin (san HEE drihn), the Jewish court, and told more lies. “We heard Stephen say that Jesus will destroy the temple and change the laws that Moses gave us,” they said. “Is this true?” the high priest asked Stephen.

Stephen began to preach about Jesus. He reminded the court about Abraham. God had made promises to Abraham and his son Isaac. He reminded them about Joseph and Moses. God kept Joseph safe when his brothers tried to hurt him, and God used Joseph to help all His people during a famine. **When God’s people lived in Egypt, God called Moses to rescue His people from Pharaoh.** Moses led God’s people away from Egypt, but they turned against Moses and against God. **God did not give up on His people, though. He was working out a plan.** God worked through Joshua and David and Solomon.

The religious leaders knew these stories from the Old Testament. Stephen told them these stories to explain that Jesus was the Messiah God had promised! But just like their ancestors rejected and killed the prophets in the Old Testament, these Jewish leaders had rejected Jesus and murdered Him!

Stephen’s words made the Jewish leaders so angry! Stephen was filled with the Holy Spirit. He looked up to heaven and saw Jesus standing there.

“Look!” he said. “I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!”

The Jewish leaders screamed at the top of their lungs. They covered their ears and rushed at Stephen. **They threw him out of the city and began throwing stones at him. Stephen called out, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!” Then he said, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them!” After this, Stephen died.**

Christ Connection: Jesus told His followers that they would be persecuted—hated, hurt, or even killed—for loving Him. Jesus also said that those who suffer for Him would be blessed. We can face suffering in this life because Jesus suffered first. He died and then rose again, and He is waiting for us in heaven. ”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Use the timeline: Point to the stories on the timeline or refer to past Bible story posters as you tell about the Old Testament stories. Remind kids of God’s faithfulness to follow His plan to send Jesus into the world to rescue sinners.

Use dramatic voice: Tell the story with a dramatic voice to emphasize the emotions of each character.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ Stephen loved Jesus, and he was even one of the men chosen to serve the church in last week’s story. He was full of the Holy Spirit and performed signs and miracles. Who argued with Stephen and made up lies about him? **[Allow responses.]** The religious leaders didn’t like how they couldn’t win arguments against Stephen, so they arranged for people to lie about Stephen. When the leaders asked Stephen to defend himself, Stephen began to preach about Jesus.

What stories from the Old Testament did Stephen share to show the religious leaders that Jesus is the Messiah God promised? **[Allow responses.]** Stephen spoke about God’s promise to Abraham, Joseph in Egypt, Moses and the burning bush, Joshua’s conquering of the promised land, and even how Solomon built God’s temple. Stephen reminded the Jewish leaders that even though God’s plan was at work to send Jesus into the world, His people rejected His prophets’ messages.

Who did Stephen say the religious leaders rejected? **[Allow responses.]** Stephen reminded the Jewish leaders that they had rejected and murdered Jesus. **Jesus became human to obey His Father’s plan and rescue sinners.** But the religious leaders did not accept the truth of the gospel.

The Jewish leaders became incredibly angry. They threw large stones at Stephen. But Jesus was with Stephen. Who did Stephen see as he was being stoned? **[Allow responses.]** As Stephen was being killed for preaching about Jesus, he saw heaven and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. This gave Stephen hope as he faced death. We can have the same kind of hope Stephen had. If we have trusted Jesus as Savior, we can face any type of suffering or death knowing that Jesus is waiting for us in heaven. ”

3 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY “ Jesus told His followers that they would be persecuted—hated, hurt, or even killed—for loving Him. Jesus also said that those who suffer for Him would be blessed. We can face suffering in this life because Jesus suffered first. He died and then rose again, and He is waiting for us in heaven. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 31, Session 3” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. What type of persecution do Christians today face for their faith in Jesus?
2. How can we pray for persecuted Christians?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

SAY “ One challenge that Casey and Amy Jones have when they are trying to tell German people about Jesus is that the people do not know the stories of the Bible. They do not believe there is only one true God and that His Son, Jesus, came to save us from sin. Another challenge is that the older



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

people in the area lived during a time when people in their country could not freely talk about Jesus or about being a Christian. Even though you can now talk in Germany about Jesus, it's still hard for some people to want to hear about Jesus. ”

Play the missions video. Pray that God will help the Jones family and other missionaries in Germany find ways to boldly tell people about Jesus and that God would open people's hearts to believe the truth of the gospel. Remind kids that Jesus said that those who suffer for Him would be blessed. We can face suffering in this life because Jesus suffered first.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Isaiah 53:5 together.

SAY “ Jesus suffered and died to pay for our sins. As Jesus' followers, we can have hope when we suffer or go through hard times because Jesus died and rose again. ”

Form kids into a circle. Hold a ball in your hand and say the first word of the key passage. Then toss or roll the ball to a kid and challenge him to say the next word in the key passage. Continue tossing or rolling the ball until the entire key passage has been said. Repeat, making sure each kid has a turn.

Lead kids to sing “By His Wounds (Isaiah 53:5).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

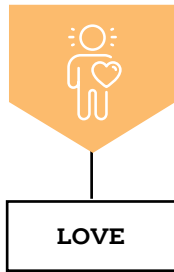
7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “ Thank You, Lord, that You are always with us and for giving us hope through Jesus. Help us face hard times with courage, knowing You will give us strength. In Jesus' name, amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the New Testament Israel Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Acts 7. Remind kids that the Bible is divided into two large sections: the Old Testament and the New Testament. Discuss how the Old Testament begins with the creation of the world and tells of God's plan to send Jesus into the world through the nation of Israel. Remind kids that Stephen's sermon included stories from the Old Testament.

Consider pointing out the location of Jerusalem (H4) on the New Testament Israel Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Acts 7:60.

SAY “As Stephen was being stoned, he prayed that God would forgive the religious leaders. This prayer reminds us of the words Jesus prayed when He was being crucified. He asked God to forgive the people that hung Him on the cross.

We can forgive others even when they hurt or wrong us as well. Because Jesus suffered and died so that we can be forgiven, we can choose to forgive others too. Forgiving others shows that Jesus has changed our hearts and is helping us live for Him.”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY Do we have a choice of whether we choose to accept or reject Jesus? Why? “ ”

Discuss how some people reject Jesus and some choose to believe in Jesus. Remind kids that Jesus died on the cross for our sins, and everyone who believes in Him will be forgiven.

SAY “How does Jesus' death and resurrection give us hope? ”

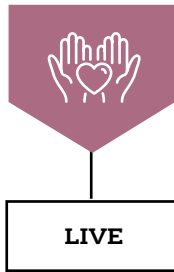
Prompt kids to think about how Stephen saw Jesus in heaven standing at God's right hand waiting for him. Remind kids that because of Jesus' death and resurrection we have the hope of eternal life with Him. Discuss how any hardship we go through will not compare to the joy that awaits us in heaven.

SAY “Why did Jesus say Christians would suffer for following Him? ”

Tell kids that just as the world hated Jesus, it will also hate those who follow Jesus. Explain that the world is against God because the world is God's enemy. Tell kids that before we accept Jesus as our Savior, we are God's enemy too. Share how we are forgiven of sin and accepted into God's family when we trust in Jesus.

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: PRETZEL PICTURE



Distribute a paper towel and assortment of pretzels in the various shapes to each kid. Mention that pretzels have been a part of German baking traditions for centuries. Tell kids that traditional pretzels of Germany are soft and doughy.

Display a pretzel sample formation such as pretzels positioned to form the shape of a house. (Use stick pretzels for the frame and snaps pretzels for the windows.) Encourage kids to use their pretzels to create their own pictures and shapes such as a flower, a cross, or any other pattern they think of.

SAY “ Pretzels have a long history with the German people. We can pray that God will help people in Germany understand the history and truth of the Bible. Let’s pray that the people who hear Bible stories from the Jones family will come to know and love Jesus. ”

OPTION 2: WHAT DO YOU SEE?



Form kids into pairs and invite them to describe a picture of an animal to their partners. For example, one might say to his partner “I see an animal with a long neck and a long tongue.” Lead the kid’s partner to guess what animal is being described. Allow each partner to describe several animals.

Then invite kids to listen as you describe what Stephen saw while he was being stoned.

SAY “ “I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!” Who saw this heavenly scene? **[Allow responses.]** Yes, Stephen saw Jesus waiting for him in heaven. Stephen was able to suffer with courage and hope because Jesus was waiting for him. If we have trusted in Jesus, we have this same hope too. **Jesus became human to obey His Father’s plan and rescue sinners.** Jesus died so that we can be forgiven and live with Him forever. ”

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask the kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids.

If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.



UNIT 31 | SESSION 4

THE CHURCH SPREAD OUT

ACTS 8

KEY PASSAGE:

Isaiah 53:5

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

Why did Jesus become human? Jesus became human to obey His Father's plan and rescue sinners.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

The Holy Spirit led Philip to help the Ethiopian official understand the good news about Jesus: Jesus died on the cross for our sins and was raised from the dead, just like the Old Testament prophets said.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION



LEADER Bible Study

The story of the Ethiopian official’s baptism began with an angel giving a command to Philip, an apostle of Jesus Christ. Philip’s on-the-spot obedience led him to clarify the Scriptures and point the Ethiopian official to Christ. As a result of Philip’s desire to live on mission, the Lord provided an opportunity for the gospel to spread further throughout the world.

In what ways did the context of Acts 8 seem inopportune for spreading God’s Word? How did Philip’s willingness to be led by the Holy Spirit play a part in this story of practical evangelism?

In the beginning of today’s reading, we see the rippling effects of Stephen’s stoning (Acts 7). Severe persecution broke out against the church in Jerusalem, and all but the apostles scattered while Saul ravaged the church. However, as these believers dispersed, they continued living on mission, preaching the Word of God boldly rather than cowering to their circumstances.

Making his way down the road God chose for him, Philip came across this traveling eunuch who needed someone to explain the meaning of Isaiah 53. Just as we read in Romans 10 that we cannot believe God’s truth without hearing or having it preached, the Ethiopian official declared that he needed a

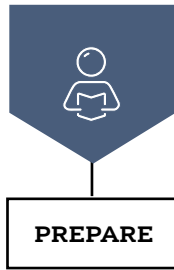
guide. While Philip did not know everything about the mysteries of God, he trusted that the Holy Spirit guided him down that desert road with divine purpose.

As you teach on the Lord’s faithfulness amidst His people’s trials, emphasize the simplicity of this story: a follower of Jesus stepped confidently into a situation where the Lord had gone before him. How can you show your kids that He will do just the same for them today as they share the gospel with others—just as you are relaying His truths to them in this story?

Teach kids that all who hear the good news of Jesus Christ and believe in Him are welcomed into God’s kingdom. Like Philip, may we trust and obey the leading of the Holy Spirit for the sake of making the gospel known to others.

PEOPLE TO KNOW

Ethiopian eunuch: an unnamed person who was returning to his homeland after having been to Jerusalem to worship. His conversion illustrates the Christian faith transcending national boundaries.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- “Desert Journey Maze” activity page

Session Starter (Option 2)

- painter’s tape



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- countdown video

Big Picture Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- “The Church Spread Out” video
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- world map (optional)

Questions from Kids

- “Unit 31, Session 4” questions from kids video

Missions Moment

- “Jones Family Photo” printable

Key Passage Activity

- Key Passage Poster
- “By His Wounds (Isaiah 53:5)” song
- worship song of your choice (optional)
- dry erase boards, 2



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- “Flags of Europe” printable, 1 per kid

Reflection and Prayer

- Bible Story Coloring Page (optional)



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

SAY “What is something you didn’t understand at first? Has someone ever helped you read a word or learn a new skill? How did you feel when you received help?”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Desert Journey Maze” on the activity page.

SAY “In today’s story, we will learn that Philip obeyed God and listened to the Holy Spirit. Because Philip obeyed, he was able to share good news with someone.”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: PASS THE MESSAGE



Form kids into groups of four or five kids and direct them to line up shoulder to shoulder. Whisper a “secret message” to the first kid in each group such as “I saw a kitten eating chicken in the kitchen.” Challenge kids to pass the message by whispering it in the next kid’s ear. Direct kids to continue through the line until it gets to the last kid. Once the message reaches the last kid in each group, direct them to say the message aloud and see if it is correct. Repeat as time allows.

SAY “Sometimes we don’t always understand what we hear. It can be confusing if something is unclear. Today, we will learn about a man who was reading God’s Word, but he didn’t understand what he was reading. Let’s learn how God sent Philip to help the man understand the good news.”

OPTION 2: LISTEN AND FOLLOW

Before the session, use painter’s tape to create a “ladder” on the floor. Create enough “steps” of the ladder for each kid. For larger groups, consider making two or more ladders.

Invite kids to stand on a step of the “ladder.” Tell kids that they must listen closely and follow your instructions. Provide directions for kids to follow such as “Hop to the right of the ladder” “Step down the ladder” “Step up the ladder” etc. Repeat as time allows and consider inviting a kid to give the directions.

SAY “This game required you to listen closely and follow the directions that were given. Today, we will learn how a man named Philip, one of the apostles, listened to God and followed His directions. Let’s learn who God led Philip to help.”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “ Welcome, kids! My name is [your name]. Today, we will be reading in the book of Acts again. If you have your Bible with you, will you take it out and place it in your lap? **[Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.]** Let’s turn to Acts 8 as we get ready to hear our Bible story.

As we hear our story, we will learn how the Holy Spirit led Philip, an apostle, to a man from Ethiopia. The man from Ethiopia needed help understanding God’s Word. We’ll see how Philip listened and followed God’s leading to help the man hear the good news of Jesus. ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

SAY “ Just like our Bible story today will teach us how Philip helped the Ethiopian man understand the good news, our big picture question and answer reminds us of this good news too. What is our big picture question? **[Allow responses.] Why did Jesus become human?** What is the answer? **[Allow responses.] Jesus became human to obey His Father’s plan and rescue sinners.**

God always had a plan to save sinners by sending His one and only Son, Jesus, to take the punishment for our sins. Today, our Bible story shows us how a book from the Old Testament called Isaiah pointed to Jesus’ sacrifice. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “ The apostles and other believers were obedient to God’s command to go and share the good news with the world. The Holy Spirit gave the apostles power and helped them boldly share the gospel. Even when Peter and John were arrested for sharing the gospel and told to be quiet, God gave them courage to keep sharing the good news.

Last week, we learned that a disciple named Stephen suffered and died for loving Jesus and sharing the good news. But this did not stop believers from continuing to share the gospel. Today, we will learn how the Holy Spirit led Philip to share the good news with a man from Ethiopia. ”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Acts 8. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “The Church Spread Out.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

STORYTELLING TIPS

Use a map: Point to Ethiopia on a world map when you share how the man was from Ethiopia.

Define baptize: Remind kids that to *baptize* someone means to lower a person in the water and bring him back up. Tell kids that it is a command Jesus gave His followers and is a way for believers to publicly show they have confessed Jesus as Savior and Lord.

THE CHURCH SPREAD OUT

“ An angel of the Lord told Philip, a follower of Jesus, to go to a desert road between Jerusalem and Gaza. So Philip went.

On the road was a man from Ethiopia. He was an important official to the queen of Ethiopia. The man had come to worship in Jerusalem, and now he was on his way home. He sat in his chariot, reading aloud the words of the prophet Isaiah.

The Holy Spirit told Philip to go to the chariot, so Philip ran up to it. “Do you understand what you are reading?” Philip asked the man.

The official replied, “How can I, unless someone explains it to me?” He invited Philip into his chariot, and Philip sat with him. The official was reading these words from Isaiah: “He was led like a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb is silent before its shearer, so He does not open His mouth. He was treated unfairly, and His life is taken away.”

The official asked, “Was Isaiah talking about himself or someone else?” Isaiah was talking about the Messiah, so Philip began to tell the man the good news about Jesus, beginning with the words they had just read together.

As they traveled down the road, they came to some water. “What would keep me from being baptized?” the official asked.

Then the official told the chariot to stop. He and Philip went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water, the Holy Spirit took Philip away to another town, where he continued to travel and preach the gospel. The official went home, and he was very happy.

Christ Connection: The Holy Spirit led Philip to help the Ethiopian official understand the good news about Jesus: Jesus died on the cross for our sins and was raised from the dead, just like the Old Testament prophets said. ”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ Philip had followed Jesus and was one of His disciples. After Jesus went back to heaven, Philip joined the other disciples and was sent out to share the good news. One day, God sent Philip to a desert road between Jerusalem and Gaza. Philip obeyed and went to the road. Who told Philip to go to the chariot? [Allow responses.] The Holy Spirit led Philip to the Ethiopian’s chariot. Philip heard the man reading aloud from the book of Isaiah.

The Ethiopian man needed help understanding what he was reading. What did the man ask Philip? [Allow responses.] The Ethiopian official asked Philip who Isaiah was writing about in the Scripture he was reading. Philip told the man that it was about Jesus, and he shared the good news. The verses in Isaiah were written long before Jesus came to earth, but they were about Jesus coming to die on the cross for our sin. **Jesus became human to obey His Father’s plan and rescue sinners.**

After Philip shared the gospel and helped the Ethiopian man understand God’s Word, the Ethiopian man wanted to follow Jesus. Philip followed the command God has for all believers to go and share the good news with the world. How did the Ethiopian man show he trusted in Jesus? [Allow responses.] The Ethiopian man wanted to be baptized. Philip was faithful to make a disciple, baptize him, and teach him God’s Word.

We are called to go and share the gospel. As we go, God will lead us to people who need to hear the good news so they can believe in Jesus and be saved from their sins. ”

3 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY “ The Holy Spirit led Philip to help the Ethiopian official understand the good news about Jesus: Jesus died on the cross for our sins and was raised from the dead, just like the Old Testament prophets said. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 31, Session 4” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. What are the most important stories in the Bible to read?
2. How can you help others hear and understand the stories in the Bible?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Display the “Jones Family Photo” as you tell the kids about the missionary family in Germany.

SAY “ Amy Jones learned that God wanted Christians to tell people from every nation, tribe, people group, and language about Jesus when she was a preschooler. Long before Amy became a missionary in Germany, she began praying for people in Europe after her mother returned from a trip to England. Amy learned that very few Europeans believed in Jesus, so she prayed they would trust in Him. ”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

Tell kids that Casey and Amy Jones have worked with other missionaries from Germany, Egypt, Switzerland, India, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Brazil to tell the good news about Jesus to the German people. Remind kids that God desires His church to spread out to all parts of the world, including Germany. Pray that other missionaries will come to Germany to tell the people about Jesus and how He alone can save them from their sin.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Isaiah 53:5 together.

SAY “ Our key passage comes from the same the Ethiopian official was reading—Isaiah. It reminds us of the good news that Jesus came to save us from our sins. ”

Write the key passage on two dry erase boards but scramble some of the words. Form kids into two teams and invite a kid from each team to circle a word that is out of order. Lead the kids from their teams to say what the correct word is. Continue inviting different kids to circle words until every incorrect word is circled.

Lead kids to sing “By His Wounds (Isaiah 53:5).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

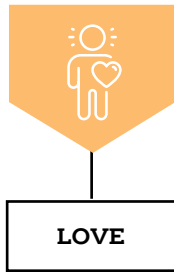
7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “ Thank You, Lord, for sending Jesus to rescue us from our sins. Help us share the good news, like Philip did, with those around us. In Jesus’ name, amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the New Testament Israel Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Acts 8. Remind kids that at the beginning of Acts, Jesus sent out His disciples to be His witnesses in the world. Discuss how Philip was obedient to that command.

Consider pointing out the location of Jerusalem and Gaza (I2) on the New Testament Israel Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Acts 8:36.

SAY “ The Lord led Philip right to the Ethiopian man so he could hear the good news about Jesus. Jesus came as the sacrifice for our sins, taking the punishment for sin on the cross, and then rising from the dead. After hearing this good news, the Ethiopian man wanted to follow Jesus and be baptized right away.

The good news of the gospel is for everyone! We can trust Jesus as our Savior and follow him. If you have not trusted Jesus as your Savior and would like to learn more, I would be happy to share more about Jesus with you. ”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

| **SAY** “ Why is Jesus’ death good news? ”

Remind kids that God loves us so much that He sent His only Son, Jesus, to die on the cross to take the punishment our sin deserves. Discuss how Jesus’ death is good news because it means we now can have forgiveness of our sin completely and forever. Invite kids to share this good news with others.

| **SAY** “ How can we follow God and listen to the Holy Spirit like Philip? ”

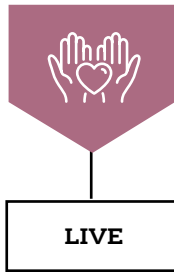
Explain that we follow God by reading the Bible and coming to church to learn more about God’s Word. Discuss how the Holy Spirit lives within believers when they trust in Jesus to help them know God’s Word and obey it. Remind kids that when we pray, we can also follow God and His Spirit as He speaks to us.

| **SAY** “ Who can you go to when you need help understanding God’s Word? ”

Remind kids that you are available to answer questions they may have or to explain something in the Bible they don’t understand. Discuss how other godly adults can help answer questions as well such as the kids ministry leader, parents, and other church leaders. Remind kids that they can also submit a question to Pastor Kevin at Questions from Kids.

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: FLAGS OF EUROPE



Distribute a “Flags of Europe” printable and markers to each kid. Direct kids to follow the patterns on each flag to color each flag correctly. Remind kids to use the key on the printable as a reference.

Discuss how many people come to Europe from all over the world for work, travel, and as refugees. Tell kids that almost 2,000 people groups are represented on the European continent. Discuss how these flags represent some of the countries with people who need to hear about Jesus. Emphasize that Jesus became human to obey His Father’s plan and rescue sinners.

SAY “ You can hang these flags in your home to help you remember to pray for the people in Europe. We can ask God to send more missionaries and be open to His call to share the gospel and start more churches. ”

OPTION 2: TRUE OR FALSE RUN



Gather kids in the center of the room. Designate one side of the room as the “true” side and another the “false” side. Challenge kids to listen closely as you call out a Bible true or false question from today’s story. If a kid thinks the answer is true, direct him to run to the true side. If he thinks it is false, direct him to run to the false side. Call out as many statements as time allows:

- God sent Philip to the Ethiopian man. (true)
- The Ethiopian man was reading from the book of Jonah. (false)
- Philip baptized the Ethiopian man. (true)
- The Holy Spirit led Peter to the Ethiopian man’s car. (false)
- Philip shared how the book of Isaiah was about the good news of Jesus. (true)

SAY “ As we read God’s Word, we come to know and understand what is true. **Jesus became human to obey His Father’s plan and rescue sinners.** ”

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask the kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids.

If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.



UNIT 31 | SESSION 5

JESUS SUFFERED FOR US

PHILIPPIANS 2

KEY PASSAGE:

Isaiah 53:5

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

Why did Jesus become human? Jesus became human to obey His Father's plan and rescue sinners.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

Jesus, the Son of God, humbled Himself by coming to earth as a man. Jesus never sinned, but He died on the cross to rescue people from their sins. Jesus rose from the dead and is alive! Everyone who trusts in Jesus has forgiveness and life with God forever.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION



LEADER Bible Study

In Philippians 2, the apostle Paul expounds upon Christ’s humility and its implications for how we live and interact with others. Though we may struggle with the paradox of His infinite power and meekness, Christ’s humility serves as the truest example for us to follow as we adopt His attitude so that the world may confess Jesus as Lord.

How does Christ’s humility encourage us to follow in His steps? How can we joyfully demonstrate Jesus’ sacrificial mindset?

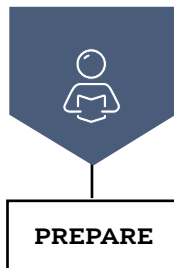
The sufferings of Jesus were rooted in humility as He sought not what was best for Himself, but rather what was for the good of sinful people. His obedience to deny Himself and seek the Father’s will demonstrates the same mindset we should have toward one another. The love Christ has shown us through His humble death exhorts us to show this same love to others, trusting that God will use our humble efforts to shine like stars in a dark world. As followers of Christ, we seek to emulate His self-sacrifice, trusting that God is glorified through it and that we, who are in Christ, will one day be exalted with Him. (1 Peter 5:6) Yet as Paul reminds us, we remember that it is God working in us to help us have the desire and the ability to conform more into the image of Christ. (Phil. 2:13)

While being willing to humbly put another’s needs above ours doesn’t come easy, we can look to Jesus who for the joy set before Him endured the cross—knowing that His sacrificial death would mean everlasting life for us. Though it may seem like rejoicing has no place in humble self-sacrifice, Paul wanted us to see that this fruit of the Spirit is ours for the taking when our eyes are set on Jesus.

Help your kids see that we can find encouragement in Christ’s story, just as the early church did. The reality of Jesus’ suffering helps us live humbly so that we can exalt His name and will above our own. Just as Christ did not begrudgingly take to the cross, so, too, are we to walk in obedient sacrifice, knowing that our hope is not in vain. He rescued us through His own suffering that we might find His strength amidst our lack. When we trust in Him, we find new life and the forgiveness we need.

DOCTRINE TO KNOW

Christ’s Humiliation: God the Son left His glorious state and came in the likeness of sinful flesh. He experienced a humiliating death on a cross to rescue sinners. (2 Cor. 5:21)



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- “Jesus Died for Us” activity page

Session Starter (Option 1)

- pole or broomstick
- music

Session Starter (Option 2)

- painter’s tape
- table tennis balls, 2
- straws, 1 per kid



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- countdown video

Big Picture Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- “Jesus Suffered for Us” video
- Bible Story Picture Poster

Questions from Kids

- “Unit 31, Session 5” questions from kids video

Missions Moment

- “Jones Family Photo” printable

Key Passage Activity

- Key Passage Poster
- “By His Wounds (Isaiah 53:5)” song
- worship song of your choice (optional)
- 2-inch by 6-inch cardstock strips, 1 per kid
- stickers (optional)



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

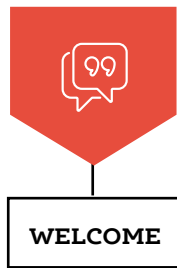
- blindfold
- wooden spoon
- cooking pot
- wrapped chocolate candy

Activity Choice (Option 2)

- plastic sandwich bags, 1 per kid
- pretzel sticks
- raisins or craisins
- round crackers
- fish-shaped crackers
- mini marshmallows
- paper towels, 1 per kid

Reflection and Prayer

- Bible Story Coloring Page (optional)



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

SAY “Have you ever made a mistake? What are some ways you tried to fix your mistake? Did anything work? Why or why not?”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Jesus Died for Us” on the activity page.

SAY “Today, we will see how Jesus came as a servant and obeyed God’s plan by dying on the cross. Because of Jesus, we can be forgiven and have life forever with God.”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: GET LOW



Play a game of limbo using a long pole or a broomstick. Play some music and direct kids to form a single file line. Lead kids to go under the pole, lowering it several inches after all the kids have gone under. Tell kids that they must go under the pole with their head back and without falling to their knees. Repeat sending kids under the pole and lowering it until only one kid remains.

SAY “Toward the end of this game you had to get very low to go under the pole. You couldn’t win the game by raising your self higher. Only lowering yourself would help you win. This reminds me of Jesus who chose to lower Himself to rescue us from sin. Even though He is God, He became a man to die on the cross. Let’s learn more about how Jesus suffered for us.”

OPTION 2: FOLLOW THE TRACK

Before the session, create two “tracks” on the floor using painter’s tape. Make the tracks about 3 inches wide and about 5 feet long. Be sure to add straight paths and curved paths to the track.

Form kids into two groups and provide each group with a table tennis ball. Distribute a straw to each kid. Explain that the straw will be used to propel the ball along the track as kids blow air through it. Challenge kids to take turns racing their ball down the track while trying to stay inside the lines. Tell kids that if their ball goes outside the lines, their turn is up and they must go to the back of the line. Continue until all kids have had a turn.

SAY “To complete this activity, you had to follow the track. But it was hard to stay on the track at all times. In today’s story, we will learn that even though we can’t follow God perfectly, Jesus did follow God’s plan perfectly. He took our punishment for sin. Let’s learn how Jesus’ sacrifice now makes a way for us to become like Jesus and follow God.”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “ Welcome, kids! My name is [your name], and I am so glad you’re here today! If you have your Bibles with you, will you take them out? [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.] Today, we will be in the book of Philippians. This book is in the New Testament. Let’s turn to this book together. [Assist kids in finding Philippians.]

Today, we will learn how Jesus suffered for us. We cannot remove our sin or do enough good deeds to take away our sin. So, Jesus came to serve us and give His life on the cross for our sin. ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

SAY “ Our big picture question is, **why did Jesus become human?** Do you remember the answer we’ve been learning? [Allow responses.] **Jesus became human to obey His Father’s plan and rescue sinners.** Let’s say it again together: **Jesus became human to obey His Father’s plan and rescue sinners.**

Jesus is God. But He chose to leave heaven and become a man to rescue us from sin. He never sinned but took our place on the cross so we can be saved from sin. He suffered in our place and rose again so we could live with Him forever. We can give praise to God for how Jesus obeyed His Father and rescues us. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “ Before Jesus went back to heaven, He told His followers to go into all the world and share the good news that He had come to save sinners. The apostles and other believers obeyed this command, and through the power of the Holy Spirit, the church began to grow—even when faced with hard times. Like the early church, we are also commanded to share the good news of Jesus with others. Today, our Bible story reminds us of why Jesus came to earth and why the gospel is such good news for every person. ”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Philippians 2. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Jesus Suffered for Us.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

JESUS SUFFERED FOR US

“**Paul, a follower of Jesus, was living as a prisoner in Rome.** The Jewish people had tried to kill him because he believed and taught that Jesus had risen from the dead.

While Paul was waiting to meet with the emperor of Rome, other believers visited Paul or sent him gifts. **The Christians in Philippi sent a gift to Paul, and he wrote them a letter to thank them. Paul told them to be humble like Jesus and to love one another, working together and taking care of one another because Jesus suffered for us.**

Paul wrote, “Adopt the same attitude as that of Christ Jesus. Jesus is God, but He set aside His rights and honor to come to earth as a man. He came as a servant and obeyed God’s plan by dying on a cross.

“This is why God highly exalted Him and gave Him the name that is above every name so that out of honor for Jesus, everyone in heaven and on earth and under the earth will bow down to Him. And every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. This brings glory to God the Father.”

Jesus suffered and died for us, and He rose from the dead and is alive! Because of Jesus, we must follow and obey God. **God is at work in us, changing us to be like Jesus. Paul wrote, “Do everything without grumbling and arguing so that you may be blameless and pure, children of God who are faultless in a world full of wickedness. In this way, you will shine like stars in the world.”**

Christ Connection: Jesus, the Son of God, humbled Himself by coming to earth as a man. Jesus never sinned, but He died on the cross to rescue people from their sins. Jesus rose from the dead and is alive! Everyone who trusts in Jesus has forgiveness and life with God forever. ”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Create a letter: Use brown paper or a brown paper grocery bag to make a Bible times letter. Use it as a prop as you tell the Bible story.

Demonstrate it: Get low to demonstrate humility or being humble. Stand tall and proud to demonstrate exalted.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ Why did Jesus become a man and come to earth? [Allow responses.] Jesus is God, but He left His throne in heaven to come to earth and live as a man. **Jesus became human to obey His Father’s plan and rescue sinners.** He was obedient to God even when it meant He would suffer and die on the cross. Anyone who trusts in Jesus will be forgiven of all their sins and get to spend forever with God in heaven.

When He became a human, Jesus made Himself low, like a servant. He was obedient to His Father’s plan to rescue sinners. The Bible tells us that God exalted Jesus because of His perfect obedience. What does exalt mean? [Allow responses.] God raised Jesus above every name on heaven and earth. Jesus will be worshiped and praised forever. Everyone will one day confess that Jesus is Lord.

When we trust Jesus as our Savior, we receive forgiveness of sins and life with Him forever. Those who are saved are given the Holy Spirit. Who does the Holy Spirit help us become more like? [Allow responses.] The Holy Spirit helps us become more like Jesus. As we follow Jesus, we become like a light shining in the darkness. We show others what Jesus is like by the way we treat others, how we trust the Lord, and by sharing the gospel. ”

3 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY “ Jesus, the Son of God, humbled Himself by coming to earth as a man. Jesus never sinned, but He died on the cross to rescue people from their sins. Jesus rose from the dead and is alive! Everyone who trusts in Jesus has forgiveness and life with God forever. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 31, Session 5” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. Who was Jesus before He became a man? Why did Jesus become a man?
2. How can you follow the example of Jesus and serve others?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Display the “Jones Family Photo” as you tell the kids about the missionaries.

SAY “ The Jones family has served as missionaries in Leipzig, Germany, for over four years. Casey Jones encourages anyone interested in going on a mission trip to consider coming to Germany. Leipzig has a university where teens and young adults have opportunities to meet people their age and tell them about Jesus. Kids can also be involved in missions through kid-friendly events hosted by their church at a local park. These events help the people of the church get to know their neighbors and provide an opportunity to invite their neighbors to church. ”

Explain that another way we can help the Joneses in their ministry is to give to the Lottie



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

Moon Christmas Offering® for International Missions. Tell kids that these offerings go to support missionaries and help them share the gospel with others. Remind kids that we can also support Casey, Amy, and other missionaries through prayer. Close in prayer, asking God to strengthen the Jones family as they share Jesus with the people in Germany.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Isaiah 53:5 together.

SAY “ Jesus came to rescue people from their sins. Anyone who trusts in Jesus receives forgiveness of sins and will spend forever with God. ”

Lead kids to create a bookmark using a 2-by-6-inch piece of cardstock. Lead kids to copy the verse on the cardstock and decorate it with stickers and markers. Consider laminating the cardstock to make the bookmarks more durable.

Lead kids to sing “By His Wounds (Isaiah 53:5).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

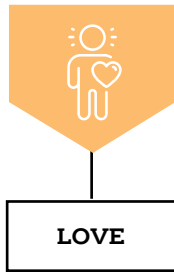
7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “ Thank You, God for sending Your Son, Jesus, to die for our sins. Thank You that, through Jesus, we can have forgiveness and spend forever with You. In Jesus’ name, amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the New Testament Mediterranean Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Philippians 2. Explain that the book of Philippians is a letter the apostle Paul wrote to a church in the city of Philippi. Tell kids some of Paul's other letters in the New Testament include Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, and 1 and 2 Timothy.

Consider pointing out the location of Philippi (C5) on the New Testament Israel Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Philippians 2:14.

SAY “ The Bible tells us that anyone who follows Jesus shines like a light in a dark world. That means we should live differently than those who do not follow Jesus. One way we can live like Jesus is to obey without grumbling or complaining. We follow Jesus joyfully because we love Him and want others to know Him. We can happily put others first and model Jesus’ love for them. ”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY “ What makes Jesus different than any other man who lived on earth? ”

Remind kids that **Jesus became human to obey His Father’s plan and rescue sinners**. Tell kids that Jesus faced every temptation to sin, just like we do. But unlike us, Jesus never sinned. He lived a perfect life without sin, which allowed Him to be the perfect sacrifice for our sins.

SAY “ Why did Jesus make Himself low? ”

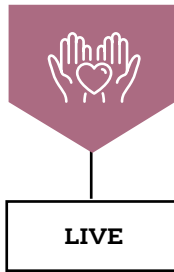
Prompt kids to remember that Jesus is God. Remind kids that even though Jesus is God, He chose to lay down His rights and honor to become a man. Help kids understand that He did this to rescue us from sin. Remind kids that we need a Savior because we cannot save ourselves. Encourage kids to thank Jesus for coming to rescue us from sin.

SAY “ Jesus served us by laying down His life on the cross. How can we serve others and take care of one another? ”

Answers will vary. Discuss how Jesus is our example of how we should serve and love one another. Remind kids that our hearts are transformed to be more like Jesus when we trust in Him. Prompt kids to think about practical ways they can serve their families, schools, friends, and church. For example, kids can choose to wash the dishes at home or pass out paper for their teacher.

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: HIT THE POT



Tell kids that in Germany, a common kid's birthday party game is called Topfschlagen (Tohpf-SHLAH-gehn), translated "Hit the Pot." Blindfold a volunteer and give him a wooden spoon. Place a cooking pot somewhere in the room, flipped over with wrapped chocolate candy underneath. Tell the kid that he must crawl around the room while tapping his spoon on the floor, trying to locate the pot. Explain that once he finds the pot, he can take off his blindfold and turn the pot over to uncover the gift.

Continue playing until each kid has had a turn to locate the pot. For larger groups, consider placing two pots around the room and allowing two kids to locate a pot at the same time.

SAY “ The best gift we can ever receive is the gift of eternal life through faith in Jesus. Let's pray for the people of Germany to hear and believe in the good news of Jesus. ”

OPTION 2: EASTER TRAIL MIX



Invite kids to sit around tables and distribute a paper towel and sandwich bag to each kid. Lead kids to make Easter trail mix that helps tell the story of Jesus dying on the cross for our sin. Distribute each food item one at a time and explain what each represents.

First, pass out pretzel sticks and share how the pretzel sticks can be used to make a cross and remind us of Jesus paying for our sins. Next, distribute raisins or craisins which remind us of Jesus' blood. Then distribute round crackers to remind us of the stone that was rolled away when Jesus rose. Distribute fish crackers which remind us that we should go and tell others about Jesus and be "fishers of men." Finally, distribute mini marshmallows to remind us that our sins are forgiven because of Jesus. Invite kids to create a bag to take home.

SAY “ Jesus died on the cross to rescue people from their sins. I hope that you will take this Easter Trail Mix home and use it to share the good news with someone today. ”

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask the kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids.

If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.



UNIT 32 | SESSION 1

PETER PERFORMED MIRACLES

ACTS 9

KEY PASSAGE:

1 Corinthians 12:12

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

What is the church? The church is all Christians everywhere, who gather together in their communities to worship and serve God.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

When the Holy Spirit gave Peter power to perform miracles, people saw what happened and believed in Jesus. These miracles remind us of Jesus' miracles, which proved He is the Son of God who came to bring salvation to the world.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION



LEADER Bible Study

Peter’s miracles in Acts 9 showcase the power of the Holy Spirit at work within the early church. Though the people who witnessed and heard of these healings and resurrections were amazed and intrigued, Peter did not perform them to wow the crowd or to even illustrate his own strength. Rather, he met people’s needs as a means of demonstrating God’s power at work, that more may come to saving faith in Jesus and truly believe Him to be Messiah and Lord.

What was the significance of the restoration of Aeneas and the revival of Dorcas? What did these events reveal about Christ’s saving power through the faith of Peter?

Both instances of Peter’s miraculous acts were evidence of Christ’s power to heal despite the impossible circumstances. While Christ’s power through Peter brought physical healing to the man in Lydda, it also brought spiritual healing to the people in Lydda and Sharon as they turned to the Lord. Similarly, Dorcas’ resurrection was used by God to draw many people to faith in Christ—the One who holds power over the grave.

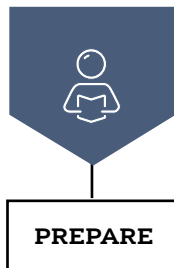
These miracles performed by Peter point to the reality of Jesus’ power and to the proof that He is still alive within His followers. The usual patterns of sickness and death were

not the final endings for Aeneas and Dorcas; rather, they were the work of the Lord’s restoration and redemption—pointing to the reality that everlasting life is ours through the power of Jesus. And through these events, we are encouraged to remember the hope we have in Christ, who is making all things new.

As you lead your kids this week, remember that you, too, get to share the good news of hope and healing to the next generation of young disciples. Just as Peter “called the saints and widows and presented [Dorcas] alive,” so, too, are you proclaiming the gift of everlasting life you have in Jesus.

PEOPLE TO KNOW

Dorcas: a Christian woman of Joppa who was known for her charitable works (Acts 9:36). She was also called Tabitha, an Aramaic name.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- “Who Has the Power?” activity page

Session Starter (Option 1)

- AAA battery
- AA battery
- C battery
- D battery
- 9-Volt battery

Session Starter (Option 2)

- backpacks, 3
- books, 16



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- countdown video

Big Picture Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- “Peter Performed Miracles” video
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- New Testament Israel Map (optional)

Questions from Kids

- “Unit 32, Session 1” questions from kids video

Missions Moment

- map of the United States
- “Send South Florida” missions video

Key Passage Activity

- Key Passage Poster
- “Many Parts (1 Corinthians 12:12)” song
- worship song of your choice (optional)
- dry erase board
- dry erase marker



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- brown paper bags, 1 per kid
- “Alligator Face” printable, 1 per kid
- red, white, and green construction papers, 1 per kid

Activity Choice (Option 2)

- Big Picture Question Poster

Reflection and Prayer

- Bible Story Coloring Page (optional)



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

| **SAY** “ When have you seen something amazing? What was it? Why were you so amazed? ”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Who Has the Power?” on the activity page.

| **SAY** “ The answer you decoded was the Holy Spirit. Today, we will learn how the Holy Spirit gave Peter power to perform miracles. ”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: BATTERY POWER



Before the session, gather AAA, AA, C, D, and 9-Volt batteries. Display the batteries on a table, in any order, and direct kids to look at the batteries, observing their differences. Prompt kids to think about which battery they think has more power.

Hold up each battery one at a time and lead kids to raise their hand when the battery they think has the most power is raised. Then reveal the order of the battery power from the least to the most: AAA, AA, C, D, and 9-Volt. Consider asking kids what types of tools or objects these batteries can power such as a flashlight and remote control car.

| **SAY** “ Each battery has power and is used to give power to different types of devices like flashlights, toys, and calculators. But the 9-Volt battery has the most power. Yet, even a battery’s power is nothing compared to the power of God. Today, we will learn how Peter displayed the power of the Holy Spirit as he performed miracles. ”

OPTION 2: CAN YOU LIFT IT?

Before the session, gather three backpacks and fill the first one with three books, the second one with five books, and the last one with eight books. Place the backpacks at the front of the room.

Invite three kids at a time to lift up each backpack. Make sure they try to lift up each one. Continue inviting kids in groups of threes to lift up the backpacks until everyone has had a turn.

| **SAY** “ These backpacks were heavy! It required a lot of power to lift them. Could you imagine trying to carry these backpacks around all day? It would be hard! We are not all-powerful and are limited in what we can do. But God isn’t. He holds all power! Today, we will learn how God gave Peter power through His Spirit to perform miracles. Let’s get ready to learn more. ”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “ Hi, everyone! My name is [your name]. I’m so glad you’re here with us today. Did anyone bring their Bible? Hold up your Bible if you brought yours. [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.]

Today, we will learn how Peter performed miracles. We’ll see how it wasn’t Peter who had power, but God’s Spirit who gave Peter power. Let’s hear how the miracles Peter performed helped more people trust in Jesus. ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

SAY “ Our big picture question for today and the next few weeks is, **What is the church?** Have you ever heard someone say, ‘We are going to church?’ [Allow responses.] When we go to church the building is where the people of God, the church, meet to worship together! But a building is not the church. So, **what is the church?** The answer we will learn is, **The church is all Christians everywhere, who gather together in their communities to worship and serve God.** Let’s repeat that together: **The church is all Christians everywhere, who gather together in their communities to worship and serve God.** ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “ Jesus promised that He would send the Holy Spirit to help His followers share the gospel throughout the world. After the Holy Spirit came, the apostles and other believers boldly shared the good news through the Spirit’s power. The early church grew, even when they faced hard times. The church first began in Jerusalem, grew into Judea, and was about to expand into Samaria and toward the ends of the earth. Today, we will learn how the Holy Spirit gave Peter power to perform miracles so that more people could be united to Jesus’ church. ”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Acts 9. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Peter Performed Miracles.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

PETER PERFORMED MIRACLES

“ Peter had become a leader in the early church. Through the Holy Spirit, God’s power enabled him and Jesus’ other apostles to heal people and to speak boldly about Jesus the Messiah. During this time, the church throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and was strengthened. Jesus’ followers honored God, and the Holy Spirit encouraged them. More people joined the church.

Peter was traveling from place to place. He visited the Christians living in a town called Lydda (LID uh). In that town was a man named Aeneas (ih NEE uhs). Aeneas was paralyzed and had been bedridden for eight years. Peter said to Aeneas, “Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you. Get up and make your bed,” and immediately Aeneas got up. When this happened, many people saw that Aeneas was healed and turned to the Lord.

In the city of Joppa (JAHP uh), there was a follower of Jesus named Tabitha; she was also known as Dorcas. She was always doing good works—helping people in need and making clothes for widows. Over time, Dorcas got sick and died. The disciples in Joppa sent two men to Lydda to get Peter.

Peter went to Joppa. He went upstairs in the house where Dorcas’ body lay. Peter sent Dorcas’ friends out of the room and knelt down beside her body. Peter prayed and then said, “Tabitha, get up.”

She opened her eyes, saw Peter, and sat up. Peter called for the disciples and friends, and they saw that Dorcas was alive! This miracle became known throughout Joppa, and many believed in the Lord.

Christ Connection: When the Holy Spirit gave Peter power to perform miracles, people saw what happened and believed in Jesus. These miracles remind us of Jesus’ miracles, which proved He is the Son of God who came to bring salvation to the world. ”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Clap aloud: Lead kids to clap when they hear people believe in Jesus.

Point to a map: Use the New Testament Israel Map to point out Lydda (G3) and Joppa (G2) as you teach about them in the story.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ God used Peter in His plan to build His church. As Peter and the other disciples shared the good news, the church grew and had spread out to different parts of Judea and Samaria. Jesus promised that His church would grow into all parts of the world. In our story today, Peter visited churches in Lydda and Joppa.

Who were the two Christians Peter healed through the Spirit’s power? [Allow responses.] Through the power of the Holy Spirit, Peter healed a paralyzed man named Aeneas and raised Dorcas back to life. These miracles helped prove the gospel. Jesus really does have the power to heal and to save!

What happened in the towns because Peter performed these miracles? [Allow responses.] The power of the Holy Spirit not only healed people but changed their hearts to trust in Jesus. Many people turned to the Lord and were saved from their sin. We can be saved from our sin when we confess our sin and trust in Jesus. ”

3 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY “ When the Holy Spirit gave Peter power to perform miracles, people saw what happened and believed in Jesus. These miracles remind us of Jesus’ miracles, which proved He is the Son of God who came to bring salvation to the world. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 32, Session 1” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. Will we be sad in heaven if our family is not there yet? Why not?
2. Why can we always have hope even if we die?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Display a map of the United States as you tell the kids about Florida.

SAY “ Florida is a state in the southeastern part of the US. Its nickname is ‘The Sunshine State.’ The shape of Florida is called a peninsula, which means it is almost surrounded by water. Florida has many beautiful beaches and even includes a chain of islands called the Florida Keys. Many people come to Florida for the beaches and the many outdoor attractions including theme parks, golf, and nature preserves. ”

Play the missions video. Tell kids that the North American Mission Board (NAMB) works with many missionaries and church planters to tell the people of South Florida about Jesus. Explain that one out of five people in Florida were born in another country. Share how this means many people do not speak English. Tell kids that one of the best ways to love non-English speaking neighbors is through local churches teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) classes. People working with ESL ministries want to tell others about Jesus as they help



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

people learn to speak English. Close in prayer, thanking God for the ESL ministries that help people learn English and about Jesus' love for them.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud 1 Corinthians 12:12 together.

SAY “ The Bible describes the church as a body. The church is made of many Christians just like a body is made of many parts. The church is Jesus' body here on earth. ”

Write the key passage on a dry erase board. Lead kids to say the key passage aloud two times. After the second time, erase two words. Then recite the key passage again. Repeat until the verse is completely erased.

Lead kids to sing “Many Parts (1 Corinthians 12:12).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

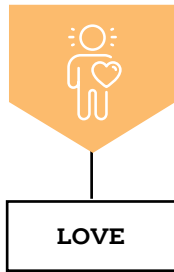
7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “ Thank You, Lord, that You have given us the Holy Spirit. You are our Healer and Savior. By the power of Your Spirit, help us share the good news of the gospel with others. Amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the New Testament Israel Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Acts 9. Remind kids that the Bible is made of 66 books. Invite kids to name as many of the 27 New Testament books as they can.

Consider pointing out the location of Joppa (G2) and Lydda (G3) on the New Testament Israel Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Acts 9:39-40.

SAY “ Before Peter raised Dorcas from the dead, he prayed. Peter recognized that he needed God. He also might have prayed to ask God for direction as to what God wanted to do about Dorcas’ death. Peter had no power without God, and he needed God to perform the miracle.

When we seek God in prayer, we show that we need and trust God. Only God has the power to heal and to save. We can ask Him to help us and give us direction in our lives as we live to honor Him. ”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

| **SAY** “ What do Peter’s miracles remind you of? ”

Prompt kids to remember Jesus’ miracles that He performed when He was on earth. Tell kids that like Jesus, Peter was able to demonstrate God’s power over sickness and death. Remind kids that Peter’s power didn’t come from himself but from the Holy Spirit who dwelt within him.

| **SAY** “ Why do you think people trusted in Jesus after Peter performed these miracles? ”

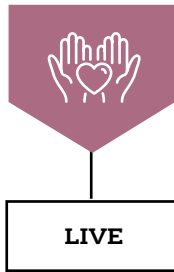
Answers will vary. Discuss how the miracles of healing and raising someone from the dead help show that the truth of the gospel is real. Explain how the message of the gospel teaches us that God has power over sin and death. Tell kids that just as the Holy Spirit gave Peter power to perform the miracles, He also worked in people’s hearts to help them believe.

| **SAY** “ How can these stories help you trust God? ”

Answers will vary. Encourage kids to remember that all of the stories of the Bible are true. Remind kids that these stories point to an even greater display of God’s power through Jesus, who lived a perfect life, died in our place, and rose from the dead. Invite kids to ask questions or initiate an invitation to learn more about how they can trust in Jesus as Savior.

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: ALLIGATOR PUPPET



Provide each kid with a brown paper bag; “Alligator Face” printable; red, white, and green construction paper; scissors; glue; and markers. Lead kids to make an alligator puppet by following these instructions: Cut out the alligator face from the printable. Turn the paper bag so the bottom flap is facing upward, and glue the face to the flap. Cut a tongue from red construction paper and triangle teeth from white construction paper. Lift the flap and glue the tongue and teeth to the paper bag. Then cut a tail from green construction paper, and glue it to the back of the bag.

SAY “ Alligators are a common reptile in Florida. The Everglades, a National Park in South Florida, is home to over 200,000 alligators. As you play with your alligator puppets, remember to pray that the people of South Florida will hear the gospel and trust in Jesus. ”

OPTION 2: CHURCH TOUR



Before the session, plan a tour of your church building to help kids see all the different places available to serve. Consider visiting such areas as the church office, nursery, middle and high school rooms, the doors where people greet, and even those in the church kitchen.

Point to the Big Picture Question Poster and read it aloud. Remind kids that **the church is all Christians everywhere, who gather together in their communities to worship and serve God.** Invite kids on a tour of the church and encourage them to observe all the people serving in different ways.

SAY “ The church has many members and every person has a way to serve others. Whenever we gather together, we love each other by how we serve one another. It takes everyone working together to help the church grow and share the gospel. ”

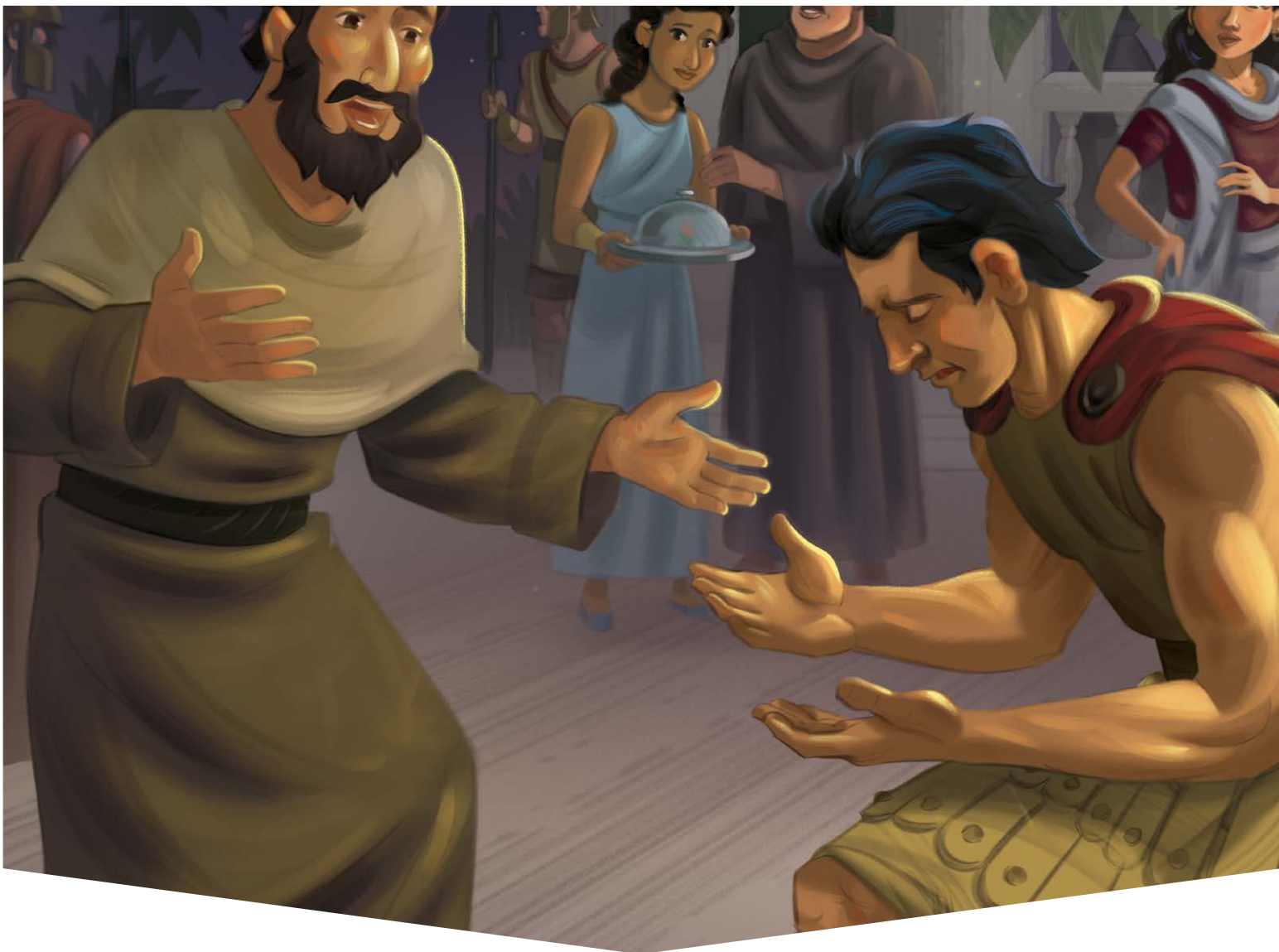
2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask the kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids.

If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.



UNIT 32 | SESSION 2

PETER LEARNED THAT JESUS IS FOR ALL

ACTS 10

KEY PASSAGE:

1 Corinthians 12:12

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

What is the church? The church is all Christians everywhere, who gather together in their communities to worship and serve God.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

God showed Peter that just as there is no “clean” and “unclean” food in Christ, there are no “clean” and “unclean” people. God calls believers to tell everyone the good news about Jesus, no matter who they are or where they come from. Jesus is the Lord of all.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION



LEADER Bible Study

The story of Peter’s revelation in Acts 10 reveals a core tenet in the gospel of Jesus Christ: God saves all who come to faith in His Son, regardless of their past, cultural differences, or their upbringing. The gospel is for all people, and it took Peter—just as it will require us today—great humility to see that God shows no favoritism. The ones whom God calls clean are clean; the ones He brings into His family are in His family forever.

What did these visions reveal to both Cornelius and Peter? How did these animals in the vision correlate to a deeper truth about God’s gift of salvation and invitation for all?

God prepared both Cornelius and Peter for the invitation that would change the makeup of Jesus’ church forever. Cornelius, a God-fearing Gentile centurion, was not welcome within Jewish social circles nor was he accepted in any way as clean according to Jewish beliefs. Even still, God used him to open Peter’s eyes to the reality that the gospel builds bridges between people groups rather than divide them even further.

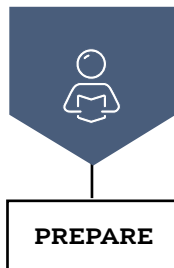
Peter’s vision seemed to be much less direct than Cornelius; yet God was patiently repetitive in instilling the greater message that the ones whom He purifies through faith are brought into the family of God—with no stipulations due to custom or culture.

This revelation was contrary to the Jewish traditions and defied favoritism, which later caused tension within the early church. (Acts 11:1-18) Still, as Peter preached the good news and declared that Jesus is Lord of all, the Holy Spirit fell on all who believed the gospel—confirming God’s desire to save anyone who trusts in Jesus.

Explain to your kids that the good news of Jesus Christ is for all people, and we are all called to faithfully invite others to believe the good news of Jesus Christ. May this reality be as true in our churches and social circles today as it was in Cornelius’ home all those centuries ago.

PEOPLE TO KNOW

Cornelius: a centurion in the Roman army who lived in Caesarea (Acts 10:1). He was a Gentile who worshiped the one true God and treated the Jewish people with kindness and generosity.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- “All Kinds of Animals” activity page

Session Starter (Option 2)

- toy animals, 1 less than the total number of kids
- bedsheet



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- countdown video

Big Picture Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- “Peter Learned That Jesus Is for All” video
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- bedsheet (optional)
- toy animals (optional)

Questions from Kids

- “Unit 32, Session 2” questions from kids video

Missions Moment

- “Gospel City Church” missions video

Key Passage Activity

- Key Passage Poster
- “Many Parts (1 Corinthians 12:12)” song
- worship song of your choice (optional)
- sticky notes



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- “Popcorn Box Template” printable
- wrapped, unpopped package of microwave popcorn, 1 per kid (optional)

Activity Choice (Option 2)

- dry erase board

Reflection and Prayer

- Bible Story Coloring Page (optional)



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

| **SAY** “ What is your favorite thing to eat? What is something you do not like to eat? ”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “All Kinds of Animals” on the activity page.

| **SAY** “ Were you able to find all the animals? Today, we’re going to learn about a vision Peter had with all kinds of animals. Let’s get ready to learn what Peter’s vision meant. ”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: ANIMAL SOUNDS



Invite kids to sit in a circle. Lead kids to go through the letters of the alphabet by making an animal sound that starts with that letter. For example, for the letter “A” a kid could simulate the sound of an alligator by clapping their hands together. Or for the letter “B,” a kid could growl like a bear. Invite the other kids to guess the animal for each sound. Be sure to offer help to kids stuck on a letter. Consider skipping the letters X and Y.

| **SAY** “ Those were some fantastic animal sounds! God has made so many amazing animals. Long ago, God said that some animals were unclean for His people to eat. In our story today, we will hear how God told Peter that all animals were made clean. Let’s get ready to learn how Jesus makes all things clean. ”

OPTION 2: RACE TO WIN

Lay a bedsheet in the center of the room and place toy animals on it, making sure there is one less animal than the total number of kids. Invite kids to circle around the bedsheet. Tell kids that when you say “Go,” they will race to grab an animal and stand back in the circle. Explain that whoever does not get an animal is out. Play additional rounds, being sure to remove one animal each round.

| **SAY** “ Seeing all these animals on the sheet reminds me of our Bible story. We will learn how Peter had a vision from God of all kinds of animals on a sheet. Let’s get ready to learn why God gave Peter this vision and how it is good news for all people. ”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “ Hi, my name is [your name]. I am so glad you are here today! Today, we will hear a story from the Bible with some amazing news: Jesus is for all people. If you brought your Bible, hold it up as high as you can. [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.]

God speaks to us through His Bible and gave us His Word so we can know Him. We are able to understand who God is and what He has done through the Bible. Today, God helped Peter understand more about what He had done through His Son, Jesus. As we hear our story, we’ll see that Peter learned that Jesus is for all. ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

SAY “ Last time, we learned our new big picture question. Does anyone remember it? [Allow responses.] Our big picture question is, **What is the church?** Can you repeat the answer after me: **The church is all Christians everywhere, who gather together in their communities to worship and serve God.** [Guide kids in repeating the answer, breaking it into segments if needed.]

It doesn’t matter where someone lives or what language a person speaks—all people are invited to trust in Jesus and become a part of His church. In our story today, we will learn how the church continued to grow through Peter’s ministry and that the good news of Jesus is for everyone! ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “ We have been learning how the church grew and spread out into Judea and Samaria. As the church grew, Peter and the apostles also traveled to different cities. A few weeks ago, we learned that Philip was led by the Holy Spirit to an Ethiopian man who trusted in Jesus and was baptized. Then last week, we saw how Peter traveled to Lydda and Joppa and healed Aeneas and Tabitha. Through Peter’s miracles, people trusted in the Lord and were saved. Today, we will learn how the church continued to grow and how anyone, no matter who they are or where they’re from, can be saved by Jesus. ”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Acts 10. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Peter Learned That Jesus Is for All.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

PETER LEARNED THAT JESUS IS FOR ALL

“**Cornelius was an officer in the Roman army who lived in Caesarea (sesh uh REE uh).** He and everyone in his house worshiped God. **Cornelius helped other people, and he always prayed to God. One afternoon, Cornelius saw an angel of God in a vision which frightened him.**

The angel said to him, “God has heard your prayers, and He has seen how you help others.” Then the angel told Cornelius to send for a man named Peter, who was in the city of Joppa. So Cornelius sent two of his servants and one soldier to Joppa.

The next day, as the servants and the soldier were nearing the city, Peter went up on the roof of the house to pray. Peter saw a vision of something like a large sheet coming down from heaven. In the sheet were all kinds of animals, reptiles, and birds. A voice said to him, “Get up, Peter; kill and eat!”

“No, Lord!” Peter said. “I have never eaten anything that is unclean or used for sacrifices.”

Again, a voice said to him, “God has made these clean. Do not call them unclean.” This happened three times, and then the whole thing was taken up into heaven. Peter tried to understand what the vision meant.

Then Cornelius’ men arrived at the gate. They explained that Cornelius had seen a vision, and an angel instructed him to send for Peter. So the next day, Peter went with the men to Caesarea.

When Peter got to Cornelius’ house, he explained to Cornelius that God does not consider some people to be better than others. God had sent good news to the Israelites: Jesus is Lord of all. After Jesus was killed, God raised Him from the dead on the third day, and Jesus appeared to many people. Jesus told His followers to tell others about Him. **Peter said, “Everyone who believes in Jesus will have their sins forgiven.”**

As Peter said this, the Holy Spirit came down on those who heard the message—not just the Jews, but the Gentiles, or non-Jews, too. The Jewish believers were amazed.

Cornelius, his friends, and his relatives were baptized in the name of Jesus, and Peter stayed with them for a few days.

Christ Connection: God showed Peter that just as there is no “clean” and “unclean”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Provide a visual: Lay out a bedsheet with toy animals on it while telling the story.

Act it out: Perform the actions of Peter as you tell the story.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

food in Christ, there are no “clean” and “unclean” people. God calls believers to tell everyone the good news about Jesus, no matter who they are or where they come from. Jesus is the Lord of all. ”

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ God wants all people to know Him. Even though Cornelius was not Jewish—he was a Gentile—God wanted Cornelius to know Him and trust in Jesus. God gave Peter a vision to help him understand an important truth. What did Peter see in his vision? **[Allow responses.]** Peter saw a large sheet coming down from heaven, lowered by its four corners and filled with all kinds of animals. God commanded Peter to kill and eat the animals, but Peter refused. Then God told Peter how He has made all animals clean.

What did Peter’s vision mean? **[Allow responses.]** Peter understood that salvation in Jesus is offered to all people, everywhere—not just to one group of people. Even though Cornelius was not Jewish, Jesus had come to save him too. Jesus is Lord of all—anyone can trust in Jesus and be saved from their sin. This is good news for all people!

The Holy Spirit came down on all who heard the gospel and believed in Cornelius’ household. They began speaking in other languages and proclaiming God’s greatness, just like the apostles did when the Holy Spirit first came on them. How did Cornelius and his household show they had trusted in Jesus? **[Allow responses.]** Cornelius and his household were baptized.

It doesn’t matter where anyone is from, what language they speak, what they look like, or what their family is like. Jesus came to offer salvation to all people. All people need to hear the good news so they have an opportunity to trust in Jesus and be saved from their sins. ”

3 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY “ God showed Peter that just as there is no “clean” and “unclean” food in Christ, there are no “clean” and “unclean” people. God calls believers to tell everyone the good news about Jesus, no matter who they are or where they come from. Jesus is the Lord of all. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 32, Session 2” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. Why were some foods in the Bible called “unclean”?
2. How can you pray for all people to know and believe in Jesus?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

SAY “ In September 2022, a new church called Gospel City Church launched in Boynton Beach, Florida. The church meets in a movie theater. The first regular worship service included 77 people, and now the church averages over 100 people. ”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

Play the missions video. Tell kids that missions is important to Gospel City Church. Share how they encourage kids to take part in missions: Kids might write notes of encouragement to widows or make crafts for those who are sick. They also collected shoe boxes filled with gifts for kids in other parts of the world. Remind kids that Jesus is Lord of all and wants all people, no matter where they're from, to trust in Him. Pray that as the church continues to share the gospel, many people will come to hear and trust in Jesus as their Savior.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Before the session, write one or two words of the key passage on sticky notes. Create enough sticky notes for each kid. Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud 1 Corinthians 12:12 together.

SAY “ Jesus loves all people and His church is made of all different people. Everyone has an important job to serve others and honor God. ”

Invite a kid to select a sticky note with a word or two of the key passage. Lead him to place his sticky note on the correct spot on the key passage poster. Continue inviting kids to choose a sticky note and place it on the key passage poster.

Lead kids to sing “Many Parts (1 Corinthians 12:12).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

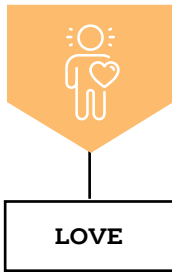
7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “ Thank You, Lord, that Your plan for salvation includes all people, both Jews and non-Jews. Please help us share the truth of your gospel with others. In Jesus’ name, amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the New Testament Israel Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Acts 10. Tell kids that the book of Acts begins with Jesus going back to heaven and ends with the gospel being taken all the way to Rome. Remind kids that Jesus promised His gospel would go throughout the world. Tell kids that as the gospel reached more places, both Jews and Gentiles had an opportunity to hear the good news.

Consider pointing out the location of Joppa (G2) and Caesarea (E3) on the New Testament Israel Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Acts 10:43.

SAY “ When Peter went to Cornelius’ house, he preached the gospel. Salvation is made available when people share the good news of Jesus. Even though Cornelius was a God-fearing man and prayed to God, he still needed to hear the gospel and believe. Peter told Cornelius that all the prophets from long ago wrote how anyone can hear the good news of Jesus and trust in Him for the forgiveness of their sins. ”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY “ How did today’s story teach us that Jesus loves everyone? ”

Prompt kids to remember that Jesus does not love one group of people more than another because He died for all people. Discuss how Jesus’ death on the cross forgives the sins of anyone who believes in Him. Help kids understand that because Jesus does not show favoritism, we shouldn’t either.

SAY “ Is it OK that everyone is different? Why? ”

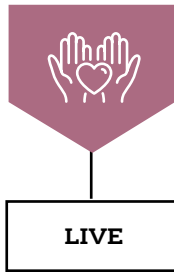
Discuss how God made all people unique and has given us all certain characteristics. Remind kids that all people are made in the image of God and that He loves them. Point out that having differences allows us to serve and love others in unique ways. Discuss how the church is made of many different people.

SAY “ How can we love others who are different from us? ”

Remind kids that because God loves all people, we are called to love all people. Tell kids that the best way to love others is to share Jesus with them. Explain that we can also serve people to show that we love them such as helping a kid at school with homework or being kind to a new kid at school.

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: POPPING PRAYERS



Remind kids that Gospel City Church meets in a movie theater. Provide each kid with a “Popcorn Box Template” printable. Lead kids to cut out the box on the solid lines. Once kids have cut out the box, direct kids to fold the box on the dotted lines. Secure the bottom of the box using tape. Invite kids to write a short prayer for Gospel City Church on their box. Consider providing each kid with a wrapped, unpopped package of microwave popcorn. Point out that the box may be too small to hold a lot of popcorn but can be used as a reminder to pray for the people of Gospel City Church as they share the gospel.

SAY “ Share your popcorn box with your friends and family. Perhaps the next time you watch a movie or eat popcorn, you can pray for Gospel City Church as the church shares Jesus with the people of South Florida. We can ask God that He will save people from every tongue, nation, and tribe. ”

OPTION 2: SAME VS. DIFFERENT



As a group, discuss ways kids are the same and different. Ask broad questions that everyone can answer “yes” or “no” to. Create two categories on a dry erase board and label the Same and Different. When you find something that everyone replies “yes” to, write it in the Same category. When kids don’t answer “yes”, write it in the Different category. For example, you may ask questions like “Do you sleep at night?”, “Do you have a brain?” “Do you need to eat food?” “Do you like to feel loved?” “Do you like pancakes?” “Do you have a dog?” etc.

Then end the activity by asking the questions: “Do you need to be forgiven?” “Do you need a Savior?”

SAY “ Many things make us different from each other. Those differences are good, and are a part of God’s beautiful design. But God has also made us the same in many ways. We are sinners who need to be forgiven. And we are all people in need of Jesus. Jesus loves us, and He is Lord of all. ”

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask the kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids.

If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.



UNIT 32 | SESSION 3

GENTILES BECAME PART OF THE CHURCH

ACTS 11

KEY PASSAGE:

1 Corinthians 12:12

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

What is the church? The church is all Christians everywhere, who gather together in their communities to worship and serve God.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

Even though some people tried to stop it, the gospel spread throughout the earth—not only to Jews but also to Gentiles. The good news about Jesus is for everyone. God calls us to celebrate when others believe and help them know and love Jesus more.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION



LEADER Bible Study

Acts 11 recounts the first time people were called “Christians” because they were recognized as followers of Jesus. In this passage, Peter was criticized by some of the believing Jews for going into the house of Cornelius and eating with Gentiles; however, these same critics later realized that God’s power was at work even among the Gentiles.

How did the church in Antioch demonstrate God’s plan for all people to be saved through the gospel? What is the proper response of Christ followers upon hearing that the lost have been found through coming to faith in Jesus?

The church in Antioch displayed the power of the gospel as Gentile believers and Jewish believers became one body under the headship of Christ. It was the transforming power of the Holy Spirit that held these brothers and sisters together, allowing for differing customs and backgrounds to be overcome. In fact, when Peter defended the Gentile salvation to the church in Jerusalem, he recited Jesus’ words from Acts 1:5 on the baptism of the Spirit. He reminded the naysayers among them that if the Gentiles truly received the Spirit, why should the rest of them get in the way of God’s salvation at work? The evidence of the Holy Spirit among them, leading them to live in holy fellowship and bold proclamation, proved that God’s

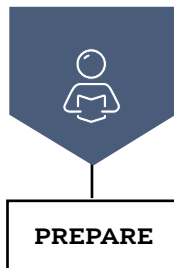
hand was working in the lives of those who were previously outside the faith.

Turning away from their disapproval, the members of the circumcision party first became stunned into silence and then glorified God for the repentance of these new Gentile followers. May we, too, be quick to move to celebration and praise when anyone trusts in Jesus for salvation, rather than be unsure or prone to criticism. Let our own hearts seek to pray that the Spirit produces good fruit in the lives of those who proclaim His truth, encouraging and lifting them up as they seek and serve His name alongside us.

Highlight God’s goodness in bringing these new followers to Himself. Encourage your kids to share the gospel with those who may be different from themselves, trusting that the good news of Jesus brings us together for the good of His church and the glory of God.

TERMS TO KNOW

Gentiles: people who are not part of God’s chosen family at birth. Jesus was a light to the Gentiles (Matt. 4:16-17; Luke 2:32). At the house of Cornelius, the Spirit was poured out on the Gentiles (Acts 10:45).



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- “Map It” activity page

Session Starter (Option 2)

- balloons, 1 per kid
- small empty cardboard tubes, 1 per kid
- ribbons or small square-cut papers



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- countdown video

Big Picture Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- “Gentiles Became Part of the Church” video
- Bible Story Picture Poster

Questions from Kids

- “Unit 32, Session 3” questions from kids video

Missions Moment

- “McCaman Family Photos” printable

Key Passage Activity

- Key Passage Poster
- “Many Parts (1 Corinthians 12:12) song
- worship song of your choice (optional)
- yarn



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- coffee filters, 1 per kid
- pipettes, 1 per kid
- water

Activity Choice (Option 2)

- Big Picture Question Poster
- construction papers in a variety of colors, 1 per kid
- brown craft paper

Reflection and Prayer

- Bible Story Coloring Page (optional)



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

| **SAY** “What activities or sports have you joined? How did it feel to join those groups?”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Map It!” on the activity page.

| **SAY** “Today, we will learn that as the church spread to more cities, more people joined the church, including Gentile believers.”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: JOIN IN TAG



Choose one kid to be It and tell him that he will try to tag the other kids. Explain to the kids that when they are tagged by It, they must stay near him and try to tag other kids as well. As time passes and more kids are tagged, the group will grow until no more kids are left to tag. Play again as time allows, choosing different kids to be It each time.

| **SAY** “As a church body, we are united in Jesus and work together to share the gospel. When God uses us to share the gospel, the body of Christ grows. The gospel is for everyone! Today, we will learn how that as the church grew, Gentiles—or non-Jewish people—became part of the church.”

OPTION 2: CELEBRATION POPPER



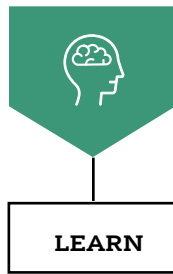
Before the session, cut off the top of balloons, leaving the bottom that you tie. Create enough for each kid. Provide each kid with a small cardboard tube, the balloons previously cut, and tape. Lead kids to take the open, cut end of the balloon and put it on the cardboard tube. Then assist kids in tying the end of the balloon as normal. Direct kids to use the tape to secure the balloon to the cardboard tube.

Next, provide kids with ribbon or small square-cut papers to be the confetti. Tell kids to place the confetti in the cardboard tube. Finally, invite kids to try out their poppers by pulling back on the balloon to see the confetti fly.

| **SAY** “Poppers are used to celebrate and show excitement. Today, we will learn how Christians celebrated because Gentile believers became part of the church. We can celebrate, too, when anyone trusts in Jesus as Savior and Lord.”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “ Hi, everyone! I’m happy you are here today. My name is [your name]. I brought my Bible with me. Did you bring yours? If you brought your Bible, please take it out. [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.]

The Bible teaches us the good news of how Jesus came to save us from our sin. In fact, Jesus came to save anyone who trusts in Him. In our story today, we will learn that as the gospel went to more new cities, the church became filled with people from different cultures and backgrounds. ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

SAY “ As we think about the church, let’s review our big picture question: **What is the church?** Can anyone tell me the answer? [Allow responses.] **The church is all Christians everywhere, who gather together in their communities to worship and serve God.**

God’s church is made up of many different people. People in the church might live in the United States, or they might live in Africa. They might speak English, or they might speak Spanish. Churches all over the world meet together because they love Jesus. Churches may be different in some ways, but believers are joined together because of what Jesus has done for us. Today, our Bible story helps us learn how the early church welcomed and celebrated Gentile believers joining the church. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “ We learned how God used Peter to help start His church. The apostle Peter traveled to different towns, following the Spirit’s lead and even performed miracles. Last week, we learned that God led Peter to a Gentile man named Cornelius who trusted in Jesus and became part of the church. Today, we will learn how Peter helped the church in Jerusalem see that Jesus is for all people, including the Gentiles, and that more Gentiles became part of the church. ”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Acts 11. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Gentiles Became Part of the Church.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

GENTILES BECAME PART OF THE CHURCH

“ God had called Peter to tell everyone the good news about Jesus, no matter who they were or where they came from. So Peter shared the gospel not only with Jews, but with Gentiles. The Gentiles in Caesarea heard Peter’s message and believed. God gave His Holy Spirit to these new believers, and they were baptized.

Before long, the apostles and other believers throughout Judea heard that Gentiles had believed the good news about Jesus. They were surprised, so Peter shared about the vision God had given to him of the sheet of clean and unclean animals and his encounter with Cornelius. Peter explained that the gospel is for all people. Then the believers praised God and understood that Jesus had come for the Gentiles, too!

At the same time, believers who scattered after Stephen’s murder had traveled to places like Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch of Syria. In those places, the believers only shared the gospel with the Jews. But some believers from Cyprus and Cyrene went to Antioch and preached the gospel to the Greeks, too. God was with them, and a large number of the Greeks believed the good news.

The church at Jerusalem heard about these new believers, so they sent Barnabas to Antioch. Barnabas was a good man. He loved God and was full of faith and the power of the Holy Spirit. When Barnabas arrived, he saw that God was gracious to these believers. He was glad and encouraged them to keep following God. Even more people trusted in Jesus.

Then Barnabas left Antioch and went to Tarsus to look for Paul. He found Paul and brought him back to Antioch. They stayed with the church in Antioch for a year, teaching large crowds of people. Jesus’ followers were first called Christians at Antioch.

Christ Connection: Even though some people tried to stop it, the gospel spread throughout the earth—not only to Jews but also to Gentiles. The good news about Jesus is for everyone. God calls us to celebrate when others believe and help them know and love Jesus more. ”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Define it: Remind kids that the word *Gentile* refers to anyone who is not Jewish.

Create pause: When telling the story, use dramatic pauses to emphasize something important is happening and to give kids a chance to think about what is happening in the story.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ Even though the apostles were Jewish, was the good news of Jesus only for Jews? [Allow responses.] No! The good news is for all people, everywhere! But the Jewish believers in Jerusalem were hesitant to accept Gentiles into the church. Peter helped them understand that God does save all people who believe in Jesus. Who did Peter say came upon the Gentiles who trusted in Jesus? [Allow responses.] Peter told the Jewish believers that the Holy Spirit had come upon the Gentile believers. This truth changed the Jewish believers’ minds, and they glorified God. Anyone, Jew or Gentile, who trusts in Jesus is given the gift of the Holy Spirit.

After Stephen’s murder, some Jews went to Antioch. Who did many of these believers share the gospel with? [Allow responses.] Many shared with Jewish people, but some shared the good news with Gentiles. As the Gentiles heard the gospel, they trusted in Jesus and were saved.

Eventually, the church in Jerusalem sent Barnabas to see these Gentile believers in Antioch. Barnabas was glad when he met the Greek believers, and he encouraged them to remain true to Jesus. We can be glad too when others trust in Jesus. When people trust in Jesus, the church can help them know and love Jesus more. ”

3 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY “ Even though some people tried to stop it, the gospel spread throughout the earth—not only to Jews but also to Gentiles. The good news about Jesus is for everyone. God calls us to celebrate when others believe and help them know and love Jesus more. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 32, Session 3” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. How did people know what to write in the Bible?
2. How do the stories of the Bible help us understand that God sent Jesus to offer salvation to all people?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Display the “McCaman Family Photos” as you tell the kids about the church planters.

SAY “ Twenty-three percent of people living in Florida were born outside the continental United States. People from all over the world have moved to South Florida, and two-thirds of the people speak Spanish. Pastor David McCaman said having people from different parts of the world creates a church with many different ways people do day to day activities or daily customs.

While people can be different in many ways, Jesus loves every person the same. When nonbelievers see unity in Christians who do not all look the same, it can be a great testimony to what God’s love can do. Pastor David says: ‘Nothing unites those with so many cultural differences like Jesus.’ ”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

Remind kids that the good news of Jesus is for everyone. God calls us to celebrate when others believe and help them know and love Jesus more. Pray for Pastor David and Gospel City Church as they celebrate the diversity of their church and ask God to help many more people believe in Jesus.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud 1 Corinthians 12:12 together.

SAY “ The Bible reminds us that the church is one body in Jesus. He is who we worship, and the reason we serve together. ”

Prompt the kids to sit in a circle. Provide one kid with a ball of yarn. Lead him to say the first word of the key passage. Then direct him to toss the ball of yarn to another kid while hold the end of the yarn. Lead the kid now holding the yarn to say the next word of the key passage and then toss the yarn to another kid while also holding onto the string of yarn. Repeat until the entire key passage is said aloud. At this point, all kids should be holding the yarn. Discuss how this is a picture of how they are unified in Jesus.

Lead kids to sing “Many Parts (1 Corinthians 12:12).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

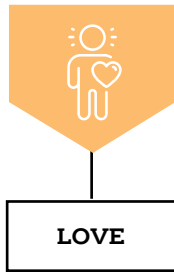
7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “ Thank You, Lord, that Your plan for salvation includes all people. We pray that You will lead more people to trust in Jesus. Give us hearts that desire to rejoice when others believe. Amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the New Testament Mediterranean Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Acts 11. Explain the differences between chapter numbers and verse numbers in the Bible. Invite kids to practice finding different chapter numbers in Acts and different verse numbers as well. Then lead kids to find Acts 11:18.

Consider pointing out the location of Antioch (E10) on the New Testament Mediterranean Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Acts 11:18 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verses aloud.

SAY “ The Jewish believers in Jerusalem rejoiced when they realized the Gentiles had received the Holy Spirit. Rather than focus on the differences between Jews and Gentiles, they chose to praise God and be thankful He saved the Gentiles.

As the church, we can rejoice and be thankful when others believe in Jesus too. Even when new people come to church who may be different from us, we can choose to be happy they are here and pray that God saves them through Jesus. ”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY “ How were the Gentiles saved? ”

Remind kids that Gentiles were saved just as the Jewish believers were: by faith in Jesus. Discuss how the Bible records how the Gentiles repented of sin, turned to Jesus, and were given the Holy Spirit.

SAY “ Do you rejoice when others trust in Jesus? Why? ”

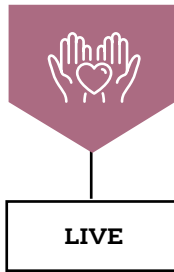
Answers will vary. Discuss how the greatest event that can happen in anyone’s life is to trust in Jesus as his or her Savior. Tell kids that salvation is more special than birthdays, vacations, getting new toys, etc. Encourage kids to celebrate and praise God when they hear about someone trusting in Jesus.

SAY “ The church in Antioch grew after Barnabas arrived and encouraged the believers there. Why do you think the church grew after Barnabas encouraged the believers in Antioch? ”

Discuss how Barnabas encouraged the believers to remain true to the Lord with devoted hearts. Explain that one way we can show we are devoted to God is by being obedient to His command to share the good news of Jesus with others. Discuss how sharing the gospel is how the church grows as others hear and believe the good news.

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: COLORS UNITE



Distribute a coffee filter, markers, a pipette, and water to each kid. Lead kids to flatten out the coffee filters by pressing firmly from the center outward. Lead kids to use washable markers to create different colors of dots all over the coffee filter. Then direct kids to use pipettes or eyedroppers to drop one drop of water on each colored dot. Tell kids to watch the colors “explode” and observe how the dots are united together to create a beautiful design.

SAY “ Watching the colors come together to make beautiful designs reminds me that God has created all people from different cultures and places to be united together through Jesus. We can pray for the McCamans as they tell people in South Florida about Jesus. God calls us to celebrate when others believe and help them know and love Jesus more. ”

OPTION 2: MANY HANDS, ONE IMAGE



Provide each kid with a piece of construction paper in a variety of colors, a pencil, and scissors. Lead kids to trace one of their hands on the piece of paper. Then, direct kids to cut out the hands.

Ask kids to gather together as one large group and use their hands to make a single image such as a cross, a butterfly, a heart, a flower, etc. Encourage kids to be creative as they decide how to make their hands into one image. Provide kids with a piece of craft paper and glue. Then direct kids to glue the hands to the craft paper as they form their image. Assist kids as needed, offering guidance on the overall design.

SAY “ Each hand on this image represents a unique kid. The hand sizes are all different but when they came together, they formed one image. This is like the church. We are many parts but one body united in Jesus. **The church is all Christians everywhere, who gather together in their communities to worship and serve God.** ”

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask the kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids.

If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.



UNIT 32 | SESSION 4

PETER WAS RESCUED FROM PRISON

ACTS 12

KEY PASSAGE:

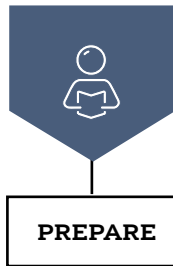
1 Corinthians 12:12

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

What is the church? The church is all Christians everywhere, who gather together in their communities to worship and serve God.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

God answered the people's prayers for Peter. God had a plan for Peter and the church, and He rescued Peter from his enemies. Peter knew he would face death because he believed in Jesus, but he kept going so he could share the good news of the gospel.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION



LEADER Bible Study

Acts 12 tells the story of God’s divine and miraculous rescue of His apostle Peter. While King Herod sought to make an example of Peter, it was God alone who was able to showcase His power and might amidst the persecution of the church. This passage highlights the power of prayer amidst hardship and how God’s purposes for His church will prevail despite the futile attempts of the enemy.

What can we learn about God’s plans despite persecution and suffering? What can we learn about living on mission even during our most difficult circumstances?

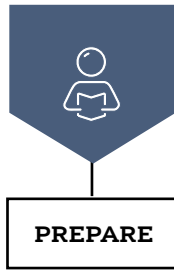
God’s plans for the good of His church, even during persecution, include the fervent prayers of the saints. The intercession of these faithful believers revealed that their only hope was in the Lord, and it was their prayers that were used by God to rescue Peter from prison. As God answered their prayers, He showcased His power to thwart the evil plans of those who wish to harm His church. Peter’s incredible escape from prison reflects the same hope that we who have trusted in Jesus receive as the chains of sin fall off, and we are set free from condemnation. God’s purpose for His church was by no means coming to an end in that prison cell; rather the word of God spread and multiplied. (Acts 12:24)

The consequence of declaring the gospel of Jesus Christ was costly for Peter and for James, who was executed by Herod. Though Herod’s sentence for James was death, to die would mean this disciple’s gain. Peter knew the consequences of sharing the gospel, yet he also believed that Jesus was worth giving his life to, trusting that the salvation of others was worth the risk as well. Even still, God granted Peter salvation from this prison cell so that he could continue living on mission for Him.

May we be aware that God has done more than send an angel to rescue us from earthly hardship. He sent His very Son to rescue us from the eternal consequence of our sins. Christ’s sacrifice on our behalf offers the hope we need to endure difficulties and the boldness we need to share His divine hope with others.

TERMS TO KNOW

Prayer: talking to God and listening to Him. Prayer makes a difference in what happens (James 4:2), and faith is a condition for answered petitions (Mark 11:24).



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- “What Doesn’t Belong?” activity page

Session Starter (Option 2)

- construction paper cut into long, narrow strips, 5 per kid



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- countdown video

Big Picture Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- “Peter Was Rescued from Prison” video
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- paper chains (optional)
- flashlight (optional)

Questions from Kids

- “Unit 32, Session 4” questions from kids video

Missions Moment

- “McCaman Family Photos” printable
- world map

Key Passage Activity

- Key Passage Poster
- “Many Parts (1 Corinthians 12:12)” song
- worship song of your choice (optional)



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- inflated beach ball

Reflection and Prayer

- Bible Story Coloring Page (optional)



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

SAY “Who do you go to when you need help or have a question? Why do you go to that person? How do they help you or answer your question?”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “What Doesn’t Belong?” on the activity page.

SAY “Many objects did not belong in this picture. Today, we will learn how Peter was put into prison even though he didn’t belong there. Let’s get ready to learn more.”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: LEAD ME



Invite kids to line up behind you. Tell kids that they are to follow you around the room, copying the movements you make. Lead kids by hopping, skipping, walking backwards, and so on. After 30 seconds or so, choose a kid to be the leader. Direct him to lead the kids using different movements. Continue switching leaders as time allows.

For an added challenge, consider turning off the lights at various times. Tell kids that when the lights are off, they must freeze. Then turn the lights back on and resume the activity.

SAY “Today, we will learn how an angel appeared to Peter while he was in prison. The angel told Peter to get up and follow him. Let’s get ready to hear where the angel led Peter.”

OPTION 2: PAPER CHAINS

Before the session, cut construction paper into long, narrow strips. Make five strips per kid. Write God rescued Peter from prison on a dry erase board for kids to refer to.

Provide each kid with a set of paper strips, tape or stapler, and a marker. Lead kids to write a word from the dry erase board on each strip of paper. Then direct kids to take the first strip with the word God and tape or staple it to form a loop. Next, lead kids to insert a second strip with the word rescued into the loop and secure it with tape or a stapler. Continue this process in order of the message from the dry erase board. Consider preparing a completed chain for the kids to refer to as well.

SAY “Your paper chains remind me of our Bible story. Today, we will learn how Peter had chains placed on him and was put in prison. Do you think chains could stop God from rescuing Peter? [Allow responses.] No, God is greater than any chain. Let’s get ready to hear how God rescued Peter from prison.”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “ Hi, kids! My name is [your name]. I am glad to see you today! As we get ready to hear our Bible story, raise up your Bible if you brought it with you. [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.]

Today, we will learn that Peter was in trouble. He was put in prison and it looked like he would be killed for his faith in Jesus. Yet, God chose to rescue Peter and answer the prayers of His church. We'll see how God had a plan for Peter and His church. ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

SAY “ What is the church? [Allow responses.] The answer we've learned is, **The church is all Christians everywhere, who gather together in their communities to worship and serve God.** Let's say that together: **The church is all Christians everywhere, who gather together in their communities to worship and serve God.**

One way the church worships and serves God is through prayer. We spend time sharing prayer requests, giving God praises, and praying for one another. God hears our prayers and wants us to talk with Him. Going to God in prayer is a way to worship Him. It's also a way to serve others as we pray for their needs. Today, we will learn how the church had gathered together to pray for Peter. They asked God to help Peter as he was in prison. Let's get ready to learn how God answered the church's prayers. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “ When Stephen was killed because of his faith in Jesus, many believers in Jerusalem scattered to other towns. While many Jewish leaders wanted to stop the church, God used their wicked plans to grow His church and spread the church further into the world. Peter and other disciples shared the good news of Jesus everywhere they went, both to Jews and Gentiles. Many people believed and the church grew.

But many leaders continued to harm Christians and stop the gospel from being shared. Today, we will learn that Peter was arrested because of his faith in Jesus. Let's get ready to hear how the church responded to this difficult circumstance. ”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Acts 12. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Peter Was Rescued from Prison.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

PETER WAS RESCUED FROM PRISON

“**King Herod Agrippa was persecuting believers in the church. He killed James, one of Jesus’ apostles.** When the king saw how happy this made the Jews, **he arrested Peter too.** The king put Peter into prison and assigned groups of soldiers to keep guard. **While Peter was in prison, other believers in the church prayed and asked God to help him.**”

The king planned for Peter to be killed. **The night before his trial, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers. He was in chains,** and other soldiers stood guard at the gate of the prison. **All of a sudden, an angel of the Lord appeared** and a bright light shone in Peter’s prison cell.

The angel struck Peter on the side and woke him up. **“Quick, get up!” the angel said. The chains fell off of Peter’s wrists. The angel told Peter to get dressed,** so Peter put on his sandals and his cloak. **Then he followed the angel.** Peter wasn’t sure what was happening; he thought he was seeing a vision.

The angel led Peter out of the prison, past the guards, through the gate, and onto the streets. Then the angel left. When Peter looked around, he realized the Lord had rescued him from prison and from certain death!

Peter hurried to the house of Mary, the mother of John Mark, where the believers had gathered to pray. When Peter knocked at the door, a servant named Rhoda answered. She heard Peter’s voice and she was so happy she rushed back inside, leaving Peter standing outside. “Peter is here! He is at the door!” she announced.

But the others didn’t believe her. “You’re crazy!” they said. Peter kept knocking, and **when they opened the door, they could hardly believe it. Peter motioned to them to be quiet, and he told them how the Lord had rescued him from prison.**

“Tell James, Jesus’ half-brother, and the other brothers about this,” Peter said. Then he left. When the sun came up, the soldiers at the prison couldn’t figure out what happened to Peter, and the king punished the soldiers because Peter had escaped.

Christ Connection: God answered the people’s prayers for Peter. God had a plan for Peter and the church, and He rescued Peter from his enemies. Peter knew he would face death because he believed in Jesus, but he kept going so he could share the good news of the gospel. ”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Display chains: Lead kids to hold up the paper chains they made from the session starter activity or display paper chains you created as you tell how Peter was bound in chains.

Shine light: Begin telling the story with the lights off. Then shine a flashlight when you get to the part about the angel appearing.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ King Herod Agrippa had James killed and Peter thrown in prison. King Herod Agrippa wanted to kill Peter too. What did the church do while Peter was in prison? [Allow responses.] The church prayed! They asked God to rescue Peter from prison. God’s people have hearts that want to talk with Him and come to Him for all their needs. Prayer is the way we come into God’s presence. Prayer is how we talk and listen to God so that we can be comforted by Him, experience His peace, and strengthen our faith in Him.

God heard the church’s prayers and sent an angel to rescue Peter. What was Peter doing when the angel rescued him? [Allow responses.] Peter had been asleep when the angel came to rescue him. Why do you think Peter was able to sleep in prison, knowing that his good friend James had just been killed? [Allow responses.] Perhaps Peter trusted God no matter what he faced, even if it was death. Peter was willing to die for the gospel because he had faith that even if he died for Jesus, he would live forever with Him.

God used the prayers of His people to rescue Peter from prison. God may not always answer our prayers how we want Him to or how we think He should. But God always hears our prayers and as we pray, we grow to trust God more. As the church meets together, we can pray for Christians around the world who may be suffering, like Peter, trusting that God hears our prayers. ”

3 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY “ God answered the people’s prayers for Peter. God had a plan for Peter and the church, and He rescued Peter from his enemies. Peter knew he would face death because he believed in Jesus, but he kept going so he could share the good news of the gospel. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 32, Session 4” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. How do we know God is real?
2. How can you help others know God is real and that He sent Jesus to save us from sin?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Display the “McCaman Family Photos” and a world map as you tell the kids about the church planters. Point to the different locations on the map as you tell the kids where the McCamans have served.

SAY “ Pastor David McCaman and his wife, Jennifer, are church planters in Boynton Beach, Florida, with Gospel City Church. The McCamans believe that God used past ministry opportunities to prepare them to be church planters in South Florida. They have led churches in Tennessee, Florida, and in Bangkok, Thailand. While in Bangkok, the McCamans learned how to creatively



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

explain God’s love to the people. Pastor David said: ‘We learned to trust God to change hearts and draw those far from Him to Himself. It taught us to be faithful to the mission and trust God with the results.’ ”

Tell kids that while serving in Tennessee at LifePoint Church, the McCamans desired to “Live Sent”—or be on mission sharing Jesus with others. Explain that even though starting new churches comes with many challenges, the McCamans want to share the gospel so that people will trust in Jesus and be saved from their sin. Remind kids that praying for other believers is a way the church can worship and serve God. Ask God to help Gospel City church reach many people for Jesus.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud 1 Corinthians 12:12 together.

SAY “ Our body has many parts—eyes, ears, legs, hands, arms, feet, knees, and elbows! Each part is used in different, but important ways. The same is true for the church. The Bible calls the church the body of Christ. We all have different jobs, but each is needed. ”

Lead kids to stand up and follow you as you point to your eyes, ears, nose, shoulders, knees, etc. While pointing to different body parts, say the key passage aloud. Then invite a kid to point to body parts and help lead in saying the key passage aloud. Repeat as time allows.

Lead kids to sing “Many Parts (1 Corinthians 12:12).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

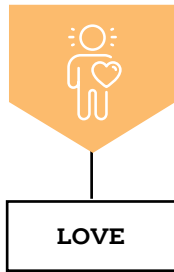
7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “ Thank You, God, that You hear our prayers. Thank You for loving Your church and helping us in hard times. Give us hearts that trust You no matter what we face. Amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the New Testament Israel Map. Remind kids that the Bible has two main divisions: the Old Testament and the New Testament. Practice leading kids to find a book in the Old Testament such as Judges and a book in the New Testament such as Ephesians. Then guide kids to open their Bibles to Acts 12.

Consider pointing out the location of Jerusalem (H4) on the New Testament Mediterranean Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Acts 12:6-7 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verses aloud.

SAY “ Peter was in prison because he shared the gospel. When the angel came to Peter, he was sleeping. Would you be able to sleep in prison, knowing that the king wanted to kill you? [Allow responses.] It would be a normal response to be afraid in such a difficult situation. But Peter was able to sleep even though he faced death because he trusted God and was willing to give his life for the gospel. For Christians, difficult times are not the end because we always have the hope of living with Jesus forever. Like Peter, we can trust that whether God chooses to rescue us or not, Jesus has saved us to enjoy heaven with Him. ”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY “ Can you think of other people in the Bible who trusted in God and were saved from dangerous situations? Who? ”

Answers will vary. Prompt kids to think about people like Noah, Moses, Rahab, David, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and others who placed their trust in God. Discuss how these people believed in God’s promises and character. Explain that some people like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego believed that even if God did not rescue them from earthly danger, they knew death was not the end.

SAY “ The church prayed for Peter. Why do we pray? ”

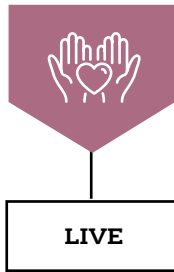
Tell kids that we pray for many reasons. Discuss how prayer is the way that we call out to God when we are in need, when we want to say we are thankful, or when we want to worship him. Share how God already knows what we pray before we pray it, but prayer helps us remember who God is and our need for him. Remind kids that God loves it when we pray to him.

SAY “ The church was amazed by Peter’s rescue. When have you been amazed by what God has done? ”

Answers will vary. Remind kids that nothing is too difficult for God. Help kids understand that God has a plan and purpose for all His actions. Tell kids that God was not done with how He would use Peter to help build His church.

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: BEACH BALL PASS



Before the session, use a permanent marker to write action words on each segment of a beach ball, such as run in place; jump; spin; say, “Pray, Give, Go;” do five jumping jacks; clap; etc. Lead kids to stand in a circle to play a beach game. Tell kids you will toss the ball to players and the words written on the ball closest to their right thumb will be the action the kids will perform. Explain that they will continue to do the action until they catch the ball again and then change to the new action. Direct kids to throw the ball to another kid after they’ve read the action they’re to perform. Continue playing as time allows.

SAY “ Gospel City Church is located in a beach town where many water and outdoor activities are enjoyed by the people. Playing games like this provides a fun way to make friends and tell others about Jesus. Let’s pray for Gospel City Church to find ways to build relationships with the people of Boynton Beach so they can hear the good news. ”

OPTION 2: PRAYER PICTURES



Prompt kids to think about how the church prayed for Peter in today’s Bible story. Then lead kids to think about different prayers they might want to ask God. Invite kids to draw a picture of their prayer whether it is a praise or a request. Provide kids with paper and markers. Encourage kids to remember that God hears our prayers. Then invite kids to share their prayer pictures with the group.

SAY “ God loves it when we come to him in prayer. Sometimes it is hard to find the right words to pray when we are overwhelmed or worried. We do not have to have the right words for God to understand our prayers. God knows our hearts, and we can ask Him to help us through His Spirit as we pray. Remember that God always hears our prayers, and we can trust Him to answer in ways that are for our good and His glory. ”

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask the kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids.

If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.



UNIT 32 | SESSION 5

WE ARE PART OF ONE CHURCH

1 CORINTHIANS 12

KEY PASSAGE:

1 Corinthians 12:12

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

What is the church? The church is all Christians everywhere, who gather together in their communities to worship and serve God.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

Paul told the believers in the Corinthian church to come together because of the gospel. He reminded them that Jesus saves sinners. Because of Jesus and what He has done, believers from every nation, tribe, people, and language can humbly come together as one body—the church.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION



LEADER Bible Study

The twelfth chapter of Paul’s letter to the church in Corinth is known for its role in encouraging the church body toward unity. Steering us away from division and partiality, this passage reminds us that we each have a role to play in Christ’s mission of sharing the gospel. Our differences can serve to strengthen us, if only we walk together in obedience to Jesus’ mission through the power of the Holy Spirit.

How can we best determine how to serve within the body of Christ? What does unity look like in the modern-day church?

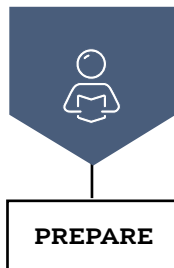
It can often be difficult to determine how we can serve within the church. We might even feel like the service we have to offer is unimportant. Yet, Paul wrote to encourage the Corinthian church to remember that all roles within the body of Christ are indispensable. As we seek to serve within the church we can consider our interests, passions, and giftings, which are given to us by God for His glory. Like Paul wrote in verse 17, if we all try to take on the same role within the church, we do not function in the ways God designed us. Therefore, we can trust that the gifts and interests God has given us play an important role in the purpose of His church and in the edification of the saints toward gospel-centered unity.

Though we may not all be called to be pastors, we might be given the roles of Sunday School teachers, small group leaders, camera operators, sound engineers, bakers, meal deliverers, and so on for our churches. Paul calls us to pursue unity in the body, even amidst our diverse giftings in the church. He reminds us that the same Spirit is active within all believers, yet working uniquely within each of us as He calls us to serve for our common good. We can rejoice that God uses diverse people with various giftings to demonstrate how the Spirit unites us all to one another through Christ.

As you prepare to teach this session, remember that every member of the body of Christ, including you and all the kids in your classroom who have trusted in Jesus, have an essential role to play in building up God’s church! As you boldly proclaim these truths of the gospel, pray that your group will pursue unity and seek how they can serve within the body of Christ.

DOCTRINE TO KNOW

Unity of the Church: Christ’s desire for the church is that we be united as one in Him by the gospel, allowing for no divisions to separate us.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- “Who’s Who?” activity page

Session Starter (Option 2)

- 10–25 piece puzzles, 1 per group



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- countdown video

Big Picture Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- “We Are Part of One Church” video
- Bible Story Picture Poster

Questions from Kids

- “Unit 32, Session 5” questions from kids video

Key Passage Activity

- Key Passage Poster
- “Many Parts (1 Corinthians 12:12)” song
- worship song of your choice (optional)
- crafts sticks, 1 per kid
- cup



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- “Flamingo” printable, 1 per kid
- metal brads, 5 per kid
- cardstock

Activity Choice (Option 2)

- brown craft paper, 1 per group

Reflection and Prayer

- Bible Story Coloring Page (optional)



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

| **SAY** “ Who do you work well with or play well with? What do you do together? ”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Who’s Who?” on the activity page.

| **SAY** “ Everyone is created by God and is unique. Today, we will learn how the church is like a body with many parts. ”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: NO HANDS, NO FEET



Provide each kid with a piece of paper and a pencil. Challenge kids to write their names on the paper without using their hands. Invite kids to get creative as to how they might write their name without using their hands.

Next, lead kids to line up on one side of the room. Challenge kids to cross to the other side of the room without using their feet.

| **SAY** “ Without using our hands, writing our names was much more challenging. And without using our feet, we had a harder time crossing the room. Both parts have important roles to play in our daily activities. Today, we will learn how each person in the church has an important job. We need every person to do their part to help the church grow and share the gospel. ”

OPTION 2: PARTS OF A WHOLE

Form kids into groups of three or four and provide each group with a 10–25 piece puzzle. Challenge the groups to work together to complete the puzzle.

Then switch puzzles between the groups and challenge the kids to complete a puzzle again. When the kids are not looking, take one of the puzzle pieces away.

| **SAY** “ The first puzzle you completed had all the pieces. But when you tried to complete the second puzzle, there was a piece missing. If a piece is missing, the puzzle is not complete. Each puzzle piece has a specific shape and place to make the puzzle whole. In the same way, each of us is made to work and serve in the church. Today, we will learn we each have an important role in the body of Christ! ”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “ Hi, everyone! My name is [your name]. I’m so excited to see you today! I brought my Bible with me. Did any of you bring yours? Show me your Bible if you did! [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.]

Today, our Bible story comes from the book of 1 Corinthians. The book of 1 Corinthians is a New Testament book after the book of Romans. In today’s Bible story, we will learn that the church in Corinth needed to be reminded that we are all one body united to Jesus. ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

SAY “ What is the church? [Allow responses.] The church is all Christians everywhere, who gather together in their communities to worship and serve God.

Churches exist all over the world. Each church is made of many different people. Every person in the church is important and has a job to serve and worship God. Today, we’ll learn how the church in Corinth needed to be reminded that they were one body who exists to work together to share the good news of Jesus. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “ Jesus commanded His disciples to take the gospel to all nations. In the book of Acts, we have learned how the church grew. Peter and other disciples shared the good news of Jesus with Jews and Gentiles. As the Gentiles trusted in Jesus for salvation, the church was made up of many different kinds of people. But the growth of the church also came with difficulty. Believers were persecuted, arrested, and even killed for their faith. In our story today, we will learn how the apostle Paul wrote a letter to the church in Corinth, encouraging them to not be divided and to come together for the gospel. ”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to 1 Corinthians 12. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “We Are Part of One Church.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

WE ARE PART OF ONE CHURCH

“The apostle Paul wrote a letter to the church at Corinth. Years after Paul helped start the church in Corinth, the believers there were facing problems. One problem was that the church was divided. The people did not always get along or agree about what was most important. Paul wanted this to stop. **“Is Christ divided?” Paul asked. Of course not. Jesus came to bring people together as one body**—brothers and sisters in God’s family.

In his letter, Paul told about the importance of the church working together like one body. Paul wrote, **“Think about the human body. It is one body, but it is made up of many parts. All the parts work together as one body.”** Paul said that Jesus is like this. **The Holy Spirit brings together many different people, but we are all one in Christ.**

“The body is not one part but many,” Paul wrote. “A foot shouldn’t say, ‘I am not a hand, so I don’t belong to the body.’ A foot is just as much a part of the body as a hand. An ear shouldn’t say, ‘I am not an eye, so I don’t belong to the body.’ An ear is just as much a part of the body as an eye.

“Imagine if the whole body were an eye. How would it hear? Imagine if the whole body were an ear. How would it smell? God has arranged each part of the body just as He wanted. If they were all the same part, how would it be a body? A body is made up of many parts!

“In the same way, an eye can’t say to the hand, ‘I don’t need you!’ and the head can’t say to the feet, ‘I don’t need you!’ Even if a part is weaker than another, it is still an important part of the body.”

Paul said that the church—like the body—should be unified. The members should have the same concern for one another. “If one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it,” Paul wrote.

“We are the body of Christ, and individual members of it. God gives each member a specific purpose and different gifts. Some are apostles, some are prophets, some are teachers. **Not everyone is the same, but every part of the body of Christ is important.”**

Christ Connection: Paul told the believers in the Corinthian church to come together because of the gospel. He reminded them that Jesus saves sinners. Because

STORYTELLING TIPS

Point to it: Invite kids to point to the parts of the body as they hear them in the story.

Active listening: Direct kids to clasp both their hands together when they hear the words “one body.”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

of Jesus and what He has done, believers from every nation, tribe, people, and language can humbly come together as one body—the church. ”

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ We all have different gifts and abilities given to us by God. When God made you, He made you on purpose. When we trust in Jesus as Savior, the Holy Spirit gives us gifts to serve the church. Just like a hand has a different job than an eye, we each have different ways we serve. Can you think of different ways we all serve the body of Christ? [Allow responses.] Some people may serve as teachers, preachers, greeters, nursery workers, or kids’ leaders. People can also serve the church through prayer, encouraging others to keep following Jesus, helping others in need, and more.

Are some gifts more important than others? Why not? [Allow responses.] Paul told the church in Corinth that everyone has an important job. No one’s job is more important than others. But not all jobs are easy to see. We may not see who buys the snacks for kids or the people cleaning the church building or people praying for us. Yet, even if we don’t see how everyone serves, it does not mean their jobs are less important. In God’s kingdom, everyone’s participation in the church is important. The gospel reminds us that no one is of greater value or worth. Every person has a gift that the church needs to help it grow and glorify God.

Paul taught that the church was designed by God to work together, not separately. When every part works together because of the gospel, the church grows together and is able to better share the good news. **The church is all Christians everywhere, who gather together in their communities to worship and serve God.** ”

3 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY “ Paul told the believers in the Corinthian church to come together because of the gospel. He reminded them that Jesus saves sinners. Because of Jesus and what He has done, believers from every nation, tribe, people, and language can humbly come together as one body—the church. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 32, Session 5” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. How can we help people do the right thing?
2. Why is it important to work together as believers for the sake of the gospel?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

SAY “ South Florida is home to some of America’s wealthiest people. However, many people in South Florida are also very poor. Both the rich and the poor think that having more money will make them happy. Many in South Florida try to gain as much as possible—but having more wealth doesn’t make us happy or give us what we need most. Sharing the hope of Christ can help people



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

| understand how to find true joy. ”

Tell kids that church planters in South Florida can offer something better than money—the gospel of Jesus Christ. Share how all people, whether rich or poor, need to hear how their sins can be forgiven. Tell kids that because of Jesus and what He has done, people from every culture, rich or poor, can find everlasting life. Pray for the people in South Florida to see Jesus as better than anything this world can offer. Ask God to help them to trust in Jesus and find true satisfaction.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Before the session, write different exercises on craft sticks such as jumping jacks, wall sits, push-ups, standing on one leg, etc. Place the craft sticks in a cup. Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud 1 Corinthians 12:12 together.

| **SAY** “ We all have an important role in the church. Just like our body parts are used for different jobs, God made us to have an important job serving the church. ”

Invite kids to take turns choosing craft sticks and leading everyone in the exercises while saying the key passage aloud. Discuss how the different parts of the body help make the exercises possible.

Lead kids to sing “Many Parts (1 Corinthians 12:12).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

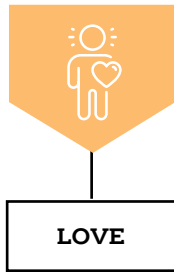
7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

| **SAY** “ Thank You, Lord, that You have made us all different with important jobs to serve Your church. Help us serve in the church and work together to share the gospel. We want to glorify You in all we do. Amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the New Testament Mediterranean Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to 1 Corinthians 12. Tell kids that Paul wrote two letters to the Corinthian church that are in the New Testament: 1 Corinthians and 2 Corinthians. Discuss how Paul helped the Corinthian church work through their differences and come together for the gospel.

Consider pointing out the location of Jerusalem (H4) on the New Testament Mediterranean Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud 1 Corinthians 12:18 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verses aloud.

SAY “ Paul told the Corinthian church that they should not say any part of the body is not needed. He said that it is God who has made the body just as He wanted. This means that God has decided what gift we have and where we should serve. The parts of the body do not belong to us, but to God who made everything. When we trust in Jesus and become part of His church, we can ask God where He would have us serve. We can trust that no matter the job we have, it has been given to us by God and is important to Him. ”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY “ How have you seen the church work together? ”

Answers will vary. Discuss different events or church services and how each person plays an important role. For example, during VBS many people work together to make snacks, lead in music, create crafts, design decorations, and play games. Remind kids that God has designed the body to work together to serve and honor Him.

SAY “ Do we need to be jealous of others or think any one has a better job in the church? Why not? ”

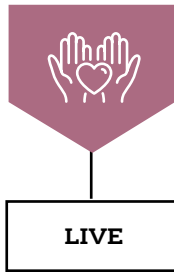
Remind kids that no job is more important than another. Discuss how becoming jealous or prideful leads to division. Explain that we need to remember that God has given each person a way to serve and that without every part the body would not work as He designed it to. Encourage kids to celebrate each person's gift and be thankful for how God has made everyone to serve an important job.

SAY “ How is the church one body even though we are many parts? ”

Prompt kids to think about how every person who belongs to the church first trusted in Jesus. Tell kids that it is our faith in Jesus that unites us and the Holy Spirit living in us that joins us together. Remind kids that even when we have differences, we are still one body in Jesus.

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: BUILD A FLAMINGO



Before the session, print the “Flamingo” printable on cardstock for each kid. Tell kids that South Florida is home to many flamingos. Share that these large birds get their bright pink color mostly from the food they eat. Provide each kid with a “Flamingo” printable; black, pink, and orange markers; scissors; and five metal brads. Lead kids to follow the directions on the printable as they color, cut out, and assemble their flamingos. Once they have built their flamingos, encourage kids to move the parts and make their flamingos look like they are standing on one leg.

SAY “ Flamingos are rarely seen alone. Most flamingos stay in large flocks, often numbering thousands. This reminds me of the body of Christ—the church. Through faith in Jesus, we become one large family of God. We are many members, but are united in Christ. Your flamingos can serve as a reminder to pray for the churches in South Florida, who are our brothers and sisters in Christ. ”

OPTION 2: BUILD A BODY



Form kids into groups of three or four. Provide each group with a large sheet of brown craft paper, pencils, and markers. Lead groups to choose one kid to lay down on the craft paper. Then direct kids to trace the outline of her body.

Lead groups to draw on different body parts such as eyes, ears, nose, mouth, knees, toes, fingers, and hair. Invite kids to color in the person and give her clothes. Once kids have completed the drawings, tape them to a wall.

SAY “ Today, we learned that the church is one body made of many different parts. A body needs eyes, ears, nose, mouth and so on. The body of Christ needs people with different jobs to serve and honor God. When each part of the body comes together, we can better share the gospel. ”

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask the kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids.

If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.



UNIT 33 | SESSION 1

PAUL BECAME A CHRISTIAN

ACTS 9

KEY PASSAGE:

John 3:17

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

Who can be saved? Anyone who trusts in Jesus can be forgiven of their sins and be right with God.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

Jesus appeared to Saul and changed him inside and out. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. (1 Timothy 1:15) Jesus called Saul, who was once an enemy to Christians, to spend the rest of his life telling people the gospel and leading them to trust in Jesus.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION



LEADER Bible Study

The Acts 9 story of how Saul of Tarsus came to be a follower of Jesus is a widely known passage that reveals an essential truth for us as believers: God has the power to transform the hearts and lives of anyone who places their faith in Him. The power of the Holy Spirit changes us from the inside out, and the same Lord who transformed Saul causes us to walk in new life when we turn to Christ.

What do we learn about the role of God’s saving grace in this story? How can our testimonies reflect the same Spirit-empowered life change as Saul’s?

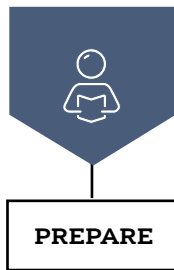
God sought out Saul for the work of His kingdom, despite the hostility and malice this former Pharisee had toward the Christian church. Nothing in Saul’s story—not even the wrongful executions and imprisonment of Christ’s disciples—was too big for God to forgive by grace through faith in His Son, Jesus. Through his experience on the road to Damascus, Saul realized the weight of his own sin, the power of this mighty God, and the only chance he had in being made right before Him: surrendering his life to Jesus. Nothing Saul did could separate him from God’s love for him in Jesus. The same is true for us!

Later, in a letter to his protégé Timothy, Saul—also known by his Greek name, Paul—wrote, “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners’—and I am the worst of them” (1 Tim. 1:15). He knew he needed God’s grace to be made right before the Father and that trusting in Jesus was his only means of being saved.

Teach the kids in your group that all of us, no matter how young or old we are, needed Jesus to come into the world to save us. The gospel transforms our hearts and propels us to share the life we’ve found in Jesus with all who will listen. How can you equip your class with the excitement and knowledge of Jesus Christ that will lead them to share of His love, just as Paul did?

TERMS TO KNOW

Christian: From the Greek noun *Christos* (“Christ” or “Messiah”) comes the word *Christianos*, meaning “belonging to Christ.” The disciples were first called “Christians” in Antioch. (Acts 11:26)



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- “Changed” activity page

Session Starter (Option 2)

- painter’s tape
- blindfolds, 2



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- countdown video

Big Picture Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- “Paul Became a Christian” video
- Bible Story Picture Poster

Questions from Kids

- “Unit 33, Session 1” questions from kids video

Missions Moment

- “The Life of Betsey Stockton” missions video
- map of the United States

Key Passage Activity

- Key Passage Poster
- “Through Him (John 3:17)” song
- worship song of your choice (optional)



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



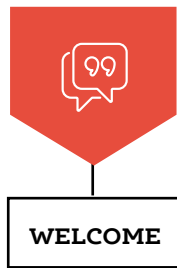
LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 2)

- dry erase board and marker

Reflection and Prayer

- Bible Story Coloring Page (optional)



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

SAY “If you could change anything about yourself, what would it be? Would you change something like your behavior or your physical abilities? Why?”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Changed” on the activity page.

SAY “Our world is full of things that change like tadpoles into frogs. But only God can change the human heart. Today, we’ll learn how Paul met Jesus and he was changed forever.”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: RUN FROM SAUL



Invite one kid to be Saul. Lead Saul to stand in the center of the room. Tell the kids that Saul will count to 10 and while he does, they need to move to one of the four corners of the room. Explain that Saul will keep his eyes closed and point to one of the four corners. Tell kids that kids in that corner are out. Play as time allows, choosing new kids to be Saul.

SAY “Today, we will learn about a man named Saul. You might know him by his Roman name Paul. Before Saul became a Christian, he wanted to put an end to the church. He went into believer’s homes, dragged them out, and put them in jail. Many believers had to flee Jerusalem. Let’s get ready to learn how Saul met Jesus and became a Christian.”

OPTION 2: WALK THE ROAD

Before the session, create two paths or “roads” using painter’s tape. Make the paths about 2 feet wide. Form kids into two teams. Tell kids that they will take turns helping their teammates walk the road blindfolded. Explain that as kids are blindfolded, their team needs to help guide the blindfolded kids down the “road” without them stepping outside the lines. Tell kids that if they step outside the lines, they are out.

Invite a kid from each team to go first and place a blindfold over their eyes. Direct kids to start walking down the “road,” listening for their teammates’ guidance. Kids can tell their teammate to “stop” “move more right” “move left” etc. The team with the most teammates left at the end of the activity wins.

SAY “You all needed help to stay on the right path. Today, we will learn about a man named Saul and how he could not see after he met Jesus. The men he was traveling with had to help lead him down the road. Let’s get ready to hear what happened to Saul.”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “ Welcome, kids! I am so glad you’re here! My name is [your name]. Today, we are going to hear a story about a man who was changed from the inside out. He still looked the same, but his heart was changed, and he began to live differently. The Bible is full of stories about people who are saved by God and changed forever. Let’s take out our Bibles as we get ready to hear our story. [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.] ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

SAY “ Today, we have a new big picture question. Our question is, **Who can be saved?** The answer to our question is such good news: **Anyone who trusts in Jesus can be forgiven of their sins and be right with God.**

What does it mean to sin? [Allow responses.] To sin is to think, say, or behave in any way that goes against God and His commands. But we can receive forgiveness and be made right with God through faith in Jesus. Let’s say our big picture question and answer together two times. **Who can be saved? Anyone who trusts in Jesus can be forgiven of their sins and be right with God.** ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “ Over the last several weeks, we have learned how the church grew and spread into Judea and Samaria. We also learned that this growth began with persecution or treating the church cruelly. As we’ll see in our Bible story today, one of those persecutors was a man named Saul. Yet, God had a plan for His church. Just as God used Peter and the other apostles to share the gospel, God also chose Saul to share the good news throughout the world. Let’s learn how God saved Saul and changed him forever. ”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Acts 9. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Paul Became a Christian.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

PAUL BECAME A CHRISTIAN

“ After Jesus died, rose from the dead, and ascended to heaven, **people in Jerusalem who believed in Jesus were persecuted**, or treated cruelly because of their faith. One of Jesus’ followers, **Stephen, was even killed. A man named Saul had watched in approval when Stephen was killed. Saul wanted to put an end to the church.** He went into the believers’ homes, dragged them out, and put them in jail. Many believers fled the city.

Saul headed to Damascus to arrest believers there, but on the way, a bright light from heaven suddenly flashed around him. Saul fell to the ground. He heard a voice saying, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?”

“Who are You, Lord?” Saul asked.

“I am Jesus,” He replied. “Get up and go into the city. Then you will be told what you must do.”

The men who were traveling with Saul were speechless. They heard the sound but saw no one. **Saul got up and opened his eyes, but he couldn’t see! So the men who were traveling with Saul led him by the hand into Damascus.**

Ananias (an uh NIGH uhs), a disciple of Jesus, lived in Damascus. The Lord spoke to Ananias in a vision. He told Ananias to go to the house where Saul was staying. Ananias knew that Saul had hurt many believers and that he arrested anyone who believed in Jesus. But **the Lord said, “Go! I have chosen this man to take my name to Gentiles, kings, and Israelites.”**

Ananias obeyed. He found Saul and told Saul that Jesus had sent him to help. Ananias put his hands on Saul, and Saul could see again. Saul got up and was baptized. For the next few days, Saul stayed with the believers in Damascus. **He began to go to the synagogues to preach about Jesus. Saul told the people, “Jesus is the Son of God!”**

The people were amazed. They recognized Saul and knew he had wanted to put an end to the church. Now he was one of them! **The Jews did not like Saul’s message. They planned to kill him, so one night Saul left the city. The disciples helped Saul escape by lowering him down the city wall in a basket.**

Later in the Bible, Saul is referred to by his Roman name, Paul.

Christ Connection: Jesus appeared to Saul and changed him inside and out. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. (1 Timothy 1:15) Jesus called Saul, who

STORYTELLING TIPS

Act it out: Act out the part of Saul as you tell the story.

Thumbs up or down: Challenge kids to hear the hard parts and good parts of the story and respond with a thumbs up when good things happen or a thumbs down when bad things happen.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

was once an enemy to Christians, to spend the rest of his life telling people the gospel and leading them to trust in Jesus. ”

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ Saul was a Pharisee who hated Christians. He thought it was OK that Stephen was stoned. In our story today, Saul was on his way to Damascus to continue arresting Christians. But before he arrived in Damascus something amazing happened. Who appeared to Saul? [Allow responses.] A bright light flashed around Saul, and he heard Jesus’ voice! Jesus asked Saul why he was persecuting Him. We’ve learned that the church is the body of Christ. So for Paul to hurt the church was the same as hurting Jesus.

Even though Saul was hurting Jesus and His church, Jesus sought Saul out—like a Shepherd who searches for a lost sheep. Jesus had a plan for Saul’s life. What happened to Saul’s eyesight after Jesus appeared to him? [Allow responses.] Saul couldn’t see. The men he was traveling with had to help him as he traveled to Damascus.

The Lord had told Ananias, a Christian man in Damascus, to help Saul. When Saul met Ananias, he regained his sight, was baptized, and even spent time with other disciples. Saul began to live differently and show that he had changed. What did Saul begin to do that showed he had changed? [Allow responses.] Saul began to preach that Jesus is the Son of God and told others that Jesus is the Messiah. Jesus said that Saul was His chosen instrument to preach the gospel throughout the world. Saul’s story reminds us that **anyone who trusts in Jesus can be forgiven of their sins and be right with God.** ”

3 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY “ Jesus appeared to Saul and changed him inside and out. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. (1 Timothy 1:15) Jesus called Saul, who was once an enemy to Christians, to spend the rest of his life telling people the gospel and leading them to trust in Jesus. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 33, Session 1” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. Why isn’t everyone saved from their sin? Are some people too bad?
2. Have you been saved by Jesus? How has Jesus changed your heart?



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Display a map of the United States and point to the State of Hawaii.

SAY “ In 1798, Betsey Stockton was born in Princeton, New Jersey. She was a slave who became a Christian while attending college classes. Later, Betsey was granted freedom from slavery and God used her to tell people in Hawaii about Jesus. ”

Play the missions video. Tell kids that Betsey believed that all Christians are called to God’s mission to share Jesus with the world. Share how Betsey felt called to take the gospel to those who had not heard. Pray that God will raise up more missionaries to share the gospel with people who have not yet heard the good news.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud John 3:17 together.

SAY “ To condemn means to declare someone guilty after weighing the evidence. We are already condemned because of our sin. We are guilty before God. Jesus came into the world to save us from our sin. He came to take the punishment we deserve. ”

Invite kids to create motions to help them remember the key passage. For example, kids could point up for “God,” shake their head no for “condemn,” cross their arms for “save the world,” etc. Challenge kids to say the key passage a few times while performing the motions.

Lead kids to sing “Through Him (John 3:17).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

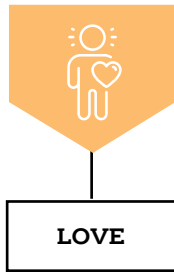
7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “ Thank You, God, for sending Your Son to earth so that we can be forgiven of our sins. Change us inside and out just like You did for Paul. Help us tell others about how Jesus saves us from our sins. Amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the New Testament Israel Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Acts 9. Explain the book of Acts was written by Luke, a physician and friend of Saul. Tell kids that later in the book of Acts, Saul goes by his Roman name Paul as he takes the gospel to both Jews and Gentiles.

Consider pointing out the location of Damascus (A8) on the New Testament Israel Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Acts 9:20-21 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verses aloud.

SAY “ Why do you think the people who heard Saul preaching Jesus were amazed? [Allow responses.] Everyone knew Saul as a man who hated Christians and wanted to arrest Christians. Now, Saul was sharing that Jesus is the Son of God.

When Saul met Jesus, his life was never the same. Saul had changed from the inside out. Jesus does the same for us. When we trust in Him as our Savior, He changes our hearts so that we no longer want to live for ourselves but for Him. We want to tell everyone how Jesus saves us from sin and gives us new life. ”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY “ What caused Saul to change? ”

Remind kids that Saul did nothing in his own power to change. Discuss how Jesus changed Saul and even though he became physically blind, he truly was able to see and believe who Jesus is. Lead kids to remember that we are never too sinful for Jesus to save us. **Anyone who trusts in Jesus can be forgiven of their sins and be right with God.**

SAY “ It took courage for Ananias to obey God and go to Saul. How can we have courage to obey God even when it might be hard or scary? ”

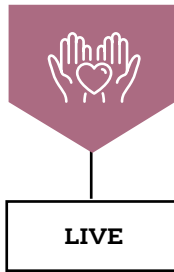
Discuss how God never calls us to do something that isn't ultimately for our good. Discuss how we can have courage as we trust God's character and believe that He always wants what is best for us. Tell kids that Ananias had an opportunity to see the power of God and how He can truly save anyone.

SAY “ How has God changed you? What are ways you can ask God to change you? ”

Answers will vary. Encourage kids to remember that we are all sinful and that when we trust in Jesus, He does begin to change us. Challenge kids to think about how they need God's grace to help them be more like Jesus. Invite kids to learn more about how they can be changed through saving faith in Christ.

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: SHIP TO SHORE



Tell kids that Betsey Stockton traveled by sea to Hawaii on a ship called *Thames*. Share that the long journey from Connecticut to Hawaii took over five months. Invite kids to play a game where they try to get from the ship to the shore and vice versa. Designate one side of the room as “ship” and the other side as “shore.” Tell kids that when you call “ship” or “shore” they need to run to the appropriate side. Explain that the last kid to reach either side is out. Consider adding in other actions such as shouting “hit the deck” and directing kids to lay on their bellies or “crow’s nest” and leading kids to form a group of three. Share that any kid who fails to complete these orders is out. Play until time is up.

SAY “ When Betsey was saved, God changed her desires. Even with such a long and dangerous journey by ship, Betsey desired to share the gospel with the people of Hawaii. We can ask God to help us be faithful to share the good news of Jesus as well. ”

OPTION 2: SAUL CHANGED



Play a game similar to hangman but instead of adding parts to build a man, you will draw a stick figure and add parts as kids answer correctly. For example, on a dry erase board draw a stick figure with only head, arms, legs, and body. As kids answer the questions correctly add parts such as eyes, nose, mouth, ears, beard, hat, and so on. Create true or false questions for kids to answer such as “Saul met Jesus on the road to Damascus” (true); “Saul could see after he met Jesus” (false); “Ananias helped Saul see again” (true); etc. Consider asking for volunteers to answer the questions by raising their hands.

SAY “ As you responded with either true or false, the stick figure began to change. He was given eyes, a nose, a mouth. This reminds me of how Saul changed from the inside out because Jesus saved Him from his sins. **Anyone who trusts in Jesus can be forgiven of their sins and be right with God.** Jesus changes us, like He did Paul, when we trust in Him. ”

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask the kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids.

If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.



UNIT 33 | SESSION 2

PAUL BECAME A MISSIONARY

ACTS 13-14

KEY PASSAGE:

John 3:17

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

Who can be saved? Anyone who trusts in Jesus can be forgiven of their sins and be right with God.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

God had a plan for Paul to share the gospel with Gentiles, no matter what troubles he faced. Many believed in Jesus. The church grew and the gospel spread so that people all over the world could be saved from their sins by trusting in Jesus.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION



LEADER Bible Study

The beginnings of Paul’s journey as a missionary in Acts 13–14 showcased the power and providence of God, even amid harsh persecution. From being sent out and set apart by the Holy Spirit to being wrongly celebrated as gods and experiencing mistreatment and stonings, Paul remained fixed on the hope he found in Jesus. No matter the circumstances he faced, he kept proclaiming Jesus’ name and paving the way for the gospel to be known around the world.

What patterns do we see in Paul’s life that propelled the gospel farther? What role do hardships play in our spiritual lives as we, too, seek to live on mission for Christ and His good news of salvation?

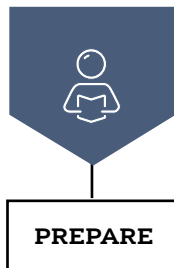
As we read of Paul’s journeys, we find that he continually sought to abide in Christ through the spiritual disciplines of fasting, prayer, and sharing the gospel. We also see that he did not back down from difficult situations; not even false prophets and sorcerers could derail him from proclaiming God’s truth! Despite the grueling hassles of life on the road and not having a place to call home, Paul chose obedience to God’s calling above any earthly comfort as he trusted the glories of heaven far outweighed any momentary affliction.

While many insulted Paul, opposed him, and rejected the words of life he spoke, he shook the dust off his feet and pressed on, filled with joy and the Holy Spirit. This same Spirit that filled Paul and sustained him on his missionary journeys also lives in us who trust in Christ. Paul’s dependence on the Spirit and his obedience to the gospel mission provide a model for us to follow as we seek to live on mission.

Encourage the kids you lead to recognize Paul’s perseverance and how the love of Jesus compelled him to share the gospel no matter the difficulties he faced. Ask the Lord to assist you as you live out this conviction through teaching it to the next generation of Christ followers.

TERMS TO KNOW

Missionary: a Christian chosen by God who obeys His command to go and tell another group of people the good news about Jesus



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- "A-Maze-ing Missions" activity page

Session Starter (Option 2)

- obstacle course items such as a chair, table, book, etc.
- timer or stopwatch



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- countdown video

Big Picture Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- "Paul Became a Missionary" video
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- New Testament Mediterranean Map (optional)

Questions from Kids

- "Unit 33, Session 2" questions from kids video

Missions Moment

- "Betsey Stockton Photo" printable

Key Passage Activity

- Key Passage Poster
- "Through Him (John 3:17)" song
- worship song of your choice (optional)
- note cards, 1 per kid



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- circular slices of string cheese, 1 per kid
- long pieces of string cheese, 1 per kid
- thin triangular sliced kiwis, 3 per kid
- triangular pineapple slices, 5 per kid
- paper plates, 1 per kid

Activity Choice (Option 2)

- Big Picture Question Poster
- index cards

Reflection and Prayer

- Bible Story Coloring Page (optional)



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

SAY “ If you were going on a journey, what things would you make sure to have with you? Why? What do you think is the most important to take? ”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “A-Maze-ing Missions” on the activity page.

SAY “ In today’s Bible story, we are going to discover how Paul traveled to all these places, telling others about Jesus, as he became a missionary. ”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: CHOSEN



Lead kids to sit in a large circle. Explain that while they close their eyes, you will tap one kid on the head to perform a mission. Assign the mission by whispering it in the kid’s ear. Consider choosing one of the following missions: turn off the lights, place a ball in the middle of the circle, take off your shoes, move to a different spot in the room, etc. Tell kids that when they open their eyes, they need to determine what the kid’s mission was. Offer hints if kids are unable to determine it right away. Continue playing, choosing different kids for a new mission each round.

SAY “ When kids were chosen, they had a specific mission assigned to them. Today, we will learn how Paul was chosen for a specific mission by God. Paul was called to be a missionary, traveling to many cities while preaching the good news of Jesus. Let’s get ready to learn more. ”

OPTION 2: OBSTACLE JOURNEY

Before the session, create an obstacle course using items present in the room such as a table the kids must go under, a chair they must go around, a book they must step over, a Bible they must pick up along the way, etc. Reveal the specific path kids must follow on their obstacle journey. Tell kids that you will time them as they travel through the obstacle course. Challenge kids to complete the course as fast as they can without straying from the correct path you showed them. Reveal the top three fastest times. Consider having a showdown of the top three fastest times to determine the final winner

SAY “ The journey you traveled around the room had quite a few obstacles to overcome. The apostle Paul also faced obstacles on his missionary journeys. Today, we will learn how Paul became a missionary and some of the obstacles he faced as he shared the gospel. ”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “ Hi, kids! My name is [your name]. I am glad you are here as we uncover more truths from God’s Word and learn how Paul became a missionary. If you have your Bible, please take it out. [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.]

The Bible tells us the best news ever! Through God’s Word, we learn that God loves us so much, He sent His Son, Jesus, to save us from our sins. The apostle Paul believed this good news needed to be shared with everyone. Today, we will learn how Paul became a missionary and traveled to different cities while preaching the gospel. ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

SAY “ Let’s review our big picture question. Does anyone remember it? [Allow responses.] Our big picture question is, **Who can be saved?** Does anyone remember the answer? [Allow responses.] **Anyone who trusts in Jesus can be forgiven of their sins and be right with God.**

Last week, we learned that Saul (who was also called Paul) was saved from his sins when he met Jesus on the road to Damascus. Paul’s encounter with Jesus not only saved him from his sins, but changed his life so much that he desired to tell everyone the good news. In today’s Bible story, we’ll learn how Paul became a missionary and wanted to tell all people about Jesus. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “ Last week, we learned how Paul became a Christian. Paul encountered Jesus on the road to Damascus and his life was never the same. We heard how God changed Paul from the inside out. He started to preach that Jesus is the Son of God. Today, we will learn how Paul became a missionary, and how he shared the good news of Jesus with all people, whether Jew or Gentile. ”



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Acts 13–14. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Paul Became a Missionary.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

PAUL BECAME A MISSIONARY

“ After Saul left Damascus, he first traveled to Jerusalem and then to Tarsus. Later, Barnabas brought Saul to Antioch. **Saul, who was also known by his Roman name, Paul, was with the church in Antioch. The Holy Spirit chose Paul and another believer, Barnabas, for a special work. So they obeyed and left Antioch. God led Paul and Barnabas to tell the good news about Jesus to not only the Jews, but the Gentiles—or people who were not Jews.**

Paul and Barnabas traveled to Lystra (LISS truh). Paul healed a man there who had never been able to walk. The people saw what Paul had done, and they thought Paul and Barnabas were gods! They began to worship them, but Paul and Barnabas tore their clothes and shouted, “No! We are not gods. We are men just like you! We want to tell you the good news of God.”

Then some people showed up from Antioch and Iconium (igh KOH nih uhm), cities where Paul and Barnabas had preached about Jesus. These people caused trouble so that the people in Lystra turned against Paul and Barnabas, too. They threw stones at Paul and dragged him out of the city. They thought he was dead, but the believers in Lystra gathered around Paul, and he got up.

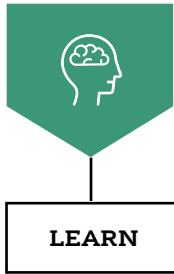
The next day, Paul and Barnabas went to the city of Derbe (DUHR bih). They told people there about Jesus, and many people believed. Then Paul and Barnabas went back to Lystra and to Iconium. They encouraged the believers there to continue in the faith. They told the believers that they would face suffering because they believed in Jesus. Paul and Barnabas also chose leaders for the churches.

Christ Connection: God had a plan for Paul to share the gospel with Gentiles, no matter what troubles he faced. Many believed in Jesus. The church grew and the gospel spread so that people all over the world could be saved from their sins by trusting in Jesus. ”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Point to a map: Display the New Testament Mediterranean Map. Point to the cities of Antioch (E9), Antioch of Pisidia (D8), Lystra (E8), Iconium (D8), and Derbe (D8) when you tell about them in the story.

Pretend to travel: As you tell the story, move about the room and pretend you are traveling to the different cities mentioned. Invite kids to change locations with you.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ Last week, we learned how Saul, also called Paul, became a Christian. Does anyone remember how Paul changed? [Allow responses.] Once an enemy to Christians, Paul began sharing Jesus with others. After Paul spent time with other believers, the Holy Spirit chose Paul and Barnabas to become missionaries. A missionary is a Christian chosen by God who obeys His command to go and tell another group of people the good news about Jesus.

Paul and Barnabas began their missionary travels and went to the town of Lystra. But in Lystra, after Paul healed a man, Paul encountered an obstacle. What did the people in Lystra start to do to Paul and Barnabas? [Allow responses.] They began to worship them. Paul told the people that they were not gods. He tried to tell them about the one true God and His Son, Jesus.

Paul and Barnabas faced more trouble when some Jews from Iconium and Antioch turned people against them. Paul was dragged out of the city and stoned. Why do you think Paul didn't stop sharing about Jesus after almost being killed? [Allow responses.] Paul was willing to risk his life for the gospel because the gospel is the only way for people to be saved. When people hear about Jesus and trust in Him, they are saved from their sins.

Even though Paul and Barnabas had hardships on their missionary journey, many people trusted in Jesus. God chose Paul to be a missionary, and He used Paul to help people experience salvation and a changed life through faith in Jesus. ”

3 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY “ God had a plan for Paul to share the gospel with Gentiles, no matter what troubles he faced. Many believed in Jesus. The church grew and the gospel spread so that people all over the world could be saved from their sins by trusting in Jesus. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 33, Session 2” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. Why is the gospel called “good news” if Jesus had to die?
2. Who can you share the good news of Jesus with this week?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Display the “Betsey Stockton Photo” as you tell the kids about the missionary.

SAY “ Betsey Stockton left for Hawaii with a team of missionaries. After a little over five months at sea, they arrived in Hawaii in April 1823. Betsey became the first unmarried American woman to travel overseas as a missionary, and the first African American woman to arrive in Hawaii.

Betsey was soon assigned to a mission in Lahaina (lah-HIGH-nah), Maui. She received permission to start a school for the Maka'ainana (MAH-kah ay-NAH-nah) people. Betsey learned the Hawaiian



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

native language. She taught history, English, Latin, and algebra at the school. ”

Tell kids the missionaries believed that Betsey’s work of helping the people to read and write was important for the people to understand the Bible. Share how Betsey also helped train the native Hawaiian teachers, who continued her work after she left Hawaii. Explain that although Betsey was only in Hawaii for two years, her work improved her skills as a teacher, had an impact on the native Hawaiian children, and helped the Hawaiian people see the importance of education. Pray, thanking God for Betsey’s willingness to travel to Hawaii to share the gospel. Ask God to call more missionaries who will take the gospel to more people groups.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud John 3:17 together.

SAY “ Let’s create a note card of our key passage that we can give to someone who needs to hear the good news of Jesus. ”

Provide each kid with a blank note card. Lead kids to write the key passage on the note card by copying it from their Bible or from the key passage poster. Assist kids as needed.

Lead kids to sing “Through Him (John 3:17).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

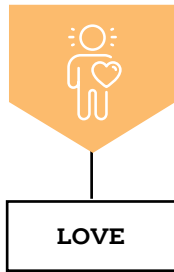
7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “ God, thank You for the example that Paul set for us to follow as we share the good news with others. Help us be brave like Paul and share the good news with others. Amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the New Testament Mediterranean Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Acts 13. Explain after the first four books of the New Testament called the Gospels, we find the book of Acts. Tell kids that Acts can be broken into four divisions: the church in Jerusalem (chapters 1–7), the church in Judea and Samaria (chapters 8–12), the church in Gentile territories (chapters 13–20), and Paul’s trials and voyage to Rome (chapters 21–28).

Consider pointing out the location of Antioch of Pisidia (D8) on the New Testament Israel Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Acts 13:47 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verses aloud.

SAY “ Paul became a Christian when the bright light of Jesus shone around him. Even though Paul was blinded by the light, his spiritual eyes were opened to see and believe in Jesus. The Holy Spirit then set apart Paul to be a missionary to not only Jews but to the Gentiles. Paul was called to shine the light of Jesus on all people so that they could hear and believe the good news. ”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY “ Even though Paul and Barnabas faced troubles in the cities they went to, what was something good that happened? ”

Discuss how Paul and Barnabas led many people to trust in Jesus. Tell kids that they did not let their hardships keep them from telling people the most important news. Remind kids that they also showed others that Jesus is worth everything, even losing their lives. Tell kids that many churches were started as well.

SAY “ Why does God call missionaries? ”

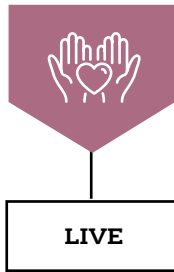
Remind kids that a missionary is a Christian chosen by God who obeys His command to go and tell another group of people the good news of Jesus. Discuss how missionaries are called to share the gospel because there may not be another Christian presence. Remind kids that all people need to hear the gospel to have an opportunity to trust in Jesus.

SAY “ God had a plan for Paul’s life even when he suffered. How can this truth encourage you when you face hard times? ”

Answers will vary. Remind kids that we are loved by God and that He always wants what is best for us. Tell kids that sometimes challenging times make us run to God more and help us trust Him in ways we never could without the challenges. Help kids understand that God is with us and gives us courage, like He did for Paul, when we have hardships.

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 **ACTIVITY CHOICE** (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: EDIBLE PICTURES



Provide each kid with one circular slice of string cheese, a long piece of string cheese, three thinly triangular sliced kiwis, five triangular pineapple slices, and a paper plate. Tell kids the state flower of Hawaii is the Pua Aloalo (POO-wah AH-low-AH-low), or yellow hibiscus. Lead kids to make an edible picture of the yellow hibiscus using their foods. Direct kids to place the circular slice of cheese in the center of their plate and arrange the triangular pineapple slices around the cheese to create the petals of the flower. Next, make the leaves by placing the kiwis outside the petals. Finally, place the long piece of string cheese extending from the center of the flower outward. Invite kids to eat their edible picture.

SAY “ Hawaii has a beautiful state flower! Betsey Stockton followed God’s call to tell the people of Hawaii about Jesus. Like Paul, she was willing to go to a far away place so people could hear the good news and be saved from their sin. ”

OPTION 2: BIG PICTURE SCRAMBLE



Before the session, write each word of the big picture answer on individual index cards. Create two sets. For larger groups, create additional sets.

Form kids into two teams. Lead each team to line up on one side of the room. Tell kids that on your start, one kid from each team will race to grab an index card that has a word from the big picture answer. Explain that teams will need to find each word to complete the big picture answer. When you say “Go,” throw the cards in the air and call the first kid from each team to grab one. Then tell another kid to come grab the next one and so on. Tell kids if they get a word they already have and do not need, they must send a kid to return the card and choose another. The first team to complete the big picture answer wins.

SAY “ **Anyone who trusts in Jesus can be forgiven of their sins and be right with God.** Paul had experienced forgiveness and wanted to tell others this good news. Like Paul, we can share the gospel and pray others are saved. ”

2 **REFLECTION AND PRAYER** (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask the kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids.

If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.



UNIT 33 | SESSION 3

JESUS CAN FORGIVE ANYONE

2 CORINTHIANS 5

KEY PASSAGE:

John 3:17

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

Who can be saved? Anyone who trusts in Jesus can be forgiven of their sins and be right with God.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

Jesus can forgive anyone. When we trust in Jesus, God forgives our sin and invites us into His family. He calls us to tell others about Him so they might believe in Jesus and be saved.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION



LEADER Bible Study

One theme Paul wrote about in the book of 2 Corinthians is the forgiveness of God through Jesus Christ. He shared of his own need for reconciliation with God and how he—like us—had been tasked with taking part in the Lord’s ministry of reconciliation. Being a part of God’s family means bringing others into His kingdom, too.

How can anyone be forgiven of their sins? What does it look like to live as one forgiven by God?

Like Paul, we are all in need of the Lord’s forgiveness because we have all sinned against Him. Paul reminded the Corinthian church that forgiveness of sins has been made possible through Christ’s perfect sacrifice. It is faith in Jesus alone that reconciles us to God, and it is faith in Jesus by which our sins are not counted against us. Through Jesus’ willing sacrifice on our behalf, He was made sin so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God. Thus, forgiveness is given to anyone who turns to Christ as Savior and Lord.

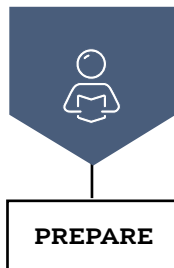
Paul continued to encourage the Corinthians to live as forgiven people who are compelled by the love of Christ to share the gospel with others. No longer should we live for ourselves, seeking after the ways of the world. Rather, we live as new creations,

set on making much of Jesus and declaring how only He can reconcile us to God. The hearts of forgiven people saved by grace have a deep desire for others to know the love of Jesus and be saved.

As you prepare for this session, consider the forgiveness you’ve received from God. How has repentance played a role in your life as a believer? What is your testimony of being brought from death to life, and how can you share it with the kids in your class? Ask God to make the reality of His power to save and forgive real in the hearts and minds of your class today.

DOCTRINE TO KNOW

Christ as Reconciliation: Through Christ’s death, God provides the means whereby the broken relationship between God and humanity is restored and renewed.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- “What’s the Good News?” activity page



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- countdown video

Big Picture Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- “Jesus Can Forgive Anyone” video
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- small wooden cross or picture of a cross (optional)

Questions from Kids

- “Unit 33, Session 3” questions from kids video

Missions Moment

- “Betsey Stockton Photo” printable

Key Passage Activity

- Key Passage Poster
- “Through Him (John 3:17)” song
- worship song of your choice (optional)
- index cards



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- hula hoops, 5 or 6
- music

Activity Choice (Option 2)

- dry erase board and marker

Reflection and Prayer

- Bible Story Coloring Page (optional)



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

| **SAY** “What are some animals in creation that change? How do they change?”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “What’s the Good News?” on the activity page.

| **SAY** “The Bible tells us good news; news that really is life-changing. Today, we will learn how anyone who trusts in Jesus is forgiven of sin and given new life.”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: TRANSFORM PAPER

Provide each kid with a piece of paper. Challenge kids to transform their paper into an airplane. Allow kids a few minutes, offering assistance as needed. Then invite kids to test their paper planes by flying them across the room. Consider creating a contest to see whose plane can fly the farthest.

If time allows, challenge kids to see other ways they can transform their paper such as a star or an envelope.

| **SAY** “Through some simple folding, we were able to transform the paper into new creations. In our story today, we’ll learn that God does more than change the outside. He changes us from the inside out to make us new creations that live to glorify Him. Let’s learn how the apostle Paul helps us understand how we have new life in Jesus.”

OPTION 2: EXCHANGE PLACES



Form kids into two even groups. Assign each kid from both groups a number, making sure both groups use the same numbers. If groups are uneven, choose one kid to have two numbers. Lead groups to line up on opposite sides of the room.

Tell kids that you will call out a number such as “two.” Explain that both kids assigned the number two will run to swap places. Tell kids that whoever is first to get to their spot earns a point. Continue playing, calling out different numbers each time. For even more of a challenge, call out multiple numbers each time. The kid with the most points wins.

| **SAY** “What an exciting game! Each time your number was called you had to exchange places. This reminds me of something we’ll learn in our Bible story today. Paul taught us that Jesus came to earth and took our place as He was punished for our sin. Because of what Jesus did, we can now have forgiveness of our sins.”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “ Hello! It is so great to see you! My name is [your name]. I am so excited to share a story from God’s Word with you from the book of 2 Corinthians. Did you bring your Bible with you? If so, please take it out. [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.]

The book of 2 Corinthians was written by Paul. Last week, we learned that God called Paul to be a missionary. Corinth was one of the cities where Paul preached the gospel. Later, he wrote the church a letter to help them in their faith. Let’s get ready to learn how Paul told them that Jesus can forgive anyone. ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

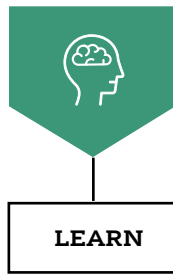
SAY “ Who can answer our big picture question: **Who can be saved?** [Allow responses.] Our answer is, **Anyone who trusts in Jesus can be forgiven of their sins and be right with God.**

Our story today helps us understand why trusting in Jesus is the only way to be forgiven and saved from our sins. We can’t do good deeds or go to church enough to have our sins forgiven. Only faith in Jesus forgives us of our sins and makes us right with God. We are made right with God because our sins have been forgiven. As we’ll learn, Jesus took our punishment on Himself when He died on the cross for our sins. Now, when we trust in Him, we can be forgiven. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “ Over the past couple of weeks, we have learned how God changed Paul’s life. He went from a persecutor of the church to one who was now starting churches in new cities throughout the world. Paul’s life had changed so much that he was willing to risk losing his life so others could hear the good news. Today, we will learn how Paul wrote to the Corinthian church to remind them of Jesus’ forgiveness and encourage them to make the gospel known to others. ”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to 2 Corinthians 5. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Jesus Can Forgive Anyone.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

JESUS CAN FORGIVE ANYONE

“ In his second letter to the church at Corinth, Paul wrote to encourage the believers. Paul reminded them that because of Jesus, God forgives our sin and invites us into His family forever. He loves us, and He calls all of us to tell people about Jesus so they might believe and become part of God’s family too.

Paul wrote, “We know what it is like to fear God because we will have to answer for our sins.” **Paul used to be an enemy of God, but Jesus saved him! Apart from Jesus, all sinners are enemies of God. Paul wanted to share the good news that Jesus came into the world to rescue sinners.**

Paul wrote, “We are compelled to obey God and to share Christ because He loves us, and we love Him. **We know this truth: Jesus died for all, and therefore all died. And He died for all so that those who live should no longer live for themselves, but for the one who died for them and was raised.**” Paul wanted others to hear the gospel so they might hear and believe in Jesus.

Jesus changes everything. To some people, Paul seemed like he was out of his mind. Why would anyone be content with a difficult life? But Paul believed any suffering was worth it if it brought glory to God. **Paul wrote, “Once we follow Jesus, we see the world differently. If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, and see, the new has come!”**

Then Paul wrote, “Everything is from God, who has brought us to Himself through Christ.” Something amazing happened when Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead. **Jesus gave up His life to rescue sinners, and God was pleased with Jesus’ sacrifice.**

Paul said that Christ has made us acceptable to God, and He gives us the mission of bringing others to Him through Christ. “So we are ambassadors for Christ. **God can use us to reach other people. We can tell others, ‘Be made right with God. He made Jesus—who never sinned—to be sin for us, so that in Jesus we might become the righteousness of God.’**”

Christ Connection: Jesus can forgive anyone. When we trust in Jesus, God forgives our sin and invites us into His family. He calls us to tell others about Him so they might believe in Jesus and be saved. ”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Cheer: Lead kids to cheer every time the Bible story mentions Jesus’ love, forgiveness, or salvation.

Show a cross: Display a small wooden cross or pass around a picture of a cross as you tell the Bible story. Remind kids that Jesus died on the cross so we can be forgiven of our sins.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ Paul sent a letter to remind the church in Corinth that through Jesus, God forgives sin and invites everyone to be a part of His family. Paul wrote, ‘We know what it is like to fear God because we will have to answer for our sins.’ What does that mean to fear God? **[Allow responses.]** Fearing God is not the same as fearing something like spiders. The fear of God is an attitude of respect. We recognize that God is holy and just. He knows and will judge every thought, word, and action. When we fear God, we understand that we are sinful and that our sin deserves to be punished. But there’s good news! God loves us and made a way for us to be forgiven. Through faith in Jesus, we receive forgiveness of our sins.

Paul said that trusting in Jesus changes everything. How do we change when we trust in Jesus? **[Allow responses.]** Jesus died for our sins by taking our punishment on Himself. He makes us into new creations by giving us changed hearts. Now, we want to follow Jesus and live for Him.

Paul said that faith in Jesus makes us right with God. God also gives us a job to do. What job do we now have? **[Allow responses.]** Our job is to now tell others how they can be forgiven of their sins. We share the good news of the gospel so they can have new life and be made right with God.

Jesus died on the cross for our sin. He was sinless but took our punishment for sin. When we trust in Jesus, we are forgiven and God no longer counts our sin against us. Now, God looks at us and doesn’t see our sin, but Jesus’ righteousness. ”

3 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY “ Jesus can forgive anyone. When we trust in Jesus, God forgives our sin and invites us into His family. He calls us to tell others about Him so they might believe in Jesus and be saved. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 33, Session 3” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. How do we become new creations in Christ?
2. Why is Jesus worth giving our lives to?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Display the “Betsey Stockton Photo” as you tell the kids about the missionary.

SAY “ When Betsey Stockton became a Christian she wanted to be a missionary in Africa. However, God ended up leading Betsey to serve as a missionary in Hawaii. While traveling to Hawaii, Betsey became friends with Charles Samuel Stewart and his wife, Harriet. Betsey taught at the school she helped start until Harriet became sick and needed to return home. Even though Betsey had to leave Hawaii, her work helped train other teachers and more than 8,000 Hawaiians were taught in the school by 1826. ”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

Tell kids that later Betsey became a teacher to preschoolers in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Share that Betsey went on to teach in other schools, but she eventually moved back to Princeton. Explain that at Princeton, Betsey served as founder, director, and active teacher in schools for the African American community. Tell kids that she also helped start the first African American Presbyterian Church in Princeton, which is now known as the Witherspoon Street Presbyterian Church. Close in prayer, asking God to send more missionaries into the world who will teach others the good news of Jesus Christ.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Before the session, write each word of the key passage on individual index cards. Create two sets. Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud John 3:17 together.

SAY “Our Bible story today helps us know that Jesus forgives anyone that is willing to ask for forgiveness and put their trust in Jesus.”

Form kids into two groups and give each group a set of index cards with the key passage. Challenge each group to put the cards in order of the key passage. If time allows, mix up the cards and remove one card from each team. Then, the first team that can put the verse in order and know what word is missing, wins round two. Continue to shuffle and remove a card as time allows.

Lead kids to sing “Through Him (John 3:17).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

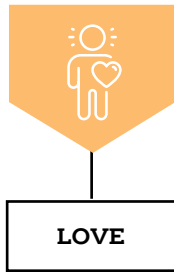
7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “God, thank You, that You forgive us of all our sin when we trust in Jesus. Help us live for You and tell others how they can be forgiven. Amen.”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the New Testament Mediterranean Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to 2 Corinthians 5. Tell kids that Paul preached and lived in Corinth (D5) for a year and a half. Explain that during his time there, he worked as a tentmaker to earn money. Share that the church in Corinth was made of Jewish and Gentile believers.

Consider pointing out the location of Antioch of Corinth (D5) on the New Testament Israel Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud 2 Corinthians 5:14-15 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verses aloud.

SAY “ Paul wants us to remember the love God has for us. God proved His love for us by sending Jesus to die for our sins. Jesus died not only to give us eternal life, but to also change us so we can live for Him now.

When we live for Jesus, we help others see how they can have forgiveness and new life too. Living for Jesus can look like being honest, choosing to serve others, and speaking kind words. As we live for Jesus, we glorify God. ”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

| **SAY** “ Who took your punishment for sin? Why? ”

Remind kids that Jesus took our punishment for sin. Tell kids that Jesus did this because He loves us, and His death and resurrection is the only way we can have forgiveness. Explain that only Jesus’ death on the cross provided the perfect sacrifice our sin required.

| **SAY** “ Are some people too sinful to be forgiven? Why not? ”

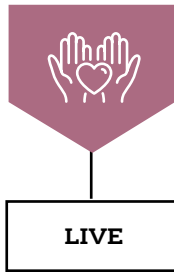
Discuss how no one is too sinful to be forgiven of their sins. Remind kids that the apostle Paul was a murderer before he became a Christian. Tell kids that God’s grace is greater than all of our sin. Explain that Jesus’ sacrifice covers all our sin for all time.

| **SAY** “ Who does God use to share the good news of Jesus with others? ”

Encourage kids to remember that God uses Christians to share the gospel. Tell kids that Paul said we are God’s ambassadors and that we are meant to represent Jesus to the world and live to tell others about Him. Lead kids to think about people they know who may need to hear about Jesus. Invite kids to discuss how they would share the gospel with others.

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 **ACTIVITY CHOICE** (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: MUSICAL ISLANDS



Remind kids that Betsey Stockton served as a missionary to an island of Hawaii called Maui. Place five or six hula hoops on the floor in a large circle. Explain that kids will play “Musical Islands.” Share that when the music starts, everyone must begin walking around the hula hoops. Tell kids that when the music stops, all kids must jump into an “island” hoop. Explain that if a kid doesn’t fit in a hoop, he is out. Play a few rounds and remove “islands” until kids who remain after each round are trying to squeeze into just one or two islands.

SAY “As the game progressed, some of you were left out of an island. It became harder and harder to fit everyone inside the hula hoops. Thankfully, God never leaves us out of the opportunity to find forgiveness through Jesus. Just as Betsey Stockton shared the gospel with the people of Hawaii, we have the opportunity to tell others how Jesus can forgive anyone of their sins.”

OPTION 2: BEFORE AND AFTER



On a dry erase board, create two columns titled *Before* and *After*. Prompt kids to think about the apostle Paul. Challenge kids to describe what Paul was like before he became a Christian and write down their responses in the *Before* column. Responses may include *Pharisee, followed the law, hated Christians, persecuted the church, etc.* Then challenge kids to describe Paul after he became a Christian. Answers may include *shared the gospel, became a missionary, boldness to share the good news, willing to die for the gospel, planted churches, etc.*

SAY “Today, we learned that anyone can be forgiven of their sins when they trust in Jesus. The apostle Paul is an example of Jesus’ forgiveness. We also learned that when we trust in Jesus, He changes us. Like Paul changed, we can change to no longer live for ourselves but for Jesus. We can help others know how they can be forgiven too.”

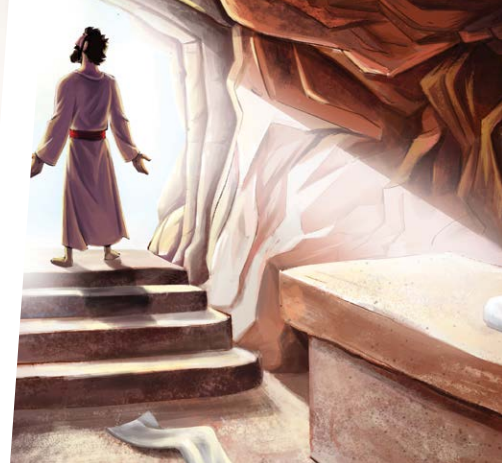
2 **REFLECTION AND PRAYER** (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask the kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids.

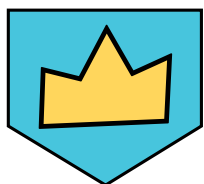
If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.



THE GOSPEL

GOD'S PLAN FOR US

The gospel is the good news, the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use these prompts to share the gospel with your kids.



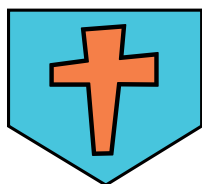
GOD RULES.

Ask: "Who is in charge at home?" Explain that because God created everything, He is in charge of everything. Read Revelation 4:11.



WE SINNED.

Ask: "Have you ever done something wrong?" Tell kids that everyone sins, or disobeys God. Our sin separates us from God. Read Romans 3:23.



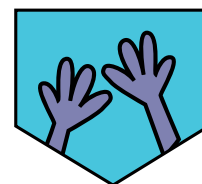
GOD PROVIDED.

Explain that God is holy and must punish sin. God sent His Son, Jesus, to take the punishment we deserve. Read John 3:16.



JESUS GIVES.

Ask: "What is the best gift you've ever received?" Say that Jesus took our punishment for sin by giving His life, and He gives us His righteousness. God sees us as if we lived the perfect life Jesus lived. This is the best gift ever!
Read
2 Corinthians 5:21.



WE RESPOND.

Explain that everyone has a choice to make. Ask: "Will you trust Jesus as your Savior and Lord? You can turn from self and sin and turn to Jesus." Read Romans 10:9-10.

THE GOSPEL PROJECT

The Gospel Project is designed to help your kids **LEARN** the gospel story of Scripture, **LOVE** the Author and Subject of that gospel story, and then to **LIVE** out their part in this ongoing gospel story.

WE'RE HERE TO HELP!

WEEKLY AUDIO HELPS:

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