

BELIEVE AND CONFESS
SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: ROMANS 10:1-17

Salvation in Christ is free for all to believe.

The STORY

Pray with children to start class.

Teaching Points for Class Discussion:

Salvation can not be earned. Paul hammers away at the idea that righteousness can not be earned. Paul repeats that we are saved by faith and not by our own works. He wants to ensure that his hearers know that our righteousness comes from Christ and not from what we do. This is important because some, especially in Paul's day, rejected the message and insisted on continuing to follow the law as a means to justify themselves before God. Paul's desire and prayers were for the salvation of Israel.

Salvation is near. Paul wanted to be sure that everyone was clear that the required work of righteousness has been done by God. Paul suggests that to try and be righteous by the law is like bringing Christ down from heaven by your own power or causing Christ to rise from the dead by your own power. The point is that God has already done these things! There is no more work to be done but to believe the word that is near us. The word is already in our mouths and in our hearts. We simply need to believe what we know and confess our belief and trust in the Lord. Then we will be saved. Salvation is not far away. Salvation is near.

Salvation is spread by preaching the gospel. The good news is the message that all the requirements of the law have been met in Christ! All the work is done! All across the land people were and are trying to earn their salvation. We need to share the good news that the work is done. All that is left is for us to believe!

It sounds simple, but Paul was aware that not everyone who heard the message accepted the message. Many of the Jews refused to believe, just as the prophets had predicted. Often the Gentiles accepted the message of the gospel which the Jews rejected.

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WHERE IS THE GOSPEL?

Please use the following comments connecting today's lesson to the Gospel to help inform your understanding and serve you by aiding your preparation for class. Remember, we want to do more than present disconnected Bible stories and lessons to our young children. We want them to understand how each story in the Bible plays a part in God's greater plan of redemption.

This is one of the clearest passages which addresses our responsibility toward God in salvation.

We must believe that the Jesus who was crucified was also raised from the dead. Though this belief is a requirement for salvation, we cannot simply believe unless God first extends His saving grace. This is because we were completely dead in our sins. When we hear the words of the gospel, the Spirit of God uses them to give us a new heart so that we might believe and confess.

ON THE ROAD TO EMMANUS

Read the following Bible passage from the Old Testament. Use the following questions to help the children understand how this passage points to Christ in the New Testament.

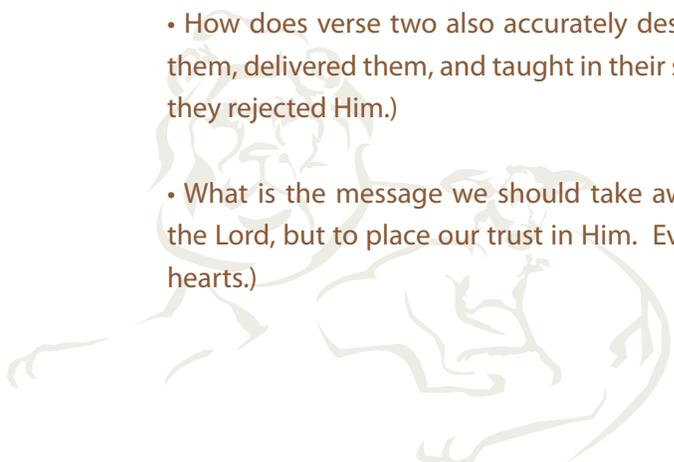
Bible Passage: Isaiah 65:1,2

Connecting the passage to Christ:

Paul connects this passage to Christ in Romans 10:20. Paul pulls the rebellion of Israel in Isaiah's day forward and speaks of Israel's rejection of Jesus. Jesus is the subject of this passage. Jesus is the one who was rejected by the Jews, the very ones who sought after the Messiah. The Gentiles, however, who did not seek after the Messiah, found a Savior in Jesus.

Questions for reflection:

- How does verse two also accurately describe Jesus? (Jesus ministered among the Jews. He healed them, delivered them, and taught in their synagogues proclaiming the good news of the kingdom. But they rejected Him.)
- What is the message we should take away for our own lives? (We need to be careful not to reject the Lord, but to place our trust in Him. Every sin that led the Jews to reject Christ is active in our own hearts.)



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SWORD BIBLE MEMORY**BE A DOER OF THE WORD**

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

ACTIVITIES & OBJECT LESSONS

Use the following activities for practical application and discovery of this lesson. For the younger children, review the preschool questions and use them to help the children relate to the passage. For older children, ask them why they think this passage is in the Bible for us today. How is it supposed to affect our lives?

BEAUTIFUL SHOES**Supplies:**

an old pair of shoes
sprayed gold with sequins
glued to it (the more
gaudy the sequins, the
better)

Use this object lesson to bring out the correct meaning of Romans 10:15.

Have a volunteer ask you about your shoes. Tell him that they are gospel shoes. When he asks you what gospel shoes are, tell him that the gospel is spread more effectively when you wear these kinds of shoes.

The volunteer should look puzzled but inquires to see if they are working. You reply that they are not working. In fact, you have not even spoken to a single person. Explain that as soon as people see your shoes they walk away thinking you are a little strange.

Play out the silliness of the misunderstanding for a while. Then have your helper ask you what gave you the idea to decorate your shoes like that. Take him to Romans 10: 15 and just smile. Your helper can then explain that its not beautiful shoes that make the gospel, it's the gospel that makes beautiful shoes. In other words, the gospel is such good news that those who share it are beautiful for they bring the message of salvation.

Draw the class out for their help as well and then explain why the gospel is the best news of all.



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THE GOOD NEWS IS NOT SO GOOD FOR STUBBORN REBELLIOUS PEOPLE

Supplies:

- chair
- length of rope

The object of this lesson is to show just how stubborn we can be.

You will need an adult helper to serve you in this exercise. Have the helper come up to you as you start to teach the class and ask if they can show you an escape trick. The helper says that if you tie his hands behind his back he can break free on his own, no matter how hard you tie their hands. You act reluctant because you are trying to teach the class about righteousness and sin.

The helper should say that he has a way to work his act into your lesson if you would only let him. You reluctantly agree and tie his hands behind the chair. As you tie them up, in order to connect the trick to the lesson, he tells you how the rope represents sin and how God is going to help him break free from sin.

Once the person is tied up well, give him a chance to break free. The person pretends to struggle and gives whatever excuses he can think of. Finally, you ask if you can just help him by loosening the knot. He flatly refuses.

For the next part of the class teach about how our righteousness is a free gift and how the Jews insisted on earning righteousness themselves. Every so often ask your helper if you can just set him free. He should get rather obstinate saying he will do it himself. Thank your helper for doing such a good job of illustrating your lesson.

The rope is sin and it has him all bound up. He can't get free, or righteous, on his own. Salvation is near him. He simply needs to accept your help. But like stubborn Israel, he is rejecting salvation.

Finally, have your helper request your assistance in doing what he is unable to do - free him from the bonds of sin.

Then draw your class out about how the skit illustrates those who refuse the gospel.



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TESTIMONY TIME

Supplies:

a guest to share his/her testimony

Review the gospel with your children and make sure they all know what the message is. (Don't assume they know the gospel.)

Invite a guest to share his/her testimony of how the guest became a Christian. Make sure that you choose a person who didn't grow up as a Christian and had someone tell them the gospel. Invite the class to ask your guest questions about how the guest's life changed.

PRAYER

Pick several children to pray based on the day's scripture passages.

IN CLASS PROJECT

Draw a picture of a person preaching the Gospel.

FOR THE OLDER GRADES

"HOW GOOD ARE YOU?"

Supplies:

Enough tracts to give one to each student

Go through an evangelistic tract like the "How Good Are You" tract with your class to help them know how to share the Gospel message. Feel free to enlist the help of someone who is more familiar with the tract. Also, make sure that you don't assume that everyone in the class is already a Christian. Make a point to explain that the first person we need to see evangelized is ourselves. Remember, you cannot be an ambassador for a country for which you are not yet a citizen.



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A LITTLE BIT MORE

Good News - The "good news" is another name for the gospel. Literally it means the "good message." Jesus called the message of the kingdom good news and commissioned the disciples to take it to the nations (Mark 16:15). The verb form of the word to preach the good news is translated Gospel in other places in the New Testament such as when Peter says in 1 Peter 4:6, "This is the reason the gospel was preached." In the Greek there is only one word which means "the Gospel was preached." When we translate this into English we add the verb preached to the noun gospel, but in the Greek they are one. That seems appropriate, for the gospel demands proclamation. Too often we hold the gospel to ourselves and do not proclaim it as good news for others.

