

LESSON 29

Jesus & Zacchaeus

LUKE 19:1-10



BIBLE TRUTH

JESUS CAME TO SEEK AND TO SAVE THE LOST

LESSON SNAPSHOT

1. OPENING ACTIVITY AND INTRODUCTION 5 MIN

SUPPLIES: any interesting object, like a piece of jewelry or a special coin

2. BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

SUPPLIES: *The Gospel Story Bible* (story 107)

3. BIBLE STORY DISCUSSION 5 MIN

Where Is the Gospel?

SUPPLIES: Bible (ESV preferred); Review “Where Is the Gospel?” to prepare

4. SNACK QUESTIONS 10 MIN

SUPPLIES: snack food and beverage

5. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5–10 MIN

6. ACTIVITIES AND OBJECT LESSONS (CHOOSE ONE OR MORE) 20–30 MIN

Coloring Activity

SUPPLIES: coloring page for NT Lesson 29—one for each child; markers or crayons

A Friend to Sinners

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ table or tablecloth
- ✓ a dozen apples, cut up for snack (Be alert for allergies in your class.)
- ✓ cutting board
- ✓ knife
- ✓ serving plate
- ✓ trash bag for raw food waste
- ✓ construction paper hearts—one for each student (Cut large hearts out of red paper then tear them in half and staple the two pieces together.)

Seek and Save the Lost

SUPPLIES: a puppet; about 40 baseball cards (Hide cards around the room prior to class.)

7. CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

TOTAL 60–75 MIN

THE LESSON**OPENING ACTIVITY AND INTRODUCTION 5 MIN**

In this lesson the children will learn that Jesus seeks those who do not know him.

For this lesson bring to class an interesting object like a piece of jewelry or a special coin. Prior to class place the object in your pocket or in a small paper bag.

Tell the children to gather close around you as tightly as they can. Once they all gather close (your classroom helpers can make sure they press in real close) tell them you want to show them one of your most favorite things. Then quickly show the front row of children the object and place it back in the bag.

Then start to engage the children who saw it by asking, Don't you think my ring (or whatever object you brought in) is beautiful? The children standing in the back should begin to say they could not see. Ask them why they could not see. At this point one of your helpers could say that because of the crowd they could not get close enough to see. They weren't tall enough to see over the other kids' heads.

Tell your helper to bring over a few chairs and allow the children in the back to stand on the chairs. Once they are safely on the chairs. Take out the object and show it again. Ask the children standing on the chairs if they can see now? (They should say yes.) Then go up to the children on the chairs, ask them to come down and show them each personally your special object, letting them touch it if they want to.

Tell the class that in today's Bible story you are going to learn about a man who wanted to see Jesus but he was too short to see over the crowd. Then say to yourself out loud, I wonder what he will do to see Jesus? Some of the children may already know the story and shout out, "climb a tree."

Pray for the remainder of the class time before moving forward with the lesson.

BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read story 107, "Jesus & Zacchaeus," from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

BIBLE STORY DISCUSSION **5 MIN**

After reading the story, use the following questions to involve the children in a discussion:

- Who is this story about?
(Zacchaeus)
- Why did Zacchaeus climb a tree?
(He was a short man who wanted to see Jesus.)
- What happened to Zacchaeus?
(Jesus changed his heart and came to his house to eat.)

SNACK QUESTIONS **10 MIN**

While the children are eating the snack, engage them by asking the following questions:

- Does God change hearts today like he changed Zacchaeus’s heart?
(Yes, Jesus changes hearts every day.)
- How can Jesus change hearts?
(Jesus is God and Jesus came as a man to die on the cross for our sins. When we trust that Jesus died on the cross to take the punishment for our sins, he changes us to be more and more like him.)

Where Is the Gospel? _____

How does today’s Bible story fit into God’s greater plan of redemption?

Jesus makes the connection to the gospel in this story. Jesus announces, “Today salvation has come to this house.” (Luke 19:9). Though it seems that Zacchaeus was trying to draw near to Jesus, it was in fact Jesus who came to save Zacchaeus. The mission of Christ to “seek and to save the lost” (Luke 19:10) remains his mission today. Zacchaeus met Jesus along the road, we meet Jesus by reading his Word. But either way, we don’t come to Jesus as much as he seeks us. For nobody comes to Jesus unless the Father draws him (John 6:44).

■ How do we know Zacchaeus was changed?

(He was a man who loved money and would take it from the poor, but he became a man who gave money back to the poor. When Jesus changes our hearts we want to be more like him and do the kind of works he would do.)

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5-10 MIN

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.

ACTIVITIES AND OBJECT LESSONS 20-30 MIN

Coloring Activity

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ coloring page for NT Lesson 29—one for each child
- ✓ markers or crayons

While the children are coloring, engage them by asking the following questions:

- **Who is in the picture and what is he doing?**
(Zacchaeus is giving away money to the poor.)
- **Why would Zacchaeus be giving away money to the poor?**
(Prior to meeting Jesus he cheated the poor; now he is giving the money back.)
- **Why would Zacchaeus be happy to give money away?**
(Jesus changed Zacchaeus's heart from being greedy and sinful and not loving and following God to one that loved God and wanted to follow him.)

A Friend to Sinners

- ✓ table or tablecloth
- ✓ a dozen apples, cut up for snack (Be alert for allergies in your class.)
- ✓ cutting board
- ✓ knife
- ✓ serving plate
- ✓ trash bag for raw food waste
- ✓ construction paper hearts—one for each student (Cut large hearts out of red paper then tear them in half and staple the two pieces together.)

Before class tear the hearts in half and staple the two pieces together.

Set up a table or lay out a tablecloth in the middle of the classroom.

To start, ask the children to tell you what it means to be a sinner? (A sinner is someone who does something wrong.) Then ask the children if they have ever done anything wrong. (Help the class see that we are all sinners.)

Give each of the children a broken heart telling them that the torn heart represents our sinful hearts. Invite all the sinners—everyone—to come over to the table or tablecloth on the floor for a snack of apples. While you share the apples with the children, talk to them about how Jesus went home with Zacchaeus, even though Zacchaeus was a tax collector and had cheated the people. The people were upset, but Jesus knew Zacchaeus was a changed man.

Seek and Save the Lost

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ a puppet
- ✓ about forty baseball cards

Before class, hide the baseball cards around the room.

TEACHER: Hi Puppet, how are you today?

PUPPET: Terrible.

TEACHER: Why are you terrible?

PUPPET: I lost all my baseball cards.

TEACHER: How did you lose all your baseball cards?

PUPPET: I left them out and my little sister played with them and now I can't find them anywhere. I feel so terrible.

TEACHER: Perhaps I can help.

PUPPET: Can you buy me new cards?

TEACHER: Well no, Puppet, I am teaching this class so I can't go out and buy you new cards.

PUPPET: I knew it was too good to be true.

TEACHER: I still think I can help.

PUPPET: If you can't buy me new cards and I don't have my old cards, how can you possibly help me?

TEACHER: Well, I was thinking the class might be able to help me look around for your cards. Perhaps we can find them.

PUPPET: You mean the kids would really help seek out my lost cards?

TEACHER: Yes, I think they would be willing to help. Right kids?

CHILDREN: *(shouting)* Yes!

PUPPET: If you could seek out what was lost and help me find them, then you would save them from getting thrown away when the janitor comes to clean up the church building.

TEACHER: Well, children, can you all start looking around? *(Teacher encourages the children to look around the room for the cards and slowly all the cards are found.)*

PUPPET: *(excited)* Yay!

TEACHER: You know, your lost cards remind me of the story of Zacchaeus we read today.

PUPPET: I didn't know Zacchaeus had baseball cards!

TEACHER: No, Puppet, Zacchaeus didn't have baseball cards, but in the story something was lost and then found.

PUPPET: What was found?

TEACHER: Zacchaeus was found!

PUPPET: Who found him?

TEACHER: Jesus found Zacchaeus! We are all lost apart from believing in Jesus. Just like the lost cards we found and saved from the janitor. Jesus finds the lost children of God, changes their hearts, and saves them from judgment.

PUPPET: I never thought Zacchaeus was like a baseball card.

TEACHER: Well, he wasn't like a baseball card silly, he was just lost like your cards and through God's salvation was found!

CLOSING PRAYER **5 MIN**

Take time at the end of class to thank God for what you learned today. Include parts of your Bible lesson in your prayer as a way for the children to remember today's lesson.

LESSON 29 - JESUS & ZACCHAEUS

