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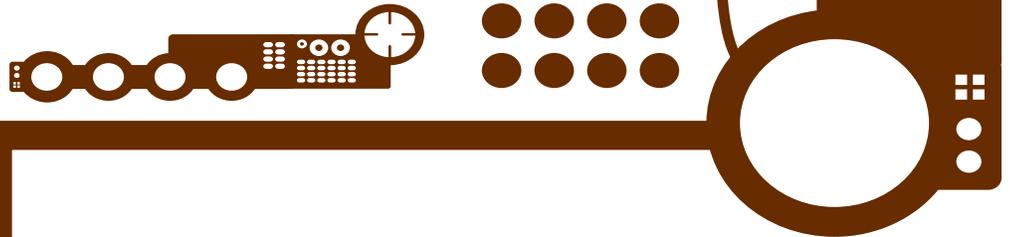
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252 BASICS®

Group and Family Experiences for K-5th Grades



1. I need to make the wise choice.
2. I can trust God no matter what.
3. I should treat others the way I want to be treated.

Statement of Faith

ABOUT GOD

God is the one and only true God, yet He exists in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. God is the Creator, so everything belongs to Him and is under His control. God is holy, so He is righteous, majestic, and loving. God is all knowing and purposeful, so He's at work to bring about His will. No person, thing, or idea compares to God.

ABOUT THE SCRIPTURES

God reveals Himself to us through the Bible, and it is 100% accurate, reliable, and authoritative.

ABOUT PEOPLE

People are made in God's image and for His pleasure. But everybody falls short of God's intention,

or ideal, for people. In other words, everyone has sinned. As a result, we are all separated from Him, even though He wants an intimate relationship with each of us.

ABOUT SALVATION

That's why Jesus—God's Son—came and lived on this earth, died, and rose again. God offers His free gift of salvation to all who believe in Jesus and accept Him as Savior—the only way to be forgiven and reconciled to God. Anyone who accepts this gift is adopted as a son or daughter into God's family and will live with Him forever in heaven.

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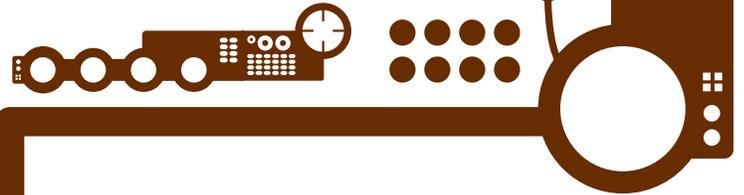
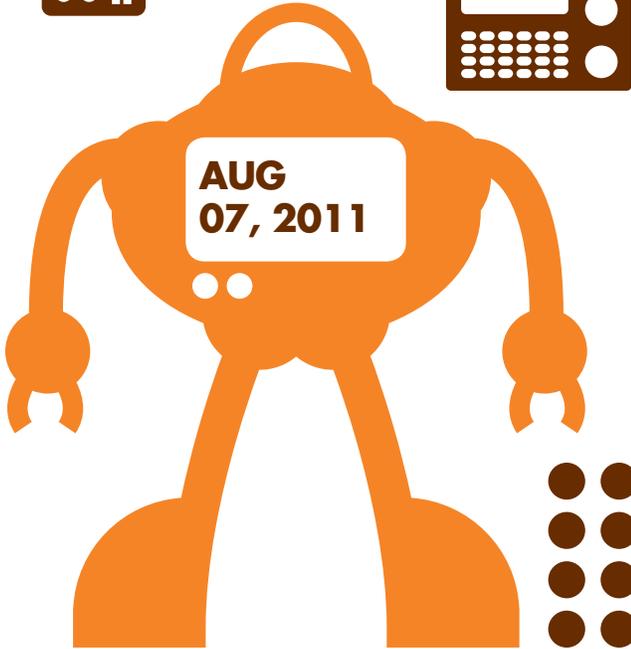
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252 BASICS®

Virtue: GRACE

Getting something great that you don't deserve.

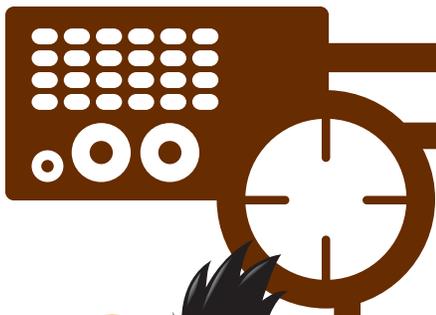


Sheep Tracks

Memory Verse: "God's grace has saved you because of your faith in Christ. Your salvation doesn't come from anything you do. It is God's gift." Ephesians 2:8, NIV

Bible Story: Sheep Tracks (the lost sheep and the lost coin) • Luke 15:1-10

Bottom Line: Jesus came to rescue everyone.



PLUG IN Small groups

- 10-15 minutes
- Focus the Energy



POWER UP Large group

- 20-25 minutes
- Engage the Heart



CATCH ON Small groups

- 25-30 minutes
- Make the Connection





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PLUG IN: Focus the Energy

Small Groups, 10-15 minutes

Bible Story:

SHEEP TRACKS

Luke 15:1-10

PREVIEW

Note! This version of the curriculum is designed especially for churches with fewer leaders and kids. You may want to use it if you have just one or two leaders and if you combine all your kids in both large and small group time.

Plug In is designed to introduce children to the day's topic in a setting that gives them individualized attention from a leader and plenty of interaction with their peers. If you have enough leaders, divide kids into small groups of up to 10 children. Ideally, assign the same Small Group Leader to the same group of kids for the entire year.

Kindergarten–5th Grade

FOR LEADERS ONLY

Basically, a virtue is something God does in us to change the world around us. As you read the next paragraph, you'll notice some numbers. Here's what they refer to: (1) the virtue definition. (2) The fact that God created that virtue and exemplifies it. (3) God instills that virtue in us as He shapes us to become more like Him. (4) God uses that virtue in us to influence and impact our families, friends, and neighbors. As others notice the virtue being lived out in our lives, we have more opportunities to tell them about God. As they come to trust God, they'll influence others as well. See the cycle?

This month we're introducing a new virtue to the 252 Basics collection: that of grace, which we're defining as (1) getting something great that you don't deserve. (2) God loves all people—every single person in the world. Thankfully, He doesn't love girls more than boys, old people more than little kids, rich people more than poor ones, or married people more than single people. He loves all of us the same. He loves us so much He goes on a quest to find us, the lost, to bring us back to Him. He makes this quest for every single person, not just "church" people. Again, thankfully, God pursues us no matter how we got lost: whether we've foolishly wandered away, or we grew up not knowing about Jesus, or we've actively rebelled against God and His ways. God paid the ultimate price in pursuing us, in saving what was



Recycle • Make It Stick
What do you want to make sure they never forget?



Impress • Make It Big
What is the one thing you want them to understand?



Personalize • Make It Real
What can you model for them from your own life?



Apply • Make It Fit
What do you want them to walk away and do?



Transition • Make It Flow
What will you say or do to keep them engaged?



PLUG IN: Focus the Energy

Small Groups, 10-15 minutes • for kindergarten–5th grade

lost, by sending Jesus to save us. The fact is we can't do anything to save ourselves; we can't do enough good things to deserve salvation. We simply must have a Rescuer. We NEED God's grace. Jesus illustrated our need succinctly through three parables, that of the lost sheep (which foolishly wandered away), the lost coin (which was lost through no fault of its own), and the lost son (who actively rebelled against his father). Today we'll be talking about the lost sheep and coin. (The rest of the month we'll focus on the lost son, which is such a rich story, we want to mine it for all we can.) Use this opportunity to help kids understand that God's grace is for everyone, and that because (3) He shows grace to us, (4) He wants us to show grace to others. After all, Jesus came to rescue everyone.

Tip: To see a preview video about this month's materials, go to the homepage at www.252basics.com and click on the virtue video for August. Show it to all your leaders to help ensure that everyone's on the same page. To download the clip in full resolution, as well as the script, go to our online store and search for "grace virtue video."

Heads up: Today is a natural opportunity to tell children about God's plan for our salvation. Note the highlighted paragraphs in Catch On in particular. Pray ahead of time, asking God to prepare the kids' hearts and minds for this important message and to give you just the right words.

GET READY

For each small group, do the following:

- **Early Arriver Idea:** Provide an interesting offering container.
- **Moo-hoo:** No supplies are needed.
- Gather the leaders together to pray before the kids arrive. Pray that each child would listen and learn the Bible truths presented during today's session. If any kids arrive before or during the prayer, invite them to participate with the leaders.

SUPPLIES:

an interesting offering container

Early Arriver Idea

Ask kids to tell you how their summer is going. What have they enjoyed most? Are they starting to get bored? Are they looking forward to school starting and seeing their friends again? Are they nervous about anything?



PLUG IN: Focus the Energy

Small Groups, 10-15 minutes • for kindergarten–5th grade

What challenges do they think they might face in the next few weeks? Invite the kids to put their offerings in the offering container.

SUPPLIES:

none

Moo-hoo (a classroom-wide activity)

Lead everyone in the classroom to play an animal match-up game. Ask kids and leaders to spread out in the room. Assign an animal to each person by whispering it to him/her, making sure two people have each animal and that all the animals you assign make a noise. Then ask all players to close their eyes and make their animal's sound. Players should find their way to their matching animal. When they find their partners, they should open their eyes and stay together until everyone has found their partner.

WRAP UP

LEADER: "You all sounded like lots of lost animals who found your friends. It's no fun to be lost, but it sure is great to be found. That's what today's Bible story is about.  **Let's go to large group and learn what God has to say about lost and found."**

Lead your group to the large group environment.

Virtue:

GRACE

Getting something great that you don't deserve.

Bottom Line: Jesus came to rescue everyone.



Memory Verse: "God's grace has saved you because of your faith in Christ. Your salvation doesn't come from anything you do. It is God's gift." Ephesians 2:8, NIRV



POWER UP: Engage the Heart

Large Group, 20-25 minutes

Bible Story:

SHEEP TRACKS

Luke 15:1-10

PREVIEW

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Power Up is designed to engage children in worship in a large group setting. Music, prayer, and an innovative approach to the Bible story are always a part of this interactive time.

Kindergarten–5th Grade

FOR LEADERS ONLY

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POWER UP: Engage the Heart

Large Group, 20-25 minutes • for kindergarten–5th grade

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OVERVIEW OF THEME AND PROPS FOR THE MONTH:

Aren't you grateful for God's grace, for the good stuff He freely and generously gives us (unmerited by us of course) and as thankful that He doesn't dish out our just desserts? So, since we're talking about grace this month, decorate your large group environment with the good stuff—"just desserts." You may want to hang posters of cakes and pies and whatnot on your walls or (even yummiier) suspend giant confections from the ceiling, particularly giant ice cream cones (made from quilt batting rolled into balls and cone shapes and spray-painted to look like different flavors), giant sprinkles (swim noodles), giant cakes (graduated boxes stacked atop one another and decorated like a cake), and so forth.

Specifically, create a "sweet shoppe" in one corner of the stage or focal wall area. Include a bar-height counter decorated with posters of ice cream, pies, cakes, etc. Place jars of candy on the counter, along with cupcakes or a cake on a stand. Place a table behind the bar to hold any needed props. In front of the bar, place a small café table and chairs, such as the kind found in



POWER UP: Engage the Heart

Large Group, 20-25 minutes • for kindergarten–5th grade

an ice cream parlor. Each week, the Assistant will step into character as the proprietor of the Sweet Shoppe, putting on a cap and apron. The Shoppe will be used as a backdrop to launch the new virtue for the month and to act out “treat others” and “wise choice” scenarios.

* Every month we suggest a theme-related item that’s designed to help kids and parents put the virtue into action. This month it’s “Just Desserts Stickers.” Mix and match the following to find a combo that works for you:

- **Large group:** Raise awareness of the item by integrating it as you choose into large group throughout the month. “Just Desserts Stickers” are available from Gecko Promotions (go to www.geckopromotions.com and click on “reThink Programs” or email Donna at donna@geckopromotions.com), OR order them from our online store (rethinkgroup.org/store).
- **FX (Family Experience):** Promote the item (a.k.a. the Application Tool) through humorous “infomercials” and sketches. *See week 1, weekly FX or monthly FX for details.*
- **CUE Box:** Give the item “legs” by making CUE Box available to families. CUE Box contains the item (a.k.a. the Mystery Widget), videos, posters, and other cool stuff designed to help kids live out the virtue. *To find out more or to order CUE Box, go to <http://www.studio252.tv>.*

GET READY

Gather all the supplies needed for large group:

- **People:** You’ll need a Leader, an Assistant, and a kid volunteer. You’ll also need an adult to wrangle the volunteer kid backstage (as he eats his sundae) and to send him back to his seat in large group.
- **Bibles:** You will need a Bible for the story presentation and worship (preferably the NIV). *(For additional Bible story resources, visit rethinkgroup.org/store and check out Feature Presentation. Great for giving your Leader a break or for last-minute absences. Not recommended for use every week, as any medium loses impact with too-frequent use.)*
- **Large Group Visuals (from the Web site):** Prepare “Virtue Slide” and the month’s “Bottom Line Slides” as noted in the LGVs.
- **Props and Costumes:** Provide the Assistant with a cap and apron for the Sweet Shoppe scenarios. Behind the Sweet Shoppe counter, place a spoon, a napkin, and an elaborate ice cream sundae with whipped cream and a cherry on top. You may want to keep it in an ice-filled cooler or bucket so it doesn’t melt. You may also want the “Just Desserts Stickers” (referenced in the overview of the theme, above).



POWER UP: Engage the Heart

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For the Bible story, you will need a coin purse, a silver coin, a lantern, a broom, a party hat, and a party horn. Place these items on the table behind the Sweet Shoppe counter. “Hide” the silver coin under the counter.

- *Movie Clips and Such (CG)*: Provide an image of a large herd of sheep. Prepare to project it onscreen or make a poster of it. *Note: Be sure to follow the terms of use guidelines associated with any photos or other images you use.*
- *Music and Sound Effects (SFX)*: You will need high-energy music as the kids enter and exit the room (like the downloadable MP3 virtue song* from the Web site). For transition to the Sweet Shoppe, we suggest “The Candy Man” song** (like the one by Sammy Davis, Jr., available at amazon.com and iTunes®). For worship, you will need the *Chase the Light** and *I Believe** CDs. (For additional online song downloads and worship resources, visit amberskyrecords.com and/or rethinkstore.org.)

* *Note: Make sure your church has obtained licensing rights to play or perform music. You can obtain a license to perform worship music from Christian Copyright Licensing International (www.ccli.com). It covers over 200,000 worship songs for congregational singing.*

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POWER UP: Engage the Heart

Large Group, 20-25 minutes • for kindergarten–5th grade

SFX: Play high-energy music as kids enter.

*Assistant should be onstage greeting kids as they come in.
Assistant is NOT wearing apron or cap at this point.*

1. Get Started

ASSISTANT: “Good morning, everyone! We have a fantastic new virtue this month. I’m tellin’ ya, it’s really SWEET! I’m excited to tell you about it, and since I really want us to understand what our new virtue is all about, I thought we could demonstrate it in a truly remarkable way. I need one volunteer to help me.

Select a kid from audience to come onstage. Put on cap/ apron and assume role of Sweet Shoppe proprietor, talking in an over-the-top happy tone of voice (think cheesy infomercial), as you act out the scene.

SFX: Play ‘The Candy Man’

ASSISTANT: “Hello, boys and girls! I’m Mr. Sprinkles! Welcome to my Sweet Shoppe! We have every wonderful sweet treat you can imagine here. *(To kid volunteer)* What’s your name, kid? *(Pause for answer.)* This is [insert kid’s name] and he came in today for one of my extraordinary confections of perfection. How about the Sweet Shoppe Superfantabulous Sundae with two super scoops of ice cream, super-hot fudge sauce, and whipped cream with a cherry on top? *(Wait for kid to respond.)* Okay, [insert kid’s name], that’ll be \$7.50. *(Hold your hand out to the kid as if expecting payment. Presumably, he will not have any money.)*

(Dropping the overly happy tone; in a stern tone) “What? You don’t have any cash on you? Hmm, well, have a seat.

Invite kid to sit at café table. Go behind counter, pretend to prepare the sundae, and then bring it to child, along with the spoon and napkin, making quite a presentation of it.

(In regular voice) “Now, [insert kid’s name], this Sweet Shoppe Superfantabulous Sundae doesn’t come cheap. We use only the best ingredients—homemade of course—and our very own secret recipe hot



POWER UP: Engage the Heart

Large Group, 20-25 minutes • for kindergarten–5th grade

fudge sauce, with whipped cream from the finest cows on earth, and cherries that are grown on only one tree that only we know about ... in fact, this Sweet Shoppe Superfantabulous Sundae is really priceless. *(Pause.)* Would you like to have it? *(Hold the sundae just a little closer to the kid, who will probably nod or reach for it.)*

"[Insert kid's name], even though you can't pay for this Sweet Shoppe Superfantabulous Sundae, and even though you haven't done a thing to deserve this Sweet Shoppe Superfantabulous Sundae, I'm going to GIVE this confection of perfection to you. You can take this with you and enjoy it.

Hand sundae, spoon, and napkin to kid. Send him backstage to a helper, who will sit with him while he finishes his treat. They should stay nearby, so the kid can still hear what's going on onstage, then the helper should send him back to sit with his small group.

Assistant takes off cap and apron.

"What happened to [kid's name] is an example of how our new virtue works. This month, we are going to learn about grace ...

CG: Virtue Slide

"... getting something great that you don't deserve. Grace is something that God gives us! He loves us when we don't deserve to be loved and forgives us when we don't deserve to be forgiven. God is always giving us something great we don't deserve. In the next couple of weeks, we'll discover how great—how SWEET!—God's grace is! And one of the absolute best places to learn about grace is the Bible.  **The Bible is like ...** *(reveal and pick up lantern)* **a light. It helps you see where you need to go and what you need to do."**

Leader enters holding Bible and takes lantern.

LEADER: "Speaking of which, thanks—I'm going to need that *(put lantern on counter)*. Hey, there is a kid backstage with whipped cream all over his face. I think you better go check on him."



POWER UP: Engage the Heart

Large Group, 20-25 minutes • for kindergarten–5th grade

Assistant exits.

2. Present the Bible Lesson

Leader: Note that the following Bible lesson script has been organized into three main points (noted in brown) to help you present it in a memorable way. The lesson concludes with a “closer” to help make real-life application for kids.

LEADER: “I’ve got a fantastic story today. (Open Bible to Luke 15:1.) Actually, it’s two stories that Jesus told. A big crowd of people had gathered to listen to Him: some tax collectors and other ‘sinners’—basically total rule-breakers—as well as Jewish teachers of the law. These guys were really big on following rules. So when they saw Jesus hanging out with the tax collectors, they started complaining about it and bad-mouthing Jesus. They whispered to each other, ‘Huh! This man hangs out with bad people!’ Jesus knew what they were thinking and saying. So He told them these two stories.

SAVE

LEADER: “First, He told them about a guy who had 100 sheep.

CG: Image of large herd of sheep

“Okay, I know you all want to baa like sheep, so let’s get it out of our systems. But when I do this (*show kids a signal to stop*), everyone stop so we can hear Jesus’ story.

Allow kids to ‘baa’ for a few seconds and then give them the signal.

“Good job! You make a great herd of sheep. You know, back in Bible times, sheep were really valuable. You could make money from raising sheep. If you had sheep, you could provide food and clothes for your family, so your sheep would be very important to you. Now, unfortunately, sheep are pretty helpless. They are not what you’d call smart. A sheep might walk right off a cliff just because it’s not paying attention. And if sheep fall down and roll on their backs, they can’t get up by themselves. As far as protecting themselves from danger, do you see any claws or sharp teeth on those sheep? (*Pointing*



POWER UP: Engage the Heart

Large Group, 20-25 minutes • for kindergarten–5th grade

to image onscreen/poster) Nope. No way to protect themselves, and they don't run very fast.

"So this guy in Jesus' story had 100 sheep and one them wanders off and gets itself lost. The guy had a choice to make. He could just say (*shrugging shoulders*), 'Eh, I've got 99 sheep left, so I'll say goodbye to that one. That sheep was really DUMB anyway.' Or he could go looking for it. What do we always say around here about the kind of choices God wants us to make?"

KIDS:  "I need to make the wise choice."

LEADER: "That's right! So because EVERY SINGLE sheep would be important to this man, and because that sheep needed help, of course the man went to find and save the lost sheep.

Act out next story with props: hold up coin purse; 'light' lantern and use it to look carefully around the stage; sweep stage with broom; and finally 'find' silver coin under Sweet Shoppe counter.

SEARCH

LEADER: "The second story Jesus told was about a woman who had 10 silver coins. She discovered one was missing. This was a big deal. Back then, in that country, a woman received 10 silver coins as a wedding gift, so to lose one of your coins was kind of like losing your wedding ring. Plus, the coins were valuable. Each one was worth as much money as you'd make in a whole day's work. So the coin would be really important to the lady. When you lose something valuable, what do you do? (*Pause for responses.*) Exactly. You look for it. Right then and there. So the woman lighted a lamp. Remember, they didn't have electricity so they couldn't just turn the lights on. She took her lamp and shone it back into the corners and under the furniture and behind all her storage bins. She searched high and low for that coin. She even got her broom out and swept the house—that's how carefully she looked for that coin.

REJOICE

LEADER: "So back to the first story. Guess what a shepherd would do when he found his lost sheep. He'd take that sheep home then call his friends together to celebrate (*put on party hat*). And the lady who found her lost coin? She would've done the same thing.



POWER UP: Engage the Heart

Large Group, 20-25 minutes • for kindergarten–5th grade

Blow party horn; then take off hat and put down party horn.

“Jesus said it’s the same in heaven, that everyone in heaven is overjoyed at just ONE person who turns away from his or her old life and starts following God.

CLOSE THE STORY

LEADER: “That’s why Jesus was hanging with the rule-breakers. Just like the shepherd and just like the woman, He was searching for and saving something that was lost—people. **! Jesus came to rescue everyone.** God doesn’t love some people more than others. He doesn’t love people who go to church more than those who don’t, or boys more than girls, or people who live in our country more than those who live someplace else! Every person everywhere is important to God and He loves everyone the same.

“God loves everyone so much He sent His Son, Jesus, to save all the people who are lost. That’s all of us, because we are all sinners. We all do wrong things; we all do things that separate us from God. That’s what it means to be ‘lost.’ But when you ask Jesus to forgive you and be your Savior, He will! Then you will get to live with God forever in heaven someday. **! Jesus came to rescue everyone.** Let’s say that together.”

CG: Bottom Line Slide

LEADER and KIDS: ! “Jesus came to rescue everyone.”

LEADER: “‘Everyone’ means even the kid in your class who cheats on tests, the mean kid down the street who makes fun of you, and people who don’t believe in God. God sent Jesus to save each of these people because He loves THEM as much as He loves YOU. God sent Jesus to be their Savior, even though they don’t deserve it, just like He sent Jesus to be our Savior, even though you and I really don’t deserve it either. That’s what people mean when they talk about God’s grace: Jesus did something great for people—He came here to be our Savior—even though we don’t deserve it.

“This is such good news that we can’t keep it to ourselves. God doesn’t want us to keep it to ourselves! He wants us to tell others about Jesus. You can do that with your words; you can do that with your kind actions; you can do that



POWER UP: Engage the Heart

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by inviting a friend here to [insert name of your K-5 program]. Let's ask Him to help us show others His grace."

3. Pray

LEADER: "God, thank You for loving everyone. Thank You for loving us all the time, even when we do things that are wrong. Thank You for showing us grace, for giving us all kinds of good things that we don't deserve. We know the greatest thing You've ever done for us is sending us Jesus. Would You please help us to spread the good news with our words and actions and by inviting our friends to church? We love You, God. Amen."

4. Worship

LEADER: "I'm so glad I feel God's love for me every day. He shows me His love and grace by giving me this amazing world to live in, people to love me, and His Son, Jesus, to be my Savior. Let's praise God for His amazing grace as we sing!"

"All Because of Jesus" / track 3 / *Chase the Light*

LEADER: "Remember the shepherd who searched until he found his lost sheep? He didn't leave the sheep to wander around lost and in danger. He looked until he found the sheep. (*Open the Bible and read Psalm 23:1, NIRV.*) 'The Lord is my shepherd. He gives me everything I need.' Because God is my Shepherd, protecting me and keeping me safe, I know that  **I can trust God no matter what.** Say that with me."

LEADER and KIDS:  "I can trust God no matter what."

LEADER: "Today we learned that **! Jesus came to rescue everyone.** God sent Jesus to rescue us and set us free from our sin! Let's sing loudly to show God our gratitude for His grace."

"You Set Me Free" / track 1 / from *I Believe*

Assistant enters near end of song. Leader exits.



POWER UP: Engage the Heart

Large Group, 20-25 minutes • for kindergarten–5th grade

5. Wrap Up

ASSISTANT: “Before you head back to your small groups, I’d like everyone to think about something: suppose you have a friend and you know that he looked on someone else’s paper for answers to a test. You know he told his parents a lie last weekend, and he’s been using some bad language. He’s kind of like that sheep in the story, the one that wandered off and got lost—he’s heading down a dangerous path. Now, if I were in danger, I’d want someone to warn me. That’s how I’d like to be treated. What do we say around here about how to treat others?”

ASSISTANT and KIDS:  “I should treat others the way I want to be treated.”

ASSISTANT: “That’s right! Now if you have a friend who’s doing stuff like that, you could be a good shepherd to him. You could offer to help him study for tests. You could invite him to [insert name of your K-5 program] to help him learn about making wise choices. You could even tell him about Jesus and give him a chance to learn about God’s grace! Think about that for a minute. *(Pause a few seconds.)*”

“Speaking of learning about God’s grace, we’ve got some great grace reminders for you.

Insert a plug here for the ‘Just Desserts Stickers’ if you’ve chosen to utilize them this month. Hold up the stickers, scratch and sniff one, and tell kids what they’re for: to help them learn even more about grace at home with their families. Briefly explain how they can get theirs (at your Family Experience, in a CUE Box your church will give families, in a CUE Box parents can purchase if you’re going to recommend them to parents, etc.)

If you choose not to use the stickers this month, simply skip the reference and move on to dismissal.

“Now, I hope you all have an awesome week—see you next time!”

Dismiss children to their small groups.

SFX: Play high-energy music as the kids exit.

Virtue:

GRACE

Getting something great that you don't deserve.

Bottom Line: Jesus came to rescue everyone.



Memory Verse: "God's grace has saved you because of your faith in Christ. Your salvation doesn't come from anything you do. It is God's gift." Ephesians 2:8, NIRV



CATCH ON: Make the Connection

Small Groups, 25-30 minutes

Bible Story:

SHEEP TRACKS

Luke 15:1-10

PREVIEW

Note! This version of the curriculum is designed especially for churches with fewer leaders and kids. You may want to use it if you have just one or two leaders and if you combine all your kids in both large and small group time.

Catch On is designed to help kids understand how the day's topic applies to them. They'll discuss real-life experiences, interact with a group of peers, and participate in a variety of activities that appeal to different learning styles. Life-application and memory-verse activities, as well as prayer, are always a part of this hands-on time. Gather children into the same small groups as for Plug In.

Kindergarten–5th Grade

GET READY

For each small group, do the following:

- **Capture the Flag:** Provide two bandanas. Also prepare a large area to play the game, preferably outdoors. Mark the boundaries of the playing area, and mark a dividing line across the middle of the playing area. You'll also need to mark a "holding area" for each team, where they can take the players they capture.
- **What's Missing? (especially for K-1):** Place 10 coins, one cotton ball, a flashlight, a broom whisk (or a dusting cloth or sponge), and a Bible on a cookie sheet or tray.
- **Secret Coins (designed for 2nd-5th grade):** Provide Bibles. For every pair of kids, do the following:
 - o Write each of the following references on a separate index card: Ephesians 2:8, Acts 15:11, 2 Corinthians 8:9.
 - o Use a fine-tip marker to write the following phrases on circle labeling stickers that will fit on coins. Choose a different color of sticker for each sentence. Write one word on each sticker. Do not write the reference in parentheses on a sticker.
 - Salvation is a gift of grace, not something you do. (Ephesians 2:8)
 - We believe the grace of Jesus saves us. (Acts 15:11)



Recycle • Make It Stick
What do you want to make sure they never forget?



Impress • Make It Big
What is the one thing you want them to understand?



Personalize • Make It Real
What can you model for them from your own life?



Apply • Make It Fit
What do you want them to walk away and do?



Transition • Make It Flow
What will you say or do to keep them engaged?



CATCH ON: Make the Connection

Small Groups, 25-30 minutes • for kindergarten–5th grade

- Jesus chose to give us grace. (2 Corinthians 8:9)
 - o Adhere the labeling stickers to coins. Put the coins for each sentence in a separate zip-top bag. Put the index card that matches the sentence in the bag with the coins, as indicated above.
- **Lyric Change:** Provide Bibles and small prizes (*optional*). *Tip: If you teach kindergartners, mark this month's memory verse in the Bibles ahead of time.*
- **Thanks for Grace:** No supplies are needed.
- Make copies on cardstock of this week's GodTime and Fridge Door cards.
- Prepare to give or tell parents about **CUE Box**. Whether you wish to distribute the box to parents or point them to the online experience, **CUE Box** is filled with activities to help parents and kids interact with each other as they continue to learn about this month's virtue at home. To find out more or to order **CUE Box**, go to <http://www.studio252.tv>.

As always, you have a choice when it comes to the activities suggested here. For instance, you may want to do the memory verse activity, the prayer experience, and one of the application activities. Choose the activities you think will appeal most to your kids and that meet your time and budget needs.

** If you don't have time to do all these activities, be sure to do activity #2 or #3. Activity #1 is particularly good for children who need to move in order to stay engaged (not just for boys).*

SUPPLIES:

bandanas, prepared playing area

* 1. Capture the Flag (a classroom-wide application activity / great for boys)

Divide everyone in the classroom into two teams. If you have a lot of kids in the room, you may need more than two teams (and more than two bandanas). Call all the kids together and explain the rules.

- Each team will have five minutes to come up with their strategy and hide their flag (bandana). Then the game will start.
- The flag must be hung at head height or lower. It must be visible and it must be inside the playing area.
- Each team may want to designate attackers and defenders. Attackers will try to capture the other team's flag, while defenders will protect their team's flag.



CATCH ON: Make the Connection

Small Groups, 25-30 minutes • for kindergarten–5th grade

- The goal is to find and capture the other team's flag and return to your team's side of the playing area without being tagged.
- Any opposing player who is tagged is to be taken to the "holding area" where they will stay for five minutes. A Leader will release them when their time is up.
- If a player is tagged while carrying the opposing team's flag, the flag will be returned to its hiding place.

Answer any questions, and then begin the game. After about 10 minutes, or when one team has won, call the kids together to talk about the game.

LEADER: "In this game, you and your team went on a quest to find the flag, and you did whatever it took to find it. Nothing could stop you. Did you know God is like that? 🦶 **God loves us so much that He goes on a quest to find us, as if we are lost or taken and He has to bring us back to Him.** He does this by putting people in our lives to show us His love, by using circumstances to turn us around in His direction, and by using all kinds of things in life to help us discover Him. He goes on this quest for every single person, not just 'church' people or 'good' people. **! Jesus came to rescue everyone.** That means Jesus is on a quest for you. And just like you didn't stop striving to get that flag, God will never stop striving to rescue you. **! Jesus came to rescue everyone,** and nothing is going to stop Him."

SUPPLIES:

coins, cotton ball, whisk
(or dusting cloth, sponge),
flashlight, Bible, tray

* 2. What's Missing? (an application activity especially for K-1 / review the Bible lesson)

Let kids look at the objects on the tray as you count to ten, then ask them to close their eyes. Remove the Bible. Ask kids to open their eyes and tell you which item is missing. When they guess correctly, ask them if today's lesson is from the Old or New Testament of the Bible. *(It was a story Jesus told, so it's in the New Testament.)*

Put the Bible back on the tray and let kids close their eyes again. This time, remove the cotton ball and then ask them what's missing. Let kids take turns telling you something they remember about a fluffy sheep from today's lesson. *(A farmer lost one of his sheep and searched until he found it.)*



CATCH ON: Make the Connection

Small Groups, 25-30 minutes • for kindergarten–5th grade

Next, remove a coin then let kids share what they learned about a woman and a coin today. (*A woman lost a valuable coin.*)

Repeat the guessing game with the whisk (or cloth or sponge) and flashlight. With each object, let kids share how it might have been used in today's Bible story. (*The woman lit a lamp and swept, or cleaned, her whole house looking for the coin she lost.*)

Help the kids think of reasons why Jesus would've told a story about a shepherd and a woman who searched everywhere for a lost sheep and a missing coin. Explain that the sheep and coin were loved and very valuable.

LEADER: "Shepherds care a lot about their sheep. Anyone who loses something valuable to her is going to look for it. Did you know that God loves you even more than a shepherd loves his sheep? Did you know that you're even more valuable to God than a priceless coin? It's true! God loves you no matter who you are or what you do. Even if you do bad things, God still loves you. That's why! **Jesus came to rescue everyone.** No one deserves God's love, but He gives it anyway. That's what 'grace' means—getting something great that you don't deserve. 🙏 **Even though no one deserves it, we get to live in heaven with Jesus someday if we ask Him to forgive our sin and be our Savior.**"

♥ Tell about a time you won a prize, were given a special gift, or when someone did an act of kindness that caught you by surprise. Explain that you did nothing to earn the things you received, but they came to you anyway. Remind kids that God's grace is like that too: God did something great by giving us Jesus even though we don't deserve it.

SUPPLIES:

Bibles, set of three bags of coins for every pair of kids

* 3. Secret Coins (an application activity designed for 2nd-5th graders / review the Bible lesson / Scripture search)

Group kids into pairs. Pass out the Bibles and the bags of coins. Tell kids to open each bag, read the reference card, find the verse in the Bible, and read it. Kids will need to think about what the verse means and then unscramble the coins in the bag to read a sentence that summarizes the verse. They'll do this for all three verses.



CATCH ON: Make the Connection

Small Groups, 25-30 minutes • for kindergarten–5th grade

Answers:

- Salvation is a gift of grace, not something you do. (Ephesians 2:8)
- We believe the grace of Jesus saves us. (Acts 15:11)
- Jesus chose to give us grace. (2 Corinthians 8:9)

LEADER: “Can anyone tell me why we used coins in this activity? (They remind us that, in the story Jesus told, the woman stopped everything to look for the valuable coin she had lost. The shepherd in Jesus’ story did the same thing.) These coins and these messages remind us that God seeks us out and that God sent Jesus to make a way for us to know Him. 🦶 **The biggest thing God did on His quest to rescue people was to send Jesus. All people need rescuing because all people have sinned.** ‘Sin’ is anything that separates us from God, like wrong attitudes, words, and actions. Because everyone is or has been ‘lost’—which is another way of saying separated from God—everyone needs a savior. God sent Jesus to be our Savior. When we ask Jesus to forgive us for the wrong things we’ve done and be our Savior, He will. Then we’ll live in heaven with Him forever someday. That’s what people mean when they talk about God’s grace. Jesus did something great for people—He came here as our Savior, even though we didn’t deserve it. 🦶 **We can’t earn God’s grace or buy it. That’s what Ephesians 2:8 says. It’s a gift that God offers us.** And He offers it to everyone, no matter who we are—that’s what 2 Corinthians 8:9 says. **! Jesus came to rescue everyone.**”

Optional 5th Grade Discussion Questions

If you lead fifth graders, consider asking these discussion questions:

- Name some times you’ve been lost or times when it would be really frightening for someone your age to be lost.
- With all our other virtues so far, there is work to be done—be kind, be faithful, show respect, practice perseverance, take initiative. But the work of the virtue of grace is very different. What is the work that has to be done with grace? (Answer: In terms of receiving grace from God for our salvation, admit that we are lost and believe that Jesus is able to save us. In terms of passing grace on to others, being kind to them when they don’t deserve it. Grace can be difficult for people to accept or pass on.) What are the attitudes and actions of a gracious person?
- Do you think the fact that salvation is so simple—admit and believe—makes it harder for some people to follow Jesus? Why



CATCH ON: Make the Connection

Small Groups, 25-30 minutes • for kindergarten–5th grade

would this be? (Possible answers: Many people are, by nature, independent. We want to do things for ourselves, and we want the credit. We may not believe we've done anything so wrong that we need saving, and so forth.)

- Why do you think God would set up a system that required us to take no action beyond just believing when we are so inclined to try to work for everything?

SUPPLIES:

Bibles, prizes (optional)

4. Lyric Change (memory verse activity)

Instruct kids to find this month's memory verse in a Bible.

Finding verses with kindergartners: Guide children to open the Bibles to the marked page. Point to the word Ephesians at the top of the page as you say it aloud. Then guide children to find the big number 2 on the page. Explain that this is the chapter number. Finally, guide them to look under the big 2 for the little 8; this is the verse number. Tell them to put their finger on the verse.

Finding verses with 1st graders: Guide kids to open their Bibles to the front and find the table of contents. (Hold up a Bible opened to the table of contents to show the kids what the page looks like.) When the kids find the table of contents, lead them to find Ephesians in the list under "New Testament." You can help by telling them that Ephesians starts with the letter E. When the kids find Ephesians, lead them to look at the page number beside the word. Explain that the number tells them on what page they can find Ephesians. Help the kids find the page. When they find Ephesians, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Help them find chapter 2. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Help them find verse 8 in chapter 2. Tell them to put their finger on the verse.

Finding verses with 2nd-3rd graders: Teach kids the half-and-half-and-half shortcut. Guide kids to open their Bibles to the middle, which will probably be Psalms or Proverbs. Tell them to open to the middle again, to the right, which will probably be one of the gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John). Then direct them to open to the middle once again, which should be one of Paul's letters. Guide them to turn pages left or right till they find Ephesians. Repeat the first 10 books of the New Testament to help them find Ephesians: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians. If they have turned to a book you didn't list, they've turned too far. When they find Ephesians, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Direct them to find chapter 2. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Direct them to find verse 8 in chapter 2.



CATCH ON: Make the Connection

Small Groups, 25-30 minutes • for kindergarten–5th grade

Finding verses with 4th-5th graders: This month's Bible verse is in Ephesians. Ask kids where they can find Ephesians. Is it in the Old or New Testament? (*New Testament*) Now, which division of the New Testament? (*Epistles, or letters*) If we want to find the epistles, where do we look? (*After the gospels and New Testament history*) If kids can find Ephesians at this point, praise their good memories/Bible skills.

If not, teach kids the half-and-half-and-half shortcut: Guide kids to open their Bibles to the middle, which will probably be Psalms or Proverbs. Tell them to open to the middle again, to the right, which will probably be one of the gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John). Then direct them to open to the middle once again, which should be one of Paul's letters, or epistles. Guide them to turn pages left or right till they find Ephesians. Repeat the first 10 books of the New Testament to help them find Ephesians: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians. If they have turned to a book you didn't list, they've turned too far. When they find Ephesians, tell them to locate chapter 2, verse 8. If you have kids new to Bible navigation, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Direct them to find chapter 2. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Direct them to find verse 8 in chapter 2.

Next, invite kids to get in groups of three or four and choose a well-known song. Tell them to set the words of the memory verse to that song, or they can make up their own tune. (Be ready to provide extra assistance to younger kids as needed.) Let kids vote to see whose song they like best. Extra points go to the team that can come up with moves for their song. Provide prizes if you like.

LEADER: "This verse tells us that God's grace is a gift that He offers to each of us. He offers it to me and (*pointing to kids*) you and you and you. It's not something that we earn or deserve. 🦶 **Grace is a gift that God gives us because He loves us. He loves all people—every single person in the world. He doesn't love certain people more than others.** He doesn't love people who go to church more than people who don't go to church. He doesn't love girls more than boys. He doesn't love old people more than kids, or moms more than dads. He loves all people the same. That's why! **Jesus came to rescue everyone.**"



CATCH ON: Make the Connection

Small Groups, 25-30 minutes • for kindergarten–5th grade

SUPPLIES:

none

5. Thanks for Grace (pray)

Lead kids in a multi-step prayer experience by following these steps:

1. Start the prayer. Thank God generally for people who have shown us grace. **♥ Thank God specifically for someone who has shown you grace. Use this pattern: "God, thank You for ____, who showed me grace when I didn't deserve it by ____."**
2. Ask each person to say a sentence prayer aloud, thanking God for one way someone has shown them grace.
3. **♥ Thank God specifically for a way He has shown you grace. Use this pattern: "God, thank You for showing me grace when I didn't deserve it by ____."**
4. Ask each person to say a sentence prayer aloud, thanking God for a way He has shown us grace. (*Forgiving us, loving us, providing for us, offering us chances to get it right, giving us friends when we don't deserve them, giving us Jesus*)
5. Finish the prayer time with the following scripted prayer: "God, You show us grace in so many ways. Sometimes we're not even aware that it's You. But we are so thankful and grateful. Thank You for not giving up on us. Thank You for coming to rescue everyone, including us. **👣 Help us to show our thanks by showing grace to others, just like You have shown grace to us. Amen."**

WRAP UP

Bring together all the groups in your classroom so you can conclude the session with a review. Be prepared to distribute this week's GodTime and Fridge Door cards.

LEADER: "I love what we've talked about today. I love learning that **! Jesus came to rescue everyone.** Some days I know I need rescuing, and it's then that I'm really thankful God gives me His grace when I don't deserve it. What a great God we have. I'm so glad He loves me and He loves you. I hope to see you next time as we learn more about God's grace."

Distribute the GodTime and Fridge Door cards.