



Date: _____

Series: God is Our Rescuer
Summer Year 2, Lesson 3

God Calls Us to Be a Part of His Rescue Team

Primary Scripture: Saul of Tarsus, Acts 9

Key Verse: Acts 9:15, “Go! I’ve chosen this man to bring my name to nations, to kings, and to the people of Israel.”

How does this address a need in our kids' lives?

Kids have a need to feel significant. They need to know they can make a difference. They are especially excited when they are included as part of a group of people around a task. Just as Paul was called and chosen by God to take the message of Jesus Christ to the world, so it is with the church. We are called and chosen to carry that same Gospel. This includes kids. They are an important part of this process. In today’s lesson, Jesus called Paul. Kids need to see, as well, that Jesus calls them today to the privileged task of sharing the good news.

How does Jesus fill this need?

Jesus for us: Jesus has shown us his love by completing his mission to go to the cross in our behalf. We must first see that he went before us and gave his life for us before we can respond to his call.

Jesus in us: Just as the living Christ appeared to Paul, the living Christ through the Holy Spirit lives in us and gives us power to go where he sends us.

Jesus through us: The power to change lives can only come through the Holy Spirit working through the powerful gospel message. We are the vessels that bring that message.

Stamp of Excellence:

Remind the kids what excellent worship looks like. We are in God's presence to honor him. Put on your best manners. This might include wearing your name tag, participating eagerly at all times, listening when the leader is talking, raising your hand to speak, not distracting others, playing the learning game with cooperation, singing enthusiastically, and praying reverently. Offer rewards or positive reinforcement to those who worship with excellence.



Worship

Invocation:

Let kids bring forward the worship symbols such as the cross, candles, Bible, and offering plate. Invite God's presence and call by name Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Attention Grabber:

Capture the children's attention and help them focus on the worship theme for the day.

Supplies: penlight or flashlight

Ask the kids to be as still and quiet as they can while you turn out the lights. When the room is dark, use either a penlight or a flashlight to focus on specific children. Ask these kids:

How does it make you feel to have the light shine right at you? Does it make you feel special?

In today's Kids Church, we are talking about how God opened up heaven and shined a bright light that even blinded the eyes of a man named Saul. God called Saul to help with his rescue plan to save the whole world. Saul felt very special.

When we worship today, I want you to think of God shining his special light on you right now. What is in your heart? What are you thinking of that is very important to God? He wants you to know that he is calling you to come and help with his rescue plan. God wants you to be part of his rescue team.

Before you can do that, God wants you to know how much he loves you. God gave you his Son, Jesus, and when you trust in him, Jesus lives right in your heart. He fills you with so much love that you want to praise him and you want to be a part of his rescue team.

Songs of Worship:

Choose two or three songs. Briefly introduce songs so kids can better understand what they are singing and be drawn into a more focused worship. Keep the attention on God!

Your choice of music.

The Power of the Cross:

Jesus has given his life for us that we might have forgiveness and power to live for him.

Read Colossians 1:14-15,17,19-20.

“His Son paid the price to free us, which means that our sins are forgiven. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. He existed before everything. God was pleased to have all of himself live in Christ. God was also pleased to bring everything on earth and in heaven back to himself through Christ. He did this by making peace through Christ’s blood sacrificed on the cross.”

Then say a general prayer of confession and announce God’s forgiveness for those sins.

Song of Response:

Choose a song to help the children turn to Jesus. Or, you may want to help them celebrate what God has done by singing a song of praise.

Offering:

Teach the importance of giving. Talk about the mission activities they are supporting.

Prop needed: a toy fire truck or a picture of a fire truck

Show the fire truck as you tell this story.

There once was a town that had a fire truck. The fire truck carried all the water in a big tank to fight fires. Since everyone in the town shared in owning the fire truck, all would use it from time to time.

Sometimes people would take the fire truck to their house and use some of the water to water their yard. Others would take it to the street and spray a big fountain for the kids to play in. Others used it to wash their cars.

Everyone said it was okay to use the fire truck and to even use the water. After all, it was the town's fire truck and water. The only rule was, "If you use the water, make sure you go to the lake and pump more water into the big tank." But do you think the people did this?

One day a great fire broke out. The town gathered around as the fire truck raced to the scene. They had to put the fire out, otherwise it would spread and destroy the whole city. The people turned on the hose, and guess what? It was empty! No one had filled it! Everyone had used it and used it and used it, but no one had given back. So the people couldn't rescue the building that was burning.

Sometimes that can be like our offerings. If we expect that other people will give their offerings to the Lord's work, guess what? No one will probably give his own offering. Everyone needs to help even if it is a little bit. It is what God asks us to do so we can show how thankful we are to be part of his rescue team.

God wants to use what we give him to do something more important than just put out fires in buildings. He wants to use what we give him to help people live in heaven forever with him.

Discuss the mission for offerings this month and then have kids bring their offering forward to put in the offering basket.



The Word

Learning Game:

Some churches dismiss children from the adult service at this time to join Kids Church. The learning game provides a fun kinesthetic activity to help kids connect with each other. The learning point will help reinforce the theme of the day.

Two large sheets, multiple balls, and blindfolds for every child are needed for this game.

This is a contest of boys against girls. It simply demonstrates that, to be an effective rescuer, we need to be able to see.

Introduce the game with:

Kids, put on your imagination caps and look at these balls. They are not really balls. They are aardvark eggs, and they need to be rescued.

You see, these eggs are freezing and if they don't get put on the blanket, they will freeze solid and die. If they can make it to the blanket, they will hatch and we will have a whole family of aardvarks.

Do you know what an aardvark is? Let's see your aardvark impression. Let's listen for the best aardvark noise. Well, you sound like a family of aardvarks trying to save the eggs!

Two kids from each team will come up front and hold a warming blanket for their team. Now everyone else must stand far away and get ready to deliver the aardvark eggs into their team's warming blanket. Since aardvarks eat ants, let's imagine there are ants covering the entire floor. This means that you cannot get up and walk over to put the eggs in the warming blanket. You are going to have to throw the eggs.

Oh no! Something else has happened. The ants have given the signal that they are about to give off a poison gas. The only way to protect your eyes is to cover them with a blindfold!

Make sure the little ones know you are only kidding as you put blindfolds on all kids. Have certain older children help tie the younger ones. Emphasize how important it is for

the children to keep their eyes covered and closed so they don't go blind from the poison gas. Then have the blindfolded kids throw the "eggs" into the "warming blankets."

Count both sides' eggs and redistribute. Repeat the game again. Now, spray an imagination anecdote gas that neutralizes the ants' poison gas, making it safe for them to remove their blindfolds. Since they can now see where to throw, count how many aardvark eggs are caught now.

In today's lesson, God showed a man named Saul that Jesus truly was the Son of God and he gave his life so that anyone who believes in him will be rescued. Saul was blinded for three days and could not see. After Jesus appeared to him, God rescued Saul's sight. Saul could then see not only with his physical eyes, but he could see with his spiritual eyes as well. He could see with his heart. Saul knew the truth that Jesus was Lord and he wanted to show the whole world.

Bible Presentation:

Help children pay attention by giving them a word or concept to listen for as you read. Consider letting a child read who could do so with excellence.

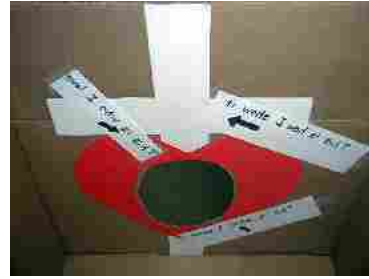
To depict Saul's conversion from Acts 9, use the video from Nest Family Entertainment, *Saul of Tarsus*.

Order from www.nestfamily.com. Begin with the section where believers are carried away and persecuted. This happens after the line, "Whose side are you on anyway?" The next scene is a battering ram against a door. Stop the tape at one of three spots:

- when Paul regains his sight and asks to be baptized (*approximately 15 minutes*),
- when he is hugged and welcomed by other Christians (*16-18 minutes*),
- or when he escapes over the wall at night (*20-22 minutes*).

Application:

Props needed: a box with a hole the size of a child's face. On the inside of the box should be a drawing of a large heart intersected by a large cross around the face hole. "This is whom I love" (arrow pointing to the child) and "This is how I show it" (arrow pointing to the cross) should also be printed. In the lower section of the cross is the phrase, "This is whom I send" (arrow pointing to the child). On the opposite side of the face hole inside the box should be a mirror. For the child to see his image with the drawing in the mirror, the box needs to have a flashlight taped inside the box shining up against the picture.



Invite four kids forward to be part of a discussion panel. Some follow-up discussion questions might include:

Why do you think God chose Saul to be one who told others about Jesus?

What did Paul see in his vision on the road to Damascus?

What was said?

Who heard it?

How does God call you?

What do you see that would change your life like Paul's and make you want to go share your new life with others?

As the kids think about this, bring out the special box that lets you see how God calls you to be part of his rescue plan. Have a child put his face into the hole and gaze inside the box.

On the opposite side of the box the child will see a mirror. The mirror will reflect back what his face looks like with the drawing around it. In effect, a child will see his face surrounded by a heart placed right in the middle of a cross. For a child to be able to see this, there needs to be a flashlight taped inside the box shining up against the picture.

Have the kid looking inside give a description of what he sees and what he thinks it means to have God call him to be a part of his rescue team.

Prayers:

Everyone needs a friendship with God, but not everyone is God's friend. They need someone to help them become friends with God. You can be that person if you pray for others.

Let's pray for the following groups of people. Can we have volunteer prayer intercessors step up here? I'll say what group we need to pray for, then you pray for those people.

- Those who don't believe in God.
- Those who are angry with God.
- Those who are too lazy to find out more about God.
- Those who are searching for a friendship with God but don't know where to look.
- Those who believe you get to heaven by doing good things instead of trusting Jesus.
- Those who don't think Jesus is really God's Son who died on the cross for us.



Witness

Witness and Tell:

Give children opportunities to share how God is working in their lives. It is best to use a microphone to ask children interview questions around the theme for the day.

If time permits, have one or more children tell about any faith-sharing experiences they have had lately.

Prayer:

Let the kids pray out loud. If you are using a microphone, invite children to form a prayer line and speak their thanksgivings or requests. If you have portable microphones, you can roam the audience. Kids can also go to prayer stations set up for specific types of prayer.

Blessing:

Speak a blessing prayer over the children. Personalize this to your setting. Use a special scripture verse or blessing around the theme of the day.

Song of Sending:

Choose one song. Briefly introduce song so kids can better understand what they are singing and be drawn into a more focused worship. Keep the attention on God.

Supplies:

Attention Grabber:

- flashlight or a penlight

Offering:

- toy fire truck or picture of a fire truck

Learning Event:

- two large sheets
- multiple balls
- blindfolds

Bible Presentation:

- large box (see directions for creating in the script)
- video, *The Animated Stories from the New Testament: Saul of Tarsus* (Nest Family Entertainment Network)—order from www.nestfamily.com

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