



Date: _____
Series: A Miraculous Church
Spring Year 2, Lesson 54

The Rope and the Rescue

Primary Scripture: Joshua 2. Joshua sends spies to Jericho.

Key Verse: 1 Peter 1:21, "Through him you believe in God who brought Christ back to life and gave him glory. So your faith and confidence are in God."

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

Kids are dependent on others to provide for their needs. Naturally, they are in a position of trust to feel confident that their basic needs will be met. If they grow spiritually, they need to learn to trust God in the same way. He provides and protects, but above all, he rescues. Through his Son, Jesus, God provides rescue from sin, death and the power of the devil. Through the Bible event of Rahab's rescue, kids see and experience a beautiful picture of trust through the metaphor of a rope. They will see it as something to hang onto confidently because we know that God himself holds the other end.

How does Jesus fill this need?

Jesus for us: Like Rahab, we, too, are identified with a scarlet marking. Through the blood of Christ, we wear a mark that rescues us from sin and the power of the devil.

Jesus in us: Jesus rescues us so that we may be free to live for him and he to live in us.

Jesus through us: We offer a rescue line to the world through Jesus.

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.

In advance, attach a rope to the ceiling by tying a thread around it or with a simple, light duct tape job so that it will easily tear loose when someone tries to climb it.

Tell the following story with fully animated body motion. Have the kids do the motions with you as you tell the story. Say:

Kids, today we're going on an elephant hunt. Stand up and come along with me!

We'd better take our tranquilizer gun Loop imaginary gun over shoulder.

We've got our spyglasses..... Hold glasses to your eyes.

And our running shoes..... Put on your running shoes.

We start off walking..... Walk in place.

We hack through the jungle..... Hack with machete knife.

No elephants here! Look around.

Let's swim through the river..... Swimming motions.

Hopscotch the rocks..... Hopscotch the rocks.

No elephants here! Look around.

Let's sneak through the grass..... Bend grass over.
No elephants here! Look around.
Wait, my glasses.....Adjust glasses on eyes.

I see them! Get the tranquilizer gun!...Aim gun.
Get low, creep up.....Get low, creep up.

Pow! We've got him! He's down! Come on! Let's go see!

Let's tag his ear..... Tag his ear.
Twist his trunk.....Twist his trunk.
Peek in his eye..... Peek in his eye.

Whoa! He's awake! Run!

Pat hands on thighs quickly. Repeat the motions for these actions below.

Run through the grass. Fast speed now! Bending grass. Hopscotch over the rocks. Jump. Swim the river. Hack through the jungle. Turn around. Have we shaken him? No we haven't! He's still there! He has us cornered! Up against a cliff. He's closing in fast! Quick, grab the rope... up you go!

Grab the rope to climb up. The rope falls down, and presenter does too.

But the rope doesn't hold! An elephant sits on it! Splat. Awwww.

What's the moral of this story? If an elephant is chasing you, make sure you grab a rope that you can count on!

Today an elephant isn't chasing us, but we are talking about a rope that you can count on. It's the rope of trust. We can count on Jesus as our Savior, no matter what. When we worship today, let's imagine that God has thrown a rope from heaven that we can hang onto and trust because he is our rescuer.

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.

Prop needed: medium or large 3D cross

Let's take a look back at one of our props from the elephant story. Do you remember how this rope fell from the ceiling? In order to trust a rope to hold you, you must make sure you know what's on the other end.

What would be one place in this room that I could place a rope, the rope of trust, and know that it would spiritually never fail me?

Now the rope of trust isn't a rope like this that you can see. It's what you grab with your heart that you hang onto and know for sure that it will always hold you. If this rope was really our rope of trust, where would we put it?

Take guesses and then lay the rope around the cross.

Yes, here is a place where it is secured and anchored. The Bible says Jesus death on the cross for us is like an anchor to our soul, both sure and steadfast.

1 Peter 1:21 says, "Through him you believe in God who brought Christ back to life and gave him glory. So your faith and confidence are in God."

Let's come to God in prayer and be thankful for the power of the cross in Jesus.

Dear God, thank you for giving your Son, Jesus, to us. He gave his life so that your promise is sure. You will never leave us. You will be like an anchor to our soul so no matter what happens, we are attached to you.

You gave us promises. For example, if we confess our sins to you, you will always forgive us. Some of us have done things that are wrong. Those things are bothering us and we need to tell you about them. Thank you that we can hang onto the rope of trust and know that at the other end is the cross of Jesus. Because of that, we have forgiveness and know that you'll never let go of us. Give us your forgiveness in the power of your name, and let the power of Jesus' life live in ours. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Song of Response:

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

Offering:

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

Make a big circle out of the rope. Have kids come and stand inside the rope circle. This is done to remind them that their life is an offering of thanks to God. They can still place their money in the offering bucket in the middle of the circle but be sure they understand that they are living sacrifices to God. Their money is not the only thing God wants.



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.

In advance, make two parallel lines of tape, 20-30 yards apart.

Additional supplies needed: 2'x3' cardboard for each six kids, kite string tied to one end of the cardboard and a heavy rope as long as the distance between the tape lines (one per team)

Option: use plastic snow sleds instead of cardboard.

Divide kids into teams of six or more. Have all members of each team except one line up in rows behind one tapeline. One kid from each team stands behind the opposite tape line or the safe side (*Rhubarb Ranch*) with the rope. Later, other kids will join him or her and help throw the rope.

Say:

This gap between the tapelines is called the Radioactive Raspberry River. You don't want to step into it or touch it under any circumstance. If you do, you will melt!

In this game, if you fall into the radioactive river and melt, you have to go back to your side of the river. But that side of the river (point to kids in lines) is slowly becoming radioactive and everyone must leave or perish.

On the other side of the river is the safe land called the Rhubarb Ranch. This area is resistant to all radioactivity so everyone wants to get there.

Getting over the river to the Rhubarb Ranch can save each person on your team. To get to the safe side of the river, your teammate on Rhubarb Ranch will toss you a rope. One at a time, each kid will sit

on the sled (*hanging on to it, too*) and hold onto the rope so they can be pulled across.

Remember, if you touch the Radioactive Raspberry River you must return to the radioactive side. If you do get across the river, another person needing rescue can pull the sled back by pulling the string attached to it.

Let's play and see which team can get the most people across the Radioactive Raspberry River.

Let kids play. Possibly add another round after three minutes. Then gather all the kids together for the teaching point.

In this game, you were dependent upon someone else to rescue you. You had to trust them by hanging onto the rope they threw to you. But if they didn't throw you the rope, you couldn't be rescued. If you didn't hang onto the rope, you wouldn't be saved.

That's what it's like with God. He threw us a rope of rescue when he gave us Jesus. Without Jesus, no one could be rescued from the power of sin, death, or the devil. But we must hang onto Jesus or we cannot receive what he has done for us. That's just like hanging onto the rope that was thrown to us to cross the Radioactive Raspberry River.

Bible Reading:

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.

Props: A small bundle of straw-like material (raffia or tall grass, possibly) and a reddish - purple cord

Costume: a period appropriate costume for the character of Rahab

For the following creative drama, have an actor in costume tell the story.

Introduction:

Hello! My name is Rahab, and I am a Canaanite. That means that I come from the country of Canaan; as a matter of fact, right in the city of Jericho. When this story begins, we Canaanites were not worshipers of the true God as I later became. No, we grew up worshiping false gods made of wood and stone. We worshiped the moon god and other gods who were cruel and who sometimes even demanded the sacrifice of our children.

Joshua's army was coming.

We had heard that Joshua, the mighty army, and the mighty people of Israel were coming into our land. They said that their God had given our land to them, and that all the people were to be driven off of it so that the people would not worship false gods but worship the true God.

We had seen what their God had done for them. We heard of his miracles. One of his miracles was to free them in Egypt where they had been slaves, and another was parting the Red Sea. Also, we heard of how he'd helped them conquer other people.

I was frightened of these people until I met two of them. Joshua, their leader, had sent two spies into our city of Jericho. They were to see what kind of city it was and figure out where we were weak and where we were strong. The spies even visited my house. Now, understand that I am not known as a lady with a good reputation. As a matter of fact, my house is open to lots of men who did lots of bad things. Maybe that's why the spies thought they might get some information when they arrived.

Rahab hides the spies.

But when they visited, I didn't recognize them. They spoke differently and they looked different, so I guessed that they must have been spies. But I did answer their questions. Later the spies fell asleep on the roof. The gates of the city had been closed.

The king of Jericho came looking for these spies and I told the king's men that they had been here but had already left. I even let them in to have a look around. When they looked on the roof, all they saw was this straw.

Hold up straw.

I said to the king's men that it was dark and the gate was just about to close so the visitors had left. I didn't know where they went, but if they hurried, they could catch them. The king's men left.

I went to the roof and told the spies that I had heard that the Lord, their God, was God of heaven and earth. Who could stand against him? So I made a deal and they offered me a bargain. They said that they would treat me kindly if I didn't tell anyone what they had been doing here.

I said I would protect them and hide them, but they must promise to be kind to my father's family as I had been kind to them. They must agree to protect my father, mother, brothers and sisters and their

households, and save us from death when they attacked. The spies agreed, so I hid the men.

Marked by a scarlet cord.

Hold up scarlet cord.

The spies gave me a scarlet cord. As you can tell, it is a reddish-purple color. I was to hang this outside the window when the Israelites attacked the city. If I had all of my family in the house, this would be the house that would be spared. So I agreed to their plan.

Escape down the rope.

Then it was time for the spies to escape. I gave them a plan. I told them I had a hidden window at the city wall. I said I would lower them down on a rope. Then they could hide in the hills for three days until everyone stopped looking for them. After that, they could return.

Rahab exits stage.

Spies bring a good report.

Presenter continues the story:

The spies did just as Rahab had suggested. They hid for three days until the searchers gave up looking for them. They returned to Joshua and gave him a good report. They said the people of Jericho were deathly afraid of them. They said, “Let us quickly take them for the Lord is surely giving us a victory.”

Jericho falls.

Not long after, the people of Israel came and surrounded the city. They didn't attack with swords or spears, but marched around for seven days and with a procession of trumpets. They carried the Ark of the Covenant with them, too.

On the seventh day, the Israelites marched around the city seven times and blew their trumpets. Then the walls fell down. But remember, Rahab's window was marked with the scarlet cord and all her family was inside. Her house did not crumble and she and her family were saved... saved by the marking of the cord.

Have you ever been in a spot where you needed rescuing? I think we all have. We all need a rescue that can only happen if we are marked, not with a cord hanging out of our window, but with a red mark nonetheless. It's not a red mark that you can see with your eyes, but

it's a red mark that happens when you trust in what has been done for you.

Maybe you can guess what I'm thinking of. What red mark has given you the promise of rescue from your sin and rescue from the power of the devil? Yes, it's the power of Jesus, his blood. We can hang on to that promise as if it were a rope. It marks us as completely forgiven.

Hang onto the rope.

It's one thing to have the rope lowered to you. Without the rope, the spies could never have escaped. But they also had to trust the rope and trust the person on the other end. The same thing is true for God. We can only be rescued when he drops a rope to us. He did that when he gave us his Son, but we must hang on to him. We must trust Jesus no matter what. I invite you to pray with me now.

Dear God, thank you for giving us Jesus. Help us to trust him with our whole heart. No matter what happens, let us trust him for forgiveness and for our rescue from sin so that we can be free to serve you. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.



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.

Have kids tell about a time when they were in a “tight fix” and had to trust God.

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.

Have kids pray about times when they need to be rescued and ask for God’s help.

Options: (select one from the options below)

Prayer Line Option: Kids line up and take turns stepping in front of the microphone to speak their prayers briefly.

Prayer Chair: Adults or children with special prayer needs are invited to sit on chairs. Kids gather around them, lay hands on their shoulders or knees, and take turns praying.

Popcorn Prayer: The leader moves through the crowd with a microphone and turns it toward kids who are raising their hands to pray. The kids speak their prayers into the microphone.

Lord's Prayer: Lead the children through the Lord’s Prayer, phrase by phrase, or let them pray the entire prayer along with you.

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.

Your choice of music.

Supplies:

Attention Grabber:

- rope attached to ceiling with a thread or tape

Power of the Cross:

- cross

Learning Game:

- heavy tape for marking the floor
- a piece of 2'x3' cardboard per 6 kids
- kite string securely attached to one side of the cardboard (or sleds)
- heavy rope (20 to 30 feet long) per 6 kids

Bible Reading:

- a small bundle of straw-like material (raffia or tall grass possibly)
- a reddish-purple cord
- Rahab in a period appropriate costume

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