



Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Series: God is Our Rescuer  
Summer Year 2, Lesson 4

# God Never Lets You Down

**Primary Scripture:** Acts 9:19b-31. Paul's escape from Damascus.

**Key Verse:** Romans 8:31b, "If God is for us, who can be against us?"

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

Kids need to know there are certain things that they can absolutely count on. This gives them security. God offers that security as he tells us that he is always for us no matter what. Even when we have great obstacles or mighty enemies, God does not let us down. We must believe this with eyes of faith, even though the temporary circumstances might discourage us.

## **How does Jesus fill this need?**

**Jesus for us:** Jesus died for us to show us how very much he loves us. He wants us to be secure in his love.

**Jesus in us:** With the security of his love, we never need to worry that he will let us down.

**Jesus through us:** We can make a difference in our world as we share the Jesus who will never let us down.

## 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.*

*A child will be asked to come forward and do a series of three different trust falls. A trust fall is when a child stands very stiff, crosses his arms, and falls straight back. The first fall is done from ground level. The presenter catches him before he falls all the way down. The next level might be from a platform a foot tall or even the height of a chair. A third platform would be higher still, even the height of a table.*

*For these catches, the presenter might have another adult with him to make sure that the child is safe. He might even have a group of children catching, if the presenter is familiar with how the kids can be arranged in such a way to insure complete safety. Throughout the process the question is presented to the child, "Do you trust me?"*

*Option: Have a child do only the first fall from ground level as an introduction to the theme, then continue immediately with the first part of the worship. Then later, instead of doing the egg toss learning game, you could have everyone break into groups at the Learning Game segment and everyone would have a chance to experience a trust fall at the level of risk with which they are comfortable. Either way, it is imperative that an adult who fully understands the following instructions supervises each trust fall group.*

#### Instructions for trust falls:

*The first fall is done from ground level. The best way to do this is for the presenter to get down on one knee behind the child and close enough to "catch" the child before the child reaches a 45-degree angle.*

The next level might be from a platform a foot tall or even the height of a chair. A third platform would be higher still, perhaps the height of a table. For these last two catches, you should have another adult with you to make sure the child is caught safely. You could also have a group of kids do the catching with the “zipper catch.”

### Directions for the zipper catch:

Divide a group of 6-10 kids into two equal parallel lines facing each other, about 18 inches apart. Each child holds his hands out in front of him, bending at the elbow like they might carry a puppy or a sack of potatoes. Kids now all have their palms up and forearms parallel to the ground. To create the “zipper” effect, kids’ arms alternate so that the arm of a person across from them is between his or her own arms.

For safety, use the following line of communication between the faller and the catchers.

- The faller makes sure all in the group are looking at him. He turns his back to them, crosses his arms over his chest, and says, “Joey (insert name of volunteer) ready.”
- Group responds by all looking up at Joey’s back and saying, “Group ready.”
- Joey responds with (but doesn’t yet fall): “Joey falling.”
- Group responds: “Fall away, Joey.”
- Joey then – and only then – falls, keeping his arms crossed over his chest and his back rigid and flat. This is to ensure that his weight is evenly distributed over the length of his body. If he bends, all his weight goes to his hips and the kids catching his hips could be injured or drop him.

***NOTE: Each group MUST be monitored by an ADULT, who makes sure the lines are straight, parallel, and the right distance apart to ensure safety for faller and catchers alike. The leader also must make sure all kids have their eyes on Joey.***

After the trust falls, continue with:

**Sometimes it is difficult to trust people because we know that people can let us down. God asks us the same question, “Do you trust me?” God promises to never let us down, no matter what. But we must trust him even if it is hard to do. Romans 8:31 tells us, “If God is for us, who can be against us?” Isn’t that amazing?**

**When we worship today, let’s begin by trusting that Jesus accepts us and loves us.**

## **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.*

Ask:

**Do you always trust God to take care of you?**

Talk about times when kids might get scared and might not fully trust God to be there for them. Tell about a time or a recurring situation in your own childhood when it was hard for you to trust God.

**Let's trust Jesus to take the punishment of our sin away by admitting our lack of trust in him and receiving his acceptance. Remember, he will never let us down.**

Lead the group in confession and announcement of forgiveness.

**Dear God, we thank you so much that you never let us down. We confess to you that we don't always trust you to be there. Sometimes we worry and fret about things when we can't see what you are doing. Help us to trust you more. Forgive us for the times when we try to do it all ourselves. In Jesus' name. Amen.**

## 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.*

**God wants us to know that when we trust him and put him first, he will never let us down. We want to trust him and put him first when we give him our offerings and our money.**

**In the Bible, there was a lady who was very poor. She only had enough oil and flour to make one last meal and then she would be out of food. She and her son would die. The prophet Elijah told her to give it to the Lord and he would provide for her. She gave to the Lord by providing a meal for the prophet. Then, miraculously, whenever she went to her jar again for more oil and flour to make her food, there was always enough. God never let her down. She learned to trust him. She learned the truth of Romans 8:31, "If God is for us, who can be against us?"**

**The same thing is true for us today with our offerings. We show God we trust him when we give him part of our money. When we do so, he will help make sure that we always have enough. We grow in our ability to trust him more and more. Whoever can trust God with all they have is blessed in their hearts.**



# 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.*

*Supplies: popcorn buckets (one for every pair of kids), newspaper, eggs (one for every pair of kids), paper towels*

*Option: Do trust falls with the kids as described in the **Attention Grabber** at the start of worship.*

The following egg toss is done with popcorn buckets or some other type of light bucket. In each bucket should be crumpled up newspaper for padding.

*This is a good outdoor game.*

Let kids choose partners and then line up opposite of each other. Have kids alternate in throwing their eggs and catching with the buckets. After each set has completed their toss successfully, one of the pair takes a step backwards. Whichever team is the farthest away from each other before the egg breaks will be the team with the longest distance. If space is an issue, have pairs of three to five go first and then another group of three to five, etc.

### Conclusion:

**While we dropped the eggs and broke them, God never lets us down. It sometimes may seem like God has dropped us, but if we wait and watch, we will always see that God has a blessing in store for us in every circumstance.**

Share an example from your life where God took a problem and turned it into a blessing.

# 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.*

The video *Saul of Tarsus* from Family Entertainment Network continues from last week. You will find it at [www.nestfamily.com](http://www.nestfamily.com).

Review what was seen last week (from Acts 7:60, 9:1-19):

- **Saul thought Jesus was a fraud and he believed God wanted him to put Jesus' followers in jail.**
- **Saul even approved when Stephen was stoned to death for believing in Jesus.**
- **Saul was traveling to Damascus to arrest more believers when a light blinded him and he heard Jesus' voice.**
- **Jesus told him to go to Damascus and wait for further instructions. He was still blind from his encounter with Jesus.**
- **Ananias, a follower of Jesus came to Saul and healed him of his blindness.**
- **Ananias told Saul that God was calling him to tell people about Jesus.**
- **Saul asked to be baptized and he was. (end of last week's video)**

Now ask:

**Was it safe in those days to be a believer in Jesus? (No.)**

**What was happening to people who believed in Jesus? (They were put in jail and even killed.)**

**What do you think is going to happen to Saul? (He might be arrested or killed.)**

**Let's watch the rest of the video and find out what happened.**

This video covers the experiences of Saul hiding in Damascus to his fleeing and escape behind city walls. The video will show the well-mapped routes of his missionary journeys and his final days in Rome. Even though he was finally put to death, notice that **God never let him down**. Saul/Paul knew Jesus to be his Savior, and when he died he knew that God would not let him down. God took Paul to live with him forever in Heaven.

Conclude with:

**God let Saul down very gently in the basket to help him escape. God never lets go of the rope or lets us crash. He is always there with us. Just like we caught the eggs by cushioning the fall, so it is with God. When we come across hard things, he helps cushion the fall. He never lets us down.**

# Shelly Surething

## Interactive Story

*Supplies: signs for volunteers—one says Shelly Surething and the other says Bible Answer Man*

The presenter invites a child up on stage. He asks that all would put on their imagination caps because the child is now Shelly Surething.

**Anytime Shelly says, “As sure as I am Shelly,” everyone else says, “It’s a sure thing.” Let’s practice. Shelly, you will know when to say your line when I tap you on the shoulder.**

The presenter taps the child on the shoulder. Child responds: ***“As sure as I am Shelly...”***

Kids respond: ***“It’s a sure thing.”***

Practiced and well rehearsed, the presenter calls a boy up on stage that will be the Bible Answer Man. He, too, has a line that is prompted with a tap on the shoulder from the presenter.

His line is, ***“There is no need for a frown...”*** to which the audience responds with, ***“God never lets you down.”*** This is practiced several times.

The story begins . . . .

**Come one, come all. Listen to the delightful story of Shelly Surething. We trust that you will be interested because...(TAP) “As sure as I am Shelly... It’s a sure thing!”**

**Shelly loved spending the night with her friends, especially Mary Taken. Mary liked being Shelly’s friend, too, and did anything she could to be a good friend. Mary Taken asked Shelly Surething if she could spend the night.**

**“Really, do you mean it?” said Shelly. “I would love to spend the night and it would be lots of fun.”**

**“Of course I do,” said Mary.**

**“Well (TAP), “As sure as I am Shelly... It’s a sure thing!”**

**She went home to ask her mother. Shelly’s mother said it would be fine, but she would have to call Mary’s mother first to make sure it was okay. She called, “Is this Mary’s mother? Is this Mrs. Taken?”**

**“Yes this is Mrs. Taken,” replied Mary’s mother, “Can I help you?”**



**“Yes,” said Shelly’s mother, “Mary has invited Shelly to spend the night. Is that okay with you?”**

**There was a brief pause. “Oh my,” said Mrs. Taken, “Mary didn’t check with me first. We are all having a family night tonight, so Mary can’t have any company. Maybe some other time.”**

**When Shelly heard the news, she said that was not fair.**

Have Shelly put on a “that’s not fair” face.

**She asked God to fix this situation so that she could go spend the night.**

Have Shelly put palms together in prayer position.

**She hoped that Mary would call and say it was all a mistake. No telephone call came. She felt let down by Mary, and she even felt let down by God. Why didn’t he fix it? Then she remembered the Bible Answer Man (TAP Bible Answer Man). *There is no need to frown... God never lets you down.***

**Since Shelly’s mom realized that Shelly was disappointed, she said, “Why don’t we bake a cake together?”**

**“Really, Mom?” she said. “That would be wonderful. I would love to do that! Then maybe we can eat it. (TAP) *“As sure as I am Shelly... It’s a sure thing!”***

**Just then the phone rang. Shelly listened to her mom talking. Her mom had a concerned voice. When she hung up the phone she explained that someone was sick in the hospital and needed someone to pray with them. Sally’s mom said that she would go.**

**“But Mom, we were supposed to make a cake together! It was a sure thing.”**

**“I am so sorry,” her mom said. “This is important right now. We can make the cake later. Would you come along?”**

**“I guess so,” said Shelly. She was disappointed and she even prayed that God would fix it so they would have a chance to make that cake. It didn’t seem like God was going to work it out that way, though. Still, she remembered God’s answer from the Bible. (TAP) *There is no need to frown... God never lets you down.***

When they were in the car driving to the hospital, Shelly told her mom how excited she was in trying out for a special part in the drama club. She prayed and prayed that she would get that part. She knew for sure, since because she prayed, it would happen. She even told her mom (TAP), *"As sure as I am Shelly... It's a sure thing!"* She would get the best part in the drama.

When they got to the hospital, they visited her mom's friend. They all felt better when they prayed together. Even though the lady was very sick, there was a smile on her face. She remembered the Bible promise (TAP Bible Answer Man) ***There is no need to frown... God never lets you down.***

Shelly said to herself, "Even when you are in the hospital, God never lets you down."

When they got back to their house, they decided to continue to bake the cake. When they went to check the answering machine, Shelly was excited to hear that it was her drama teacher with a message about the next rehearsal and what part she got. Shelly eagerly listened and... guess what? She didn't get the part that she wanted. "Oh, no," she said to herself, "that just doesn't seem fair. And I even prayed to God," she thought. "Did he let me down again?" Then she remembered (TAP Bible Answer Man), ***There is no need to frown... God never lets you down.***

If you think that is the end of the story, just wait a bit longer. That night, as Shelly Surething and her mother made the cake, some other things happened. They could see how God never let Shelly down, even if Shelly didn't get just what she wanted.

Mary Taken's mother called to ask if Shelly had ever been exposed to the chickenpox. It seems that Mary had just come down with them. If Shelly had been over there that night she might have gotten infected and sick, too. "Wow!" Shelly thought to herself as she remembered the Bible truth, (TAP Bible Answer Man) ***There is no need to frown... God never lets you down.***

When they finished making the cake, Shelly and her mom decided not to eat it. Instead they would give it to their sick friend in the hospital. It was a good feeling helping someone else. Maybe that was the best thing to do that night. Shelly remembered the promise, (TAP Bible Answer Man) ***There is no need to frown... God never lets you down.***

While they were cleaning up the kitchen, they were singing a song together. Shelly's mom said, "Shelly, you sing so well, why don't you try out for the singing part of the drama instead of this big speaking part? That might be what's best for you."

"Hmm," said Shelly, "I never thought of that before. I would like singing more than just trying to memorize all of those lines. Maybe that is what God was trying to tell me when I didn't get that part." Shelly thought to herself, "I might be Shelly Surething but (TAP Bible Answer Man) There is no need to frown... God never lets you down.. I trust in him!"



# 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.*

Kids are invited to come forward and talk about ways that God has not let them down and has helped them with special problems. During prayer time, any of these situations can be included, either as prayer requests for God's help or as prayers of thanks for how God took care of the situation.

## 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:

## Learning Event:

- popcorn buckets (one for every pair of kids)
- newspaper
- eggs (one for every pair of kids)
- paper towels

## Bible Presentation:

- video, *The Animated Stories from the New Testament: Saul of Tarsus* (Nest Family Entertainment Network)—order from [www.nestfamily.com](http://www.nestfamily.com)

## Interactive Story:

- two large name tags to hang over kids' necks:
  - “Shelly Surething”
  - “Bible Answer Man”

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