



Basics of the Gospel

A three session series on
teaching children the
foundations of the Gospel.

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Written
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Basics of the Gospel

Session 1: The Problem

Part 1: Bible Time

Supplies: *Playdough, Jesus Storybook Bible*

Introduction

I want to tell you a story. A true story. It's actually our story, but to understand our story we have to start at the very beginning, when time began. You see, everything started with one Creator. Have you ever created something? Maybe you've built something or drew a picture or made something out of clay.

Hands-on Moment

This is playdough, it's like clay. With it we can "create" all kinds of things. Let's take turns "creating" something. *(Take turns letting each child make something out of the playdough)* When we want to create, we have to start with "something". When our Creator started, he had nothing. Let me tell you the story of our Creator and His Creation.

Scripture Reading Part One

Read "The Beginning: a perfect Home" from the Jesus Storybook Bible by Sally Lloyd-Jones (from Genesis 1-2).

Review the Word

God is our Creator. He made the world and everything in it, including you and me. He made us in His image, to look like Him. Did he make animals in His image? Or Plants? Or Fish? No. Only humans were made to look like Him.

God is the ONLY God. Our story only has one Creator, not two or three or four. Just one. One, all-powerful God. This one God created everything from nothing and made two people who He loved so, so much, Adam & Eve. God was so happy to have a relationship with Adam and Eve. They loved him, they loved His creation and He loved them back. This story seems so wonderful and it is, until the "Problem" happens. Let's read the second part of our story.

Scripture Reading Part Two

Read "The Terrible Lie" from the Jesus Storybook Bible by Sally Lloyd-Jones (from Genesis 3)

Review the Word

God created a PERFECT place for Adam and Eve. Everything they could possibly need was there in the garden, but Satan introduced a lie that changed everything. It was a lie that said, "we don't need God" when we do. People still believe this lie. You and I sometimes believe this lie. Then this lie made them disobey God. To disobey God is very bad. It is Sin. God had to then punish Adam and Eve, because they disobeyed they would now have sadness and pain. They couldn't work the way God made them to be and that day they began to grow old and die.

Sin is a bad thing and every human has sin in their hearts. Sin separates us from God. We weren't made to be separated and apart from God, but sin causes us to be this way. Sin makes us broken. But in our story, our TRUE story from the Bible, it tells us that Adam and Eve's disobedience isn't the end. No, God had a plan. He made a way for His people to be back with Him. He loved them so much He couldn't bear for them to be apart from Him. So He sent a Rescuer.

Wrap-Up

Tomorrow we'll hear all about that rescuer, but for today I want you to think about the sins in your own life. Do you ever do things you shouldn't? How do those things keep you from God? Think about those questions while I close our Bible time in prayer.

Pray.

Part 2: Small Group Discussion

Discuss

We talked about a lot in our Bible time. We learned about God as Creator and the problem of Sin. Let's see what you can remember from our stories: *(lead your group through the following discussion questions)*

- Who is our Creator? *God*
- How many "creators" are there? *One, there is only one God.*
- What did God create the World from? *Nothing*
- Who did God create in His image? *Us, humans*
- Where did God put Adam and Eve? *In the Garden*
- What was the one thing God told Adam and Eve NOT to do? *Eat of the tree of the fruit of good and evil.*
- Who did Eve decide to listen to in the garden? *Satan/the serpent*
- Who did she share her fruit with? *Adam*
- What did this action cause them to do? *Disobey God*
- What is sin? *Disobeying God*
- What happens when we sin? *We are separated from God*
- Who has sinned? *Everyone*

In the Bible, Romans 3:23 says, *"for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God"*. Everyone's a sinner and a sinner cannot have a relationship with God. That's the big problem, but our Creator God is bigger than ANY problem and LOVES us more than ANYTHING. Tomorrow we'll talk about the way he rescued us from sin.

Act it Out

Let's wrap up our discussion time with acting out what we heard today. We'll be acting out the part of our story where Eve eats the fruit from the serpent. I'll need four volunteers: Adam, Eve, the Serpent, & God. *You can read Genesis 3: 1-13 and have them act out the parts or let them decide their own script. If the group is larger, divide into two "acting" teams.*

Part 3: Game Time**Instructions**

Have the kids line up on one side of the room. Without talking they must figure out how to make a bridge to get everyone to the other side of the room. They must keep a hand on a person the whole time and one foot off the ground. If they complete the task too quickly, make the game more challenging by closing their eyes or adding obstacles to the room.

After You Play

The point of this game is to talk about how sin is a “separation” and keeps us from having a relationship with God. Tomorrow we will talk about the bridge that overcame sin to allow us to have a relationship with God.

Basics of the Gospel Session 2: The Rescuer

Part 1: Bible Time

Supplies: *Jesus Storybook Bible*

Introduction

In our first Bible Time, we learned about our Creator and how He created everything from nothing and ALL that He created was good! He created two humans, the only things created in His image, and that was also good. Everything was good until the big problem. What was that problem? Sin! Adam and Eve disobeyed God and sin entered the world. Now pain and sadness and brokenness filled the world and worst of all humans were separated from God. But God had a plan, what was that plan? The Rescuer.

Hands-on Moment

I want you to think about a baby for a minute. Think about how small a baby is. A baby is innocent and small. They aren't scary or mean. When you think of great leaders and rulers and warriors, you don't think about a baby do you? But that was the big part of God's rescue plan. He came down to earth as a baby to be the Rescuer, to save the world from their sins. No one would ever expect a baby to be the Savior. That Rescuer is Jesus.

Who is Jesus?

Jesus is God's son and has always lived, just like God has always lived. Jesus and God are the same person. God sent Jesus to earth as a baby. He was born of a virgin named Mary, she was engaged to a man named Joseph. He was born in Bethlehem, in a stable (barn) since the town's hotels were all full. Jesus came into the world quietly and humbly, not like we think a Rescuer should. Jesus was born fully God and fully human. He was human just like you and I, but he did one BIG thing different, He never sinned, even when tempted.

Scripture Reading Part One

Read "Let's Go" from the Jesus Storybook Bible by Sally Lloyd-Jones, pages 208-209 only (from Matthew 4, Mark 1, Luke 4-6).

Review the Word

Jesus is fully God and fully human. Remember how Adam & Eve were tempted? They fell into temptation and disobeyed God. Jesus was faced with the same types of temptation and he stood strong, he didn't let sin take over his heart. He was ready for the rescue plan and all he had to do for it, even if it meant he had to die. After this, Jesus went and chose his 12 helpers to start his work on the big Rescue plan. He didn't choose rich, smart, perfect people. He chose fishermen who were willing to go with Him on the journey. Jesus had big plans and many people to talk to about His Father, God and why He was sent. We could talk all day about the miracles he did: healing the blind and lame, calming a storm, feeding 5,000 people with a few loaves and fish, but we know that was a small part of His major plan. The biggest part of Jesus' life was actually His death. Some people didn't like what Jesus was doing or who He claimed to be. They conspired against Him to have him crucified.

Scripture Reading Part Two

Read *“The Sun Stops Shining”* from the *Jesus Storybook Bible* by Sally Lloyd-Jones (from Matthew 27, Mark 15, Luke 23, John 19).

Review the Word

Jesus died for you. Jesus died for me. He didn't have to, He could have come down the cross at any time, but He stayed there for you and He stayed there for me. He didn't want sin to separate God from His people anymore. So He went through a terrible, horrible death on the cross. But just like our story from yesterday, that's not the end.

For three days Jesus was in the tomb. Buried. His followers were broken hearted. They didn't know what to do next. A few women followers went to the tomb to wash His body. When they got there, the stone was rolled away and the tomb was empty. Then an angel appeared to them, terrifying them! In Matthew 28:5-7 it says, *“The angel said to the women, ‘Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. 6 He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. 7 Then go quickly and tell his disciples: ‘He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.’ Now I have told you.”*

Jesus wasn't dead. Jesus' body hadn't been taken. He was Alive! In fact, he then visits his helpers, the disciples, even showing one of them the nail marks in His hands. Jesus not only died for our sins, but he conquered death! Through his sacrifice on the cross, Jesus rescues us from our sin, becoming the sacrifice for us. Our broken relationship with God can now be made new through Jesus.

Wrap-Up

Tomorrow we'll hear all about the Change in our own lives that can be made because of the fearless act of our Rescuer. Through His sacrifice we can be made new from the inside out. God loved us so much, He let his own son die to be with us forever. Think about what that could mean for you. Let's pray.

Close Bible Time in prayer.

Part 2: Small Group Discussion

Discuss

We talked about a lot in our Bible time. We learned about Jesus as God, God's Son and our Rescuer. Let's see what you can remember from our stories: *(lead your group through the following discussion questions)*

- Who is Jesus? *God's son*
- How did Jesus come to earth? *As a baby*
- Who tempted Jesus in the desert? *Satan/Serpent*
- What is the difference between us and Jesus? *Jesus is fully human and fully God*
- Who did Jesus get to help him on his mission? *His helpers, the disciples*
- What did they do as part of His ministry? *Healed people, performed miracles*
- How was Jesus killed? *On a cross*

- Jesus could have easily got off the cross, but why didn't he? *He loves us so much.*
- What happened after he was crucified? *They buried him*
- What happened after three days of being buried? *He wasn't in tomb, He was alive*
- How does that change our sin and relationship with God? *He took the sin away, He was a sacrifice for us.*

In the Bible, John 3:16 says, ***For*** God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." We learned yesterday that we're all sinners, but today we learned that we're loved so much God would do anything to be with us, including sending His own son as a sacrifice for you and me.

Act it Out

Let's wrap up our discussion time with acting out what we heard today. We'll be acting out miracles and healings of Jesus. We'll pick a few stories, read them and get in groups to act them out.

Stories:

- Jesus Calms a storm, *Mark 4:35-41*
- Jesus feeds the 5,000, *John 6:5-13*
- Jesus heals a demon possessed man, *Matthew 8:28-34*
- Jesus heals a blind man, *Mark 8:22-26*

Part 3: Game Time

Supplies: Toilet Paper Rolls

Instructions

This game is called "Jesus is Alive". Divide your group into two teams, with one person on each team designated as "Jesus". Each team starts a certain distance from "Jesus". Decide on the level of difficulty, for younger kids wrap around the whole body, but older kids can wrap each arm and leg separately. Set a number of times they must wrap the toilet paper around the person (example: 5). After the team wraps their "Jesus" that person must break out of the toilet paper and everyone shouts, "Jesus is Alive".

After You Play

This was a silly game, but it's important to not just remember Jesus' death, but also His resurrection. Jesus beat death, the only people that beat death in the Bible, were people Jesus raised from the dead. This wasn't something that happened everyday, this could only be done by God's own Son, who had the same power as God himself.

Basics of the Gospel Session 3: The Change

Part 1: Bible Time

Supplies: *Jesus Storybook Bible*

Introduction

In our first Bible Time, we talked about “the problem” of sin: God created a wonderful creation, even man in his image, but when Adam and Eve disobeyed--they threw all of it away, including their relationship with God. Then we talked about “the Rescuer”, Jesus. Jesus was God’s big plan to bring his people back to him. Jesus came as a baby, lived a perfect life then died on a cross as a sacrifice for our sins. Three days later, he conquered death and rose again.

Hands-on Moment

When we believe Jesus forgave our sins and make him our Savior, our relationship with God is no longer broken and we can be with him forever. But do we remain the same? No, once we truly meet Jesus we are CHANGED. We can’t go back to the person we were before. Imagine you met a famous person, maybe a famous football player. *(have the kids name a person)* You would tell everyone you know you met this person! You might just be *changed* by meeting this person. Meeting Jesus is the same thing, except so much better. Jesus changes us from the inside out.

A Man Named Saul

Remember we talked about how all of us are sinners. Even if you think you are a “pretty good person” the Bible tells us EVERYONE is a sinner. During our time today we’re going to read a story about a guy who thought he was *really, really* good, but it turns out he needed Jesus the most.

Scripture Reading Part One

Read “A New Way to See” from the Jesus Storybook Bible by Sally Lloyd-Jones (from Acts 6-9, 12-28; Colossians 2, Romans 8, Ephesians 2).

Of all the people who kept the rules, Saul was the best. “I’m good at being good!” he’d tell you. He was very proud. And very good. But he wasn’t very nice.

Saul hated anyone who loved Jesus. He traveled around looking for them. He wanted to catch them and put them in prison. He wanted everyone to forget all about Jesus. He didn’t believe Jesus was The Rescuer. And he didn’t believe Jesus was alive, either. You see, Saul had never met Jesus. So, one day, Jesus met Saul.

Saul was on his way to Damascus when suddenly a dazzling light flashed like lightning. It was brighter than the sun. It was too bright. Saul shielded his eyes and fell to the ground. He heard a loud voice. It was too loud. It gave Saul a headache.

“Saul! Saul!” said the loud voice. “Why are you fighting me?” “Lord?” Saul answered, “Who are you?”

“I am Jesus,” said the voice. “When you hurt my friends, you are hurting me, too.” Saul’s whole body trembled. “Go to the city,” Jesus said. “I’ll tell you what to do.”

When Saul opened his eyes, he couldn't see. His helpers had to hold his hand and lead him like a little child. Saul was blind for three whole days - and yet it was as if he was seeing for the very first time.

Meanwhile, there was a man called Ananias who loved Jesus. Jesus came to him in a dream: "God to Saul and pray for him, and I will make him see again."

Ananias knew all about Saul and how he hated Jesus' followers. "Lord, he has come to hurt us!"

But Jesus told Ananias, "Saul is the one I've chosen to tell the whole world who I am."

So Ananias went to Saul. "Brother Saul," Ananias said, it was Jesus you met on the road."

And Ananias prayed for Saul.

Suddenly, Saul could see again, but he saw everything differently. He wasn't mean anymore. He even changed his name from Saul to Paul, which means "small" and "humble--the very opposite of proud.

And do you know what Ananias' name means? "The Lord is full of grace" (Grace is just another word for gift--which is funny, because that's just what Paul's message was about from them on.)

"It's not about keeping rules!" Paul told people. "You don't have to be good at being good for God to love you. You just have to believe what Jesus has done and follow him. Because it's not about trying, it's about trusting. It's not about rules, it's about Grace: God's free gift--that cost him everything."

What happened to Paul? He met Jesus. Paul got a new job. He called himself a servant and traveled everywhere telling everyone about Jesus. He got shipwrecked--three times! He even ended up in prison. "God loves us!" he wrote from prison. "Nothing can ever--no, not ever! --separate us from the Never Stopping, Never Giving Up, Unbreaking, Always and Forever Love of God he showed us in Jesus!"

And so it was, just as God had promised Abraham that dark night, all those year before, the family of God's children grew and grew. Until one day, they would come to number more than even all the stars in the sky.

Review the Word

Saul was a pretty bad guy, he did a lot of bad things, but his encounter with Jesus changed him. On the outside, he looked like the same guy with just a different name, but we know inside he was all new! Jesus wanted to save Saul, he picked Saul for a very special purpose... to tell the world about what Jesus had done. Jesus wanted to be Saul's savior and He wants to be yours! He wants to have a relationship with you because he loves you so much, more than anyone else!

If you believe Jesus loves you and died to take away your sins, and you want to pray that prayer, let's talk after our time today. It's just a simple prayer, 'Jesus thank you for coming to earth, living a perfect life to die on a cross for me and all the wrong things I have done. Forgive me of my sins, be the Savior of my life so I can have a relationship with you forever". The key to this prayer is that you must mean every word in every part of your heart. That's the only way to be changed by Jesus.

God's Family

When you've prayed that prayer and made Jesus your Savior, you are now a part of God's family! You get to live in heaven with Jesus forever. Your relationship with God is no longer broken, but whole! And there is a special gift each believer of Jesus gets. The Holy Spirit.

Now back before Paul's story, Jesus' followers were not quite sure what to do after Jesus went back to heaven. Let's read the story of "God sends help" to see what happened to them.

Scripture Reading Part Two

Read "God Sends Help" from the Jesus Storybook Bible by Sally Lloyd-Jones (from Acts 1-5; John 15).

Review the Word

The Holy Spirit was a special gift Jesus sent his followers. It's the same gift his followers get today. The cool thing about the Holy Spirit is that it is God, just like Jesus is God. The Holy Spirit is also a helper, just like our story said. As Christ followers, we have the Holy Spirit to help us make the right choices, to be our guide when we're not sure what to do. What an amazing gift from a God who has already done so much!

Wrap-Up

We've learned a lot in our three Bible times. We've learned about the problem of sin in all of us, the great Rescuer in Jesus and heard about how God changes us from the inside out and sent us the Holy Spirit. All of these are important and show us how much God loves us and wants to have a relationship with us. But all relationships take work. The best relationships we have are with people we spend time with and talk to each day. God wants us to have the same relationship with him. Talk to him, spend time reading His Word, go to church and worship him. Then your relationship with Him can continue to grow and grow. Think of one way you can help your relationship with God grow right now!

Close Bible Time in prayer.

Part 2: Small Group Discussion

Discuss

We talked about a lot in our Bible time. We learned about how meeting Jesus changes you from the inside-out through the story of Paul and we heard about the great gift of the Holy Spirit. Let's see what you can remember from our time today: *(lead your group through the following discussion questions)*

- What was Saul's job? *Put followers of Jesus in prison*
- How did he meet Jesus? *Jesus appeared to him on the road to Damascus*
- What happened during his meeting? *He became blind*
- Who did he have to see to regain his sight? *Ananias*
- What happened after Ananias prayed? *Saul could see*
- How was Saul different after his sight returned? *He met Jesus and his life was changed*
- What was Paul's new job? *Telling people about Jesus*

- How are our lives changed by meeting Jesus?
- How do we meet Jesus?
- Why were Jesus' followers hiding? *They were scared/didn't know what to do*
- What appeared in the room? *Flickering flames*
- What were the flames? *God's power/the Holy Spirit*
- What happened when Peter preached? *People heard it in their own languages*
- How could that happen? *God's power through Peter*
- Who gets that same power? *Anyone who is a follower of Jesus*
- How do you become a follower of Jesus? *Repent, ask forgiveness and for Him to be the Savior and Lord of your life.*

In the Bible, Romans 10:9 says, "If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." There are no magic words or even a specific prayer. God made it simple for you to be in His family and for your relationship with our Creator to be whole again.

Act it Out

Let's wrap up our discussion time with acting out what we heard today. We'll be acting out both stories we heard. Divide the group into two. One group will act out Saul's Conversion (Acts 9) and the other group will act out Pentecost (Acts 2).

Part 3: Game Time

Instructions

Have the group sit in a circle. Choose a place to start in the circle and whisper a phrase from the list below into a person's ear. They whisper it to the person next to them and so on and so on until it reaches the last person. The last person then says the phrase out loud.

- Jesus changes my heart.
- Jesus loves me always.
- Jesus died so I could live.
- Jesus became a sacrifice for me.
- Jesus will always be there for me.
- I can talk to Jesus about anything.

After You Play

During this game, we shared several TRUE phrases about what Jesus did for us and how he saved us. Some of the phrases got jumbled as we shared them around the circle, but those phrases will always remain the same. No matter if it was for someone a thousand years ago, today or a thousand years from now. Jesus loved us so much He died on a cross to save us from our sins. That will never, ever change.