



## Life Changer – Lesson 3

### 4K and 5K

**Divine Attribute:** God is Life Changer

**Heart Response:** Believe in him

**Memory Verse:** 2 Corinthians 5:17

“Anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!”

### Points of Emphasis:

1. We are all sinners and need Jesus to change our lives.
2. Only God can change our hearts and lives.
3. When you believe in Jesus, you become a new person.
4. When God changes our lives, we want to tell other people.

### PERSONAL PREPARATION

When reading through the book of Acts and examining the life of Paul, one thing is very clear: God is Life Changer. Following religious rules and doing and saying religious things is not sufficient. We cannot change our lives no matter how hard we try. But God is able to change our hearts and turn us towards himself. God sent his one and only Son to rescue us and bring us back into a relationship with him. The work has already been done for us, but we must choose to believe.

The Bible is clear that when we believe in Jesus, we are made new; the old life is gone and a new life is begun. When we choose to believe in him, we are admitting we cannot do it on our own. We are in desperate need of him and he responds. He gives us the Holy Spirit to work in our lives. When we seek him, he changes our hearts and the way we think. He replaces our unfulfilling, selfish desires with his own.

This brings change. Some of this change is immediate. When we encounter our holy God, his Spirit becomes alive in us. He opens our eyes to see with a new heart. Things that used to bring

pleasure are now recognized as sin and are no longer desirable. We become hungry for more of him and what he offers. This initial change of heart starts our new life of freedom, where the focus is no longer on us and our behavior, but on worshiping and bringing glory to God. As we allow God to work in our hearts, he continues to transform our lives to resemble more of him. As he continues to change us, we begin to see other people as God sees them. We want to share our story of life change with others so they can experience the same loving and personal God we know.

Over and over in the book of Acts, that is just what Paul did. Paul told his story of how God changed his life. There could be no other explanation for the turnaround that Paul experienced. The very person who was persecuting Christians for believing and proclaiming that Jesus was God's Son was now willing to go to jail and risk his own life to tell others the Good News! Paul's life was changed, and it wasn't because he tried harder or followed more rules. He believed and received God's great gift of grace and forgiveness and then passed it along to others out of the strength that only the Spirit can give.

As you read through the book of Acts and prepare to teach these lessons, seek God and ask him how he wants to use your own changed life. Ask God to show you the areas of your life that still need to be transformed to bring glory and honor to him. Pray for the strength that only God can give as you pass on what you have received from him to each child in your class.

### CENTER TIME

*10-20 minutes as the kids begin to arrive*

To help the children transition into class, please use a center format at the beginning of each service. Set up three centers in your classroom to

allow children options of activities. Ideas include, but are not limited to:

1. Read books on the floor.
2. Color at the table.
3. Play with blocks on the floor.
4. Play with puzzles at the table.
5. Play with Play-Doh at the table.

## OPENING ACTIVITY

10 minutes at the start of service

The following activity is provided to begin engaging the children for the upcoming lesson. As the teacher of your class, you have an important opportunity to come alongside the parents of these children to teach them about God.

### God Changes Us

#### Supplies:

Bottle of water (one per bin if sink in room, one per session if not)

Red food coloring (one per bin)

Pie plate or roasting pan (for spillage) (one per bin)

Hold up the water bottle (slightly less than full). **What is this?** (Water.) **That is right! It is water.** Hold up food coloring. **Now can anyone tell me what this is?** It is red food coloring. Our memory verse tells us that, "Anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!" When we add this red food coloring to the water, the water changes color. Add a few drops of food coloring to the water bottle. When we ask Christ to come into our lives, we are given a brand new life. He changes our hearts just like this water changed color. The water is changed forever and cannot go back to being clear again. The Bible tells us that nothing can separate us from God's love. "Who can separate us from Christ's love? Can trouble or hard times or hunger? No! Nothing at all can ever separate us from God's love because of what Christ Jesus our Lord has done." (Romans 8:35-39) In today's Bible lesson, we are going to learn about how Paul praised God during a troubling and scary time. Paul believed that the one who changed his life loved him and cared about him and knew what was best. He knew

nothing could separate him from God's love because of what Jesus has done.

\*\* Teachers, if there is a sink in your room, please pour out the red water and rinse the jar/bottle/cup for the next session.

## BIG GROUP TIME

*please check your classroom schedule*

Please talk to your class about the purpose of this time—to have fun worshiping God together. Give your class practical ideas of what this means (obey the teachers up on the stage, sing and praise God with a happy heart, keep your hands to yourself, etc.). Teachers, you are crucial in helping create a peaceful, orderly environment to worship God during this time. Thank you for your help!

## SMALL GROUP TIME

25-30 minutes

### Bible Story

#### Supplies:

Bible (Acts 16:22-34)

Does everyone remember what we have been learning about? God changed Saul's life. He became a follower of Jesus. He started going from place to place, telling everyone the Good News that Jesus was God's Son and that God can change lives.

(Open your Bible to Acts 16:22-34.) After Paul leaves the town of Antioch, he begins traveling with a man named Silas. Everywhere Paul and Silas go, people stop to listen to the Good News about Jesus.

Some people become very angry when Paul and Silas talk about Jesus. These people capture Paul and Silas and put them in jail. They put Paul and Silas deep inside the prison and chain them to the walls by their feet so they cannot get away. Soldiers stand and guard the jail to make sure they do not escape. Do you know what Paul and Silas do? (Let children respond.) Do you think they cry? Do you think they are afraid?

**The Bible tells us that Paul and Silas pray and sing praises to God. Paul and Silas know God is with them and that God is powerful enough to save them. The other prisoners are listening to them, hearing them sing praise to God. As they are singing, all of a sudden, there is a great earthquake! It shakes the prison from top to bottom. (Wiggle and shake your arms.) God makes all of the doors come open and everyone's chains fall off!**

**The prison guard wakes up and sees the doors open. He is afraid because he thinks Paul and Silas have run away. Paul calls out to him in a loud voice and says, "We are all here!" The prison guard calls for some light and rushes in to see. And there they are. Paul and Silas have not run away.**

**The guard is shaking in fear, and he falls down in front of Paul and Silas. He asks them, "What must I do to be saved?" Paul and Silas tell the guard, "Believe in the Lord Jesus. Then you and your family will be saved."**

**Then Paul and Silas tell the guard and his whole family all about Jesus, and they believe in Jesus and are baptized. The guard's life is changed. He becomes kind to Paul and Silas and washes their wounds and gives them something to eat.**

**God changed the guard's heart and life. He was so glad to believe the Good News that Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead to forgive his sins. God did that for all of us. God can change our lives, too, when we believe in Jesus and ask him to forgive us.**

## **Prayer**

Prayer time may not be appropriate immediately following story time. If this is the case, we ask that you be intentional about praying spontaneously or formally with the children at other times during class.

**Dear God, thank you for always being in control. Change us and help us to always sing praises to you. Help us to believe in you and tell others about how you can change lives. Amen.**

## **Shackles**

### **Supplies:**

Strip 1: "I call out to the Lord" on blue paper (one per child)

Strip 2: "When I'm in trouble" on orange paper (one per child)

Strip 3: "And He answers me" on green paper (one per child)

Strip 4: "Psalm 120:1" on pink paper (one per child)

Glue sticks/tape/stapler

Hand out the blue strips of paper. Have children glue the ends of the strip together so that the words show on the outside of the loop. Then, give each child the orange strip of paper and have him or her loop it through the blue one and glue the ends together. Next, hand out the green paper strip and have them loop it through the orange loop and glue the ends together. Last, give them the pink strip and have them glue it through the green loop. Read aloud the verse from Psalm 120:1, "I call out to the Lord when I'm in trouble and He answers me." Remind the children that even when Paul and Silas were in jail, they praised God and spoke the Good News about Jesus. These chains can remind them of our Bible lesson today and how God used Paul and Silas' lives so that the jailer came to know who God was. Then the jailer and his entire family believed, and Jesus changed their lives too.

\*\*\*Have fun and let them do the crafts themselves, as much as possible. This is a hands-on way for them to learn who God is and remember what they learn. It doesn't matter if they place the label or stickers in the wrong spot. What matters is teaching them who God is. \*\*\*

## **SNACK & ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES**

*last 30 minutes*

Please wash the children's hands before snack time and say a prayer thanking God for the food. As they are eating their snack, please take time to go over the review questions.

## Review Questions

- 1. Why were Paul and Silas captured and put in jail?** (They were talking about Jesus and telling others about him.)
- 2. What did Paul and Silas do when they were put in prison?** (They prayed and sang praises to God.)
- 3. What happened when Paul and Silas were singing praises to God?** (An earthquake came and opened all the doors and made everyone's chains fall off.)
- 4. Did Paul and Silas run away after the earthquake?** (No. They stayed until the guard came, and they talked to him about Jesus.)
- 5. What did the guard do when he saw that Paul and Silas were still there?** (He asked what he must do to be saved and believed in Jesus and his life was changed.)

## Keep on Praising

### Supplies

Building blocks (in room)

Make a square jail out of the blocks in the classroom. Select one child to be "it" and then have the children get down on the floor and crawl around. Tell them that when they are tagged by the person who is "it" they have to go to jail and sing a song like "Jesus Loves Me" until another child lets them out by touching them on the head gently. Paul and Silas praised God and prayed while they were in jail, and we can remember to praise God when trouble comes our way too. God is the only one who can change our lives, and he is always with us. He knows best what we need and when we need it.



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