



Life Changer – Lesson 5

2s and 3s

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.

In the Middle of a Mess

Supplies:

Shipwreck water bottle (one per bin)

Have the children sit down in a circle or around the table. Shake the bottle and let each child have a turn looking at it. Ask the children what they see in the bottle. Talk about how it looks like trash, specifically trash that is left over after a shipwreck at sea. Have the children pass the bottle around and point out something they see in the bottle and what that trash may have been, such as a piece of a ship, etc. Tell them that today, we will hear about Paul being at sea when a large storm came. After the storm, the sea was a mess just like we see in this bottle. Tell them that even though this looks like a mess, God was able to do great and amazing things through the mess at sea. He changed lives as people trusted and believed in God's power.

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 27)

We've been learning about a man named Paul who was changed by God. After God changed his heart and life, Paul began teaching and sharing the Good News about Jesus. Many people who heard Paul share about Jesus believed in him, too, and their lives were also changed. Still, many people were not happy with Paul for sharing the Good News about Jesus, and it caused Paul some problems. He even got arrested sometimes! He still chose to continue on his travels and tell others about God.

(Open your Bible to Acts 27.) One day, Paul has been arrested again, and the leaders decide to send him to Rome. When it is time to sail to Rome, Paul is handed over to a Roman leader named Julius. The next day, they stop at a city, and Julius is kind to Paul. Even though Paul is a prisoner, Julius lets Paul go visit his friends so they can give him what he needs.

From there, they head out to sea again. While Paul is on the ship, a strong wind begins to blow. The sailors cannot turn the ship. It is caught in the storm, rocking back and forth in the waters. (Rock from side to side.) The sun and stars do not appear for many days. The storm is terrible.

The sailors try to do all they can. They throw things overboard to try to lighten the ship's load. They are in trouble. They cannot save themselves from this storm.

Paul stands up and says, "Now I beg you to be brave. Not one of you will die. Only the ship will be destroyed. I belong to God and serve him." He tells them how an angel of God has spoken to him and told him this would be so. Paul has

faith and believes God. He knows that it will happen just as the angel told him.

Paul tells the people on the ship that they need to eat. He takes some bread and gives thanks to God. He does this where they all can see. Then he breaks the bread and begins to eat. All of the people are filled with hope and begin to eat as well.

They lift the sail on the ship and head for the shore. But the ship gets stuck before it reaches the beach, and the strong waves break the ship into pieces.

The soldiers plan to keep the prisoners from escaping, but Julius wants to save Paul. He keeps the soldiers from harming the prisoners and tells those who can swim to jump overboard and swim to land. Those who cannot swim float on boards and other pieces of the ship to reach land safely.

Just like only God can save us from sin and change our lives, God was the only one who could save Paul and the others and get them safely to shore. The people had to listen to Paul and obey what he said, but God kept them safe and saved them as he promised Paul he would.

God can save us and change our lives, too. He is the only one who can. We cannot save ourselves. That is why Jesus died on the cross to pay for our sins. He wants to be our Savior and have a relationship with us forever. He loves us that much!

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.

God, thank you for showing us your great power even through storms and shipwrecks. Thank you for being the one to change our lives and hearts. Help us to believe in you and trust you. Amen.

Sail Boats

Supplies:

Pinch of Model Magic (about the size of a large grape) (one per child)
Mini craft stick (one per child)
Colored paper triangle for the sail (one per child)
Crayons
Glue stick

Give each child a small piece of Model Magic and help them shape it into a boat. (See craft sample picture.) Set the boat aside and then give them each a triangle (sail) to color. Give them each a craft stick and have them glue the craft stick onto the edge of the sail. Then, have the children push the end of the other end of the craft stick into the middle of the inside of their boat. Set them aside to harden and take home.

***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 was Paul on a boat going to Rome?** (He was arrested and the leaders sent him there.)
- 2. What was the name of the Roman leader who was nice to Paul?** (Julius.)
- 3. What happened while Paul was at sea?** (A terrible storm came.)
- 4. How did Paul know that they would be safe in the storm?** (An angel of God told him that no one would die but only the ship would be destroyed.)
- 5. What happened to everyone when the ship fell apart?** (They swam or floated on boards to get to shore. They made it safely.)
- 6. Who is the only one that can save us from our sins and change our lives?** (God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit.)

Shipwrecked

Supplies

Brown construction paper (12 pieces per bin)
Painter's tape

Tape the brown paper to the floor about two feet apart around the room. Have each child stand on one of the brown pieces of paper. Tell them in the Bible lesson today we learned that God saved even the ones who could not swim. They couldn't save themselves, but they were able to use the pieces of wood from the ship to safely reach the shore. Tell them when you say "go," they are going to jump from one piece of wood to the next and try not to fall into the sea. While they are jumping, remind them of the events in the Bible lesson. **God did as he promised Paul he would do. He saved his people from death. We cannot save ourselves either. There is only one that can change our hearts and lives and save us. Who is that? Jesus! That is right!**



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