



Rescuer – Lesson I

4K and 5K

Divine Attribute: God is Rescuer

Heart Response: Worship him

Memory Verse: John 3:16 NIRV

“God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son. Anyone who believes in him will not die but will have eternal life.”

Points of Emphasis:

1. We need to be rescued from our sin.
2. God loves us.
3. God sent his Son, Jesus, to rescue us.
4. We should worship Jesus.

PERSONAL PREPARATION

The Christmas season is a time of joy and excitement. But it can also be a time of stress and busyness. As you prepare to share this lesson with your class, take a moment to read Luke 2 and Matthew 1:18-25. Reflect on the extraordinary events of Jesus’ birth while remembering the extraordinary love and purpose of Jesus’ life. God chose ordinary people, Mary and Joseph, to be the parents of his extraordinary Son. Jesus was fully God, but he was also fully human and experienced life the same way that we do.

God also chose ordinary people, the shepherds, to proclaim his Son’s extraordinary birth. After Jesus’ birth, the angels praised God before the shepherds. These ordinary men responded by going to meet Jesus and worshiping God for his birth. Their joy was so great that they went on to tell everyone they could find about this amazing good news.

In light of this, how does it make you feel to know that although Jesus was God, he also lived an ordinary life on earth and understands what you experience? How do you respond to what God has done for you through Jesus? Do you share in the shepherds’ reaction—a heart of worship, praising God for the gift of his Son?

The story of Christmas is one of the ordinary being invaded by the extraordinary. God sent his Son to ordinary people in an ordinary world and through him, God brought the extraordinary into their lives. As you share this lesson, look for ways that God can use someone ordinary, like you, to bring the extraordinary message of Jesus to the children in your class and to others.

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.

Memory Verse Poster

Supplies:

Memory verse poster (one per bin)

Piece of paper – already in room (one per child)

Hang the verse poster on the board. You can give each child a piece of paper to color as you go over the memory verse with them a few times. You

may want to give them some direction on what to draw, based on the attribute/lesson. For example, you could say something like “Draw a picture of someone you know and love” and talk to them about people and relationships in our lives.

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

“Christmas Symbol Bag” - paper bag with set of the following symbols: star, baby Jesus, Mary, Joseph, shepherds, sheep, donkey (one per bin)
Lesson picture – angel with Mary (one per bin)

This week, we have a new memory verse. Our verse is, “God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son. Anyone who believes in him will not die but will have eternal life.” John 3:16. Let’s say the verse together.“ God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son. Anyone who believes in him will not die but will have eternal life.” John 3:16.

I am going to show you some things I have in this paper bag. See if you know what they are. (Pull out one item at a time. Have the children tell what the item is.) All of these items are related to a special holiday coming up soon. What holiday is it? (Give time for responses.)

What do you think about when you think of Christmas? (Give time for responses.) All of those things are fun, but the real reason for Christmas

is what our lesson is about today. Let’s all listen to find out the real reason for Christmas.

All through the Bible, even starting back with Adam and Eve, the first two people God created, people have sinned. Sin causes us to be separated from God. Can you tell me what sin is? (Give time for responses.) Yes, sin is anything that we do or think that is not pleasing to God. Let’s think of some examples. Can you name anything that we might do or think that would not please God? (Give time for responses.) Yes, sin is things like not obeying parents, hurting someone, thinking unkind thoughts about another person, longing for something that someone else has, and many more things.

Even from the beginning, God planned a way to rescue us from being separated from him. He planned to send his own Son to pay for our sins! That is wonderful news, isn’t it? Our lessons over the next few weeks are about God sending his Son, Jesus, to earth. He came to rescue us from our sinful ways and lead us back to himself. This is the story of Christmas and what Christmas is all about.

God chooses a Jewish girl named Mary to be the mother of Jesus. God sends the angel Gabriel to tell Mary that God has chosen her. (Show lesson picture.) When the angel Gabriel goes to see Mary, he says something like this, “Do not be afraid, Mary, because you have pleased God, and he has chosen you to be the mother of his Son, Jesus. Jesus will be great and he will be called the Son of the Highest.”

At first, Mary doesn’t understand. You see, Mary isn’t married. She is going to marry a man named Joseph. She wants to know how this could happen. Gabriel tells her that the Holy Spirit will put baby Jesus inside of her, and the baby she has will be the Son of God! Wow, that is amazing! Nothing like that had ever happened before and has not happened since.

Mary tells the angel she belongs to God, and whatever he wants her to do, she will do. After

that, Mary worships God. She is very glad God has chosen her to be Jesus' mother.

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.

Father God, we want to thank you for sending Jesus, your Son, to earth to be our rescuer. Help us to remember that this is the true meaning of Christmas. Amen.

Angel Gabriel

Supplies:

Worksheet - "Gabriel announced Jesus' birth" (one per child)

¼ piece of coffee filter (three per child)

Spool of gold curling ribbon for the halo (one roll per bin – enough for 1" piece per child)

Crayons

Glue sticks

Refer to the craft sample picture and have the children color hair and a face onto the circle. Then help them glue one ¼-piece of coffee filter to the paper for the angel's clothes, and glue the two other ¼-pieces to the sides for wings. Lastly, have them glue a 1" piece of gold ribbon to the angel's head, to represent Gabriel's halo.

***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. **Who did God choose to be the mother of his Son, Jesus? (Mary.)**
2. **How did God tell Mary he had chosen her to be the mother of Jesus? (God sent an angel, Gabriel, to tell her.)**
3. **Was Mary happy about being Jesus' mother? (Yes.)**
4. **What did Mary do to show that she was excited to do what God asked her to do? (She said she wanted to do what God asked her to do, and she worshiped God.)**

We Worship Jesus

Play this game as a variation of "Simon Says." Say "we worship Jesus by..." and then do an action such as clapping your hands, folding your hands in prayer, raising your hands, jumping for joy, singing Jesus loves me, etc. Each time you say "we worship Jesus by..." the kids should follow your action.



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