

SALVATION

LESSON 1: HEAVEN IS A FREE GIFT

After completing this Sunday school lesson, the children will understand that it is impossible for someone to get to Heaven on his or her own efforts. The next two lessons address the issues that all persons are sinners and this sin causes separation from God. The last two lessons explain how God sent His only Son to pay the price for our sins and how it is by placing our trust in Jesus alone that we can be saved.

(Note: Attended only by itself, this lesson may create some despair or hopelessness in young children. Therefore, everyone should be encouraged to do the assigned homework and attend the next four lessons.)

TOPICS

Believing, Born Again, Faith, Grace, Heaven, Salvation

AS KIDS ARRIVE (10 minutes)

Work Folders: Give a simple double sleeve folder to each child as they arrive. First have them write their name on the top in easy-to-read letters. These folders will be used to keep all work throughout the series.

What Would I Do to Go to Heaven? (Activity)

Place one copy of this activity inside each folder, along with one index card with the following:

Name: _____
Age: _____
Reason for Being here: _____

Have each child fill out their index card and drop it into the **Prayer Box (attached)** at the front of the class.

Prayer Box

Decorate a small box with a removable lid. Label the outside of the box "Prayer Box." Have the kids put their name on an index card, and jot down a personal prayer request. When finished, place the cards into the prayer box. At the end of class, have each child pull out one card from the box and have them pray for that person during the week.

Then have them follow the instructions for the activity, **"What Would I Do to Go to Heaven?"**

OPENING PRAYER AND PRAISE (5 minutes)

MEMORY WORK (12 minutes)

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast" Ephesians 2:8-9 NIV

Have several children read these verses. Then explain that "saved" is similar in meaning to eternal life, or Heaven. Read the verse again, but this time substitute the words "can go to Heaven" for "have been saved." Ask, what does "not by works" mean?

SCRIPTURE READING AND DISCUSSION (15 minutes)

Introduction:

During Jesus' ministry, many people heard Him talk about the Kingdom of God and eternal life in Heaven. It was clear that life on earth was different than the life Jesus was talking about. One day, a young ruler came to Jesus to find out what he had to do to have eternal life in Heaven. The passage we are going to read is from Matthew chapter 19, but the very same account can also be found in Mark 10 and Luke 18.

Read Matthew 19:16-26 (The Rich Young Man)

Discussion Questions:

1. Did you recognize any of the commandments Jesus gave the young ruler? *(Last 5 of the 10 commandments, except Jesus changed the 10th one from do not covet to love your neighbor.)*
2. Since the man said he kept all the commands mentioned by Jesus, why do you think he asked, what do I still lack? *(He was aware of something holding him back.)*
3. Why did the young man go away sad? *(He had great wealth, but more importantly, he knew he couldn't do what Jesus suggested.)*
4. Does having great wealth make it impossible to go to Heaven? *(No.)*
5. Then what was really keeping this man from eternal life? *(The man loved his wealth more than Jesus. So his riches prevented him from placing his faith in Jesus and following Him in obedience. Without Jesus, no one can receive the gift of eternal life.)*
6. Based on verse 26, can a man be good enough to save himself? *(No, with man it is impossible, but with God all things are possible.)*

CLASS EXERCISE (15 minutes)

The Price is Right (Game)

CLASS EXERCISE (10 minutes)

Verse Worksheet 1 [PDF]

Hand out one worksheet to each child and have them **paraphrase** the first two verses. (Ephesians 2: 8,9 and Proverbs 14:12) The remainder will be completed at the end of lessons 2 and 3. When finished, have the kids place the worksheet in their folder for next week.

APPLICATION (5 minutes)

Today (tonight) we learned that Heaven cannot be earned. No matter how much money we have, no matter how good we are, we cannot buy Heaven. It is a free gift - yes completely free!

A long time ago, the people of the world got together, and thought they could build a tower all the way up to Heaven. Then all they would need to do was climb up the tower, and be with God.

It was called the tower of Babel. A picture of what it may have looked like is shown on your worksheet.

As the people were building this tower, God became quite angry. For homework this week, I want you to read about the tower of Babel in Genesis 11: 1-8. Next week, have an answer to the following question: **What was man trying to do that was so wrong?**

Prayer Box

Have each child take one card out of the box. (If they draw their own name, have them put it back and try again) Have a few minutes of silent prayer, so each child can pray for the person on their card. After praying, have them write their name on the back of the card. Close the lesson with prayer.

When finished, have each child put the card back into the box for next week. The cards will be returned to the owner during the fourth lesson on Salvation.

CLOSING PRAYER (2 minutes)

IDEAS FOR MEMORIZING VERSES

- **MISSING WORDS:** Read the verse together several times, then write the verse on the board. Say the verse together as a class, erase a word or two and say the verse again. Continue in this manner until the words are all erased.
- **BIBLE VERSE HANGMAN:** With short verses play the "hangman" game. After one of the kids is able to say the verse correctly, have everyone look it up in their own Bibles.
- **READ, MEMORIZE, AND DISCUSS:** Have the kids find the verse in their Bibles and read it several times out loud. Have them close their eyes and try to say the verse again. Discuss the meaning of this verse with the children.
- **SCRAMBLED:** Give each child a slip of paper with the verse scrambled. Have the kids unscramble the verse and rewrite it the correct way. Treats can be given to all who get it right.