

Jesus Is Salvation

Remember Verse

This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. 1 John 4:9

LESSON OVERVIEW

EXPLORE//
10 minutes



Option 1: Foam Feast (for younger kids)

SUPPLIES

- Foam Feast Photo Example*
- Foam sheets (approx. 4 sheets per child, 6" x 9", several different colors)
- Scissors (1 pair per child)
- Pencils
- Glue
- Disposable plates (1 per child)
- Disposable cups or other round objects for tracing circles)
- Tape
- Optional: markers, tarp or tablecloth

Option 2: Speedy Setters (for older kids)

SUPPLIES

- Number Chart*
- Scissors
- Dice (1 for every 3–4 children)
- Disposable plates (1 for every 3–4 children)
- Disposable cups (1 for every 3–4 children)
- Disposable cutlery (1 set for every 3–4 children)
- Napkins (1 for every 3–4 children)

DISCOVER//
30 minutes



Traditions and Remember Verse

SUPPLIES

- Remember Verse image*
- Remember Verse animation*
- Mementos for your church Traditions

Connect Activity:

Walking Taco

SUPPLIES

- Connect Question image*
- Connect Activity image*
- Colored craft sticks
- Container (for craft sticks)

The Big God Story

SUPPLIES

- Timeline image*
- Timeline animation*
- Image: Banquet*
- Audio: Chicken, Lamb, Cow*
- Bibles
- Table
- Chairs (6)
- Paper tablecloth (solid-colored)
- Table settings (6)
- Birthday invitation
- Card stock (2 sheets, yellow)
- Scissors
- Optional: Bible-times costumes (9)

Worship as Response

SUPPLIES

- Pens or markers (black)
- Worship music (suggestion: "Sincerely Yours," TruWorship *Sincerely Yours*)
- Tablecloth (from The Big God Story)

RESPOND//
15 minutes



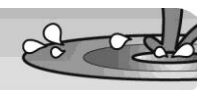
Reflect

You're Invited

SUPPLIES

- Blindfolds (3–4)

BLESS//
5 minutes



SUPPLIES

- Remember Verse cards*
- At Home Weekly: Lesson 9*
- Bible

Further Resources

To help you plan and lead:

Customizable copy of Lesson 8 2018–19 Scope and Sequence TruStory How It Works Small Group Enhancements

At Home Weekly: Lesson 8

The weekly for the next lesson—to be sent home for preteaching by parents—is found in BLESS.

LEADER PREP

Each week you'll find a list of resources along with encouraging articles that help you prepare your heart to present the lesson.

Inspire *Shares personal stories from fellow ministry leaders about how God has worked in their lives*

I love throwing parties. When I've thrown parties in the past, I would often pick a theme—sophistication, vintage, Christmas, summer—and go all out. I'd decorate my home and pick foods that matched the feel of the party. I would invite everyone from different social circles—work, church, old friends, new friends—and encourage everyone to come and bring friends. I would work hard to make people feel welcome and at ease in my home. Something about having a party and seeing people come together is fun and exciting!

From reading *The Big God Story*, it seems as though God takes joy in “having people over.” In the beginning, He invites Adam and Eve to live in this gorgeous place He created for them. In the end, we see that God invites those who have believed to the wedding feast of the Lamb!

I put effort into my parties and am so pleased when people show up and enjoy themselves. God constantly pursues and invites, hoping that we accept His invitation and come to His great banquet in celebration of the One who sacrificed all in order to be our salvation.

Denise Snyder
Crossroads Church

Equip *Offers perspective and context to the lesson's Bible passage*

In Luke 14:15, a man attending a feast with Jesus comments on how blessed it will be for those who will feast in the kingdom of God. In response, Jesus tells a parable. Despite popular opinion that parables are simple teaching tools used by Jesus to make His meanings more clear, the purpose of parables are actually to hide information from those who “do not have ears to hear.”

When Jesus begins His ministry, He offers God's people (Israel) the kingdom they have been waiting for. But then Israel formally rejects the offer of the kingdom by attributing God's work to Satan (Matthew 12:24, 31).

Following this rejection of Him in Matthew 12, Jesus speaks to the people only in parables (Mark 4:33–34). In Matthew 13:10–15, His disciples ask Jesus why He speaks in parables. He answers, “Because the knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them.” In response to the man who made the comment and to the Jews who arrogantly saw themselves in a privileged position, Jesus warns them that their having been invited to the feast means nothing if they reject the One who invited them.

Jesus is correcting their notion that only Jews would be a part of the kingdom. He says that many of these others, whom the Jews considered “unclean,” will be sitting at the table—while the Jews who rejected Him will be left outside. Jesus is saying that while the Jews remain the people of God, salvation is open to Jew and Gentile alike. But it is only available by faith. Though they weren't able to fully grasp the meaning of the parable, these self-righteous men knew enough to be offended at Jesus' claim that He is salvation.

Support *Provides reflection and assessment through encouragement, prayer, and time in God's Word*

We say it all the time—Jesus is salvation. We know that He came to die for our sins and to rescue us from death and separation from God. We think about the cross and are reminded of this great salvation. But sometimes, the longer we have been Christians, the easier it is to skim over the deep, amazing meaning of a God who sent His Son to die in our place. What a huge sacrifice it took for Jesus—fully God and fully man—to suffer beatings and crucifixion, all for a world that often rejects Him.

The salvation we've been invited into is costly, painful, tragic, and achingly beautiful. Take a moment to think back to the time you recognized your need for Jesus' salvation in your life. What caused you to see Him? What feelings did you experience? What relief did you feel as you realized your sins were forgiven?

Salvation is an amazing thing that we can begin to take for granted. So, this week, take some time to remember your salvation. Thank God for it. Sing your favorite songs of praise. Read the Scriptures that remind you of what God has done for you. And pray for your kids—that as they hear about Jesus as salvation, the Holy Spirit will be working in their lives to draw them to Him.

SMALL GROUP

SECTION

EXPLORE//10 minutes



Children engage in fun, creative activities designed to pique their curiosity about the day's portion of The Big God Story.

Option 1: Foam Feast (for younger kids)

In Jesus' time a dinner party was a highly honored event. In the parable of the great banquet, Jesus uses a dinner party setting to teach important truths about His offer of salvation. Like the master preparing a feast for His guests, the children will create their own feast out of foam shapes.

SUPPLIES

- Foam Feast Photo Example (see Resources)
- Foam sheets (approx. 4 sheets per child, 6" x 9", several different colors including green, brown, black, red, yellow, and orange)
- Scissors (1 pair per child)
- Pencils
- Glue
- Disposable plates (1 per child)
- Disposable cups or other round objects for tracing circles (1 for every 4 children)
- Tape
- Optional: markers, tarp or tablecloth

PREPARE AHEAD

Print a few copies of the photo example.

SET UP

Optional: Cover the table with a tarp or a tablecloth. Set out the foam sheets, scissors, pencils, glue, tracing objects, and tape. Place a disposable plate at each spot. Have photo examples and bowls available. Optional: Have markers close by.

RELATE

Welcome children and discuss the following questions. **If you were going to a big banquet, what kind of food would you want to be served? What's the fanciest meal you've ever eaten?** Show children the examples and encourage them to create their own feast using the supplies provided. Suggestions for foam food include pizza, salad, hamburgers, cookies, etc. If they need a round shape, model how to trace a circle using a pencil and the cups. Children can use the glue to hold their pieces in place. Encourage them to cut from the smaller scraps before taking a new foam sheet. Optional: Children may choose to add detail to their food with the markers provided.

Option 2: Speedy Setters (for older kids)

While at a dinner party, Jesus told a parable about a great banquet where a host makes preparations for his many guests. As children prepare to hear the parable, they'll have fun racing each other in this table setting game.

SUPPLIES

- Number Chart (see Resources)
- Scissors
- Dice (1 for every 3–4 children)
- Disposable plates (1 for every 3–4 children)
- Disposable cups (1 for every 3–4 children)
- Disposable cutlery (1 set for every 3–4 children)
- Napkins (1 for every 3–4 children)

PREPARE AHEAD

Print and cut out a Number Chart for every three to four children.

SET UP

Arrange the room in such a way that the table is at one end of the room and the teams are on the other. Set out one table setting (plate, cup, knife, fork, spoon, napkin), one die, and a Number Chart for each team to use.

RELATE

Divide children into teams of three to four. Give each team a die, one table setting, and a chart. Explain that they're going to play a game where the teams race to set the table. Taking turns with the die, each team must roll a six before they can begin their race. Teams continue rolling the die, and using the chart provided, teams match the number rolled to an object from their table setting.

One member from the team will run the matching object to the table. That player must return to their team before the next person can roll. Teams continue rolling their die until all of the objects have been set at the table. The first team to complete their table setting wins. Then discuss: **Have you ever attended a large feast like a wedding banquet or a large family dinner? What was it like?**

LARGE GROUP

SECTION

DISCOVER// 30 minutes



Children participate in discovering God's Word through Bible verse memorization, interactive storytelling techniques, and worship as response.

Traditions and Remember Verse

SUPPLIES

- Remember Verse image (see Resources)
- Remember Verse animation (see Resources)
- Mementos for your church Traditions (rocks, marbles, gum balls, etc.)

RELATE

Give the children mementos (such as rocks, marbles, or blocks) for accomplishments such as memorizing the Remember Verse or bringing their Bibles. Have them put the objects into a clear container or add them to a structure and celebrate when it's complete.

This week's Remember Verse focuses on a character trait of God that's highlighted in today's portion of The Big God Story.

This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. 1 John 4:9

Connect

QUESTION

If you were having a party and could invite three people—real people or fictional characters from a movie or a book—whom would you invite and why?

Activity: Walking Taco

SUPPLIES

- Connect Question image (see Resources)
- Connect Activity image (see Resources)
- Colored craft sticks (1 per child, 4 different colors)
- Container (for craft sticks)

RELATE

Have leaders walk around with the container of colored craft sticks and direct each child to pull out one stick from the container. Assign each color of craft stick a different ingredient (e.g., blue is the taco shell, green is lettuce, red is the meat, and yellow is the cheese). Children must walk around the room looking for all four ingredients/people in order to build a complete taco. Once a group has formed, they can sit down and discuss the Connect question together.

The Big God Story

Bible Passage: Luke 14:12–24

Storytelling Technique: Acting and Props

Jesus Is Salvation

SUPPLIES

- Timeline image (see Resources)
- Timeline animation (see Resources)
- Image: Banquet (see Resources)
- Audio: Chicken, Lamb, Cow (see Resources)
- Bibles
- Table
- Chairs (6)
- Paper tablecloth (solid-colored)
- Table settings (6; examples: plates, cups, cutlery, napkins)
- Birthday invitation
- Card stock (2 sheets, yellow)
- Scissors
- Optional: Bible-times costumes (9)

PREPARE AHEAD

Cut the yellow card stock into six pieces to look like “tickets.” Note: The tablecloth and table used in The Big God Story will also be used during Worship as Response. Cheap tablecloths can be found at dollar stores. You may want to test the pens or markers in advance on the tablecloths to make sure they don’t run or bleed through.

SET UP

Place a table with six chairs in the center of the stage. Set the table with the tablecloth, plates, forks, knives, and cups. Place the yellow “tickets” on the side of the table.

RELATE

Storyteller walks onstage holding birthday invitation. **Did you hear about Brandon Miller’s birthday party? It’s going to be the biggest party of the whole year! There will be bouncy slides, a cotton candy machine, and even a live band! And I’m invited! Pause for a moment. You know, maybe I won’t go. I’ve got a lot going on right now. I need to clean my room, and I haven’t spent time with my pet goldfish lately ...** Pause and then burst out laughing. **I’m joking! Who would turn down such a special invitation? This reminds me of a part in the Bible where Jesus told a story about a very special invitation. But before we go any further, let’s stop and invite the Holy Spirit to teach us today.** Lead the children in a Prayer of Release to pause, be still, and ask the Holy Spirit to quiet their hearts and minds.

What’s a parable? Invite answers. **Right! A parable is a story that tells us about something spiritual. Jesus used these stories because they were easy for the people to remember and because they explained deep truths in a simple, easy-to-understand way. The last parable we heard together was about a man who had been robbed and beaten and left on the side of the road.**

Of all the people who passed by, only one man stopped to help. Who was the man who showed God’s love? Pause for children to answer. **Yes! The good Samaritan! Jesus’ parable of the good Samaritan taught us that God is love.**

One day, Jesus was invited to a dinner in the home of an important religious leader. *Tech: Cue Banquet image.* The host and many of his guests were Pharisees. The Pharisees were Jewish leaders who thought that the way to show that you belonged to God was to keep the rules the Law of Moses told them to keep. And to make sure they didn't break any of these rules, the Pharisees made even more rules to surround the first rules. But God wants us to know that the way we show that we belong to God is to love Him and love others.

Jesus knew that the host was using this dinner to show how important he was and so that his guests would invite him to their important meals. When the guests sat down to eat, Jesus watched as they tried to pick the very best seats. **Open your Bibles to Luke 14:12 and we'll read what Jesus told the host.** Allow time for children to find the passage. Volunteers take turns reading Luke 14:12–14. **Invite the poor, the crippled, and the blind? What a crazy guest list! In Jesus' time, people believed that if you were sick, it was because you or someone in your family was sinful.**

People avoided sick people and judged them unfairly. Would inviting these people to your party make you popular? Would it make you look important? Let kids answer. **Why did Jesus tell this man to invite them?** Listen for answers. **Good thinking! No matter who you are or who you know—whether you're rich or poor, whether you're healthy or sick—there's nothing you can do to earn your way into heaven. Only Jesus is salvation—for everyone!**

To show that Jesus' invitation for salvation is way bigger than these Pharisees understood, Jesus began a parable. **I need seven volunteers who want to help us act it out.** Invite seven children to come on stage. (Optional: Have actors put on Bible-times costumes.) Place two at the back of the stage. Place three volunteers across the front of the stage; they are the invited guests. The last two volunteers will be the master and the servant. Have them stand beside the table. Give the tickets to the master.

Let's begin. Volunteer reads Luke 14:16. Master hands the tickets to the servant. Servant goes to the three volunteers across the front of the stage, handing each a ticket. **In that day it was customary for two invitations to be sent before such a large party. The first invitation let people know that there was going to be a feast, and the second invitation announced when the feast was ready. This was so the host would know how much food to prepare.** Master and servant pretend to set the table as the Storyteller speaks. **If only a few people could come, the host might prepare a chicken.** *Tech: Cue Chicken audio.* **If 10 people responded, the host would prepare a lamb.** *Tech: Cue Lamb audio.* **But if 75 people were coming, the host would butcher a calf.** *Tech: Cue Cow audio.* **Jesus said this was a great banquet and there were going to be many guests.** Direct the master and servant to pretend to fill the table with food.

So, all the feast preparations were made. Let's read what happens next. Volunteer reads Luke 14:17. Stand up and pretend to be the servant calling everyone to come. Find five different people in the room and tell them, "Come, for everything is now ready" and then sit back down. Servant motions to each of the guests at the front of the stage to come. Storyteller uses an excited voice. **So, they all came running, excited to attend the biggest party they'd ever been invited to!** Pause and look around, and then continue in a sad voice. **Actually, no. Let's read what happens.** Volunteer reads Luke 14:18. The servant goes to the first guest. First guest shakes his head and rips up the ticket. **He can't come because he has to go look at some dirt? Really? What a silly excuse!** First guest leaves the stage.

The servant goes to second guest. Have a volunteer read Luke 14:19. Second guest shakes her head and rips up the ticket. **Now those hearing the story would laugh at this excuse. You would never buy an animal without examining it first. This is clearly not true.** Second guest leaves the stage.

The servant goes to the third guest. Have a volunteer read Luke 14:20. Third guest shakes his head and rips up the ticket. **Another silly excuse! All three of these had accepted the first invitation; turning down the invitation now is just plain rude! The master couldn't just throw the leftovers in his refrigerator and eat them another day. By rejecting the dinner invitation, they were rejecting their entire friendship with the master.**

How do you think the master feels? Invite responses. **Look with me at Luke 14:21.** Storyteller reads as children follow along. The servant pretends to search the stage and finds the two volunteers at the back of the stage. The servant hands them tickets and pulls these two to the table. Two guests sit down. Volunteer reads Luke 14:22. The servant repeats the line. Storyteller continues reading Luke 14:23–24. The servant leaves the stage and pretends to search until he finds two kids in the audience. The servant hands them tickets and brings them to the table and they sit down. Master and servant sit down with them and they all pretend to eat. Thank and dismiss volunteers.

In this story, the master is God. God invited His people Israel to be together with Him in heaven—that's the banquet. But His people had come to think that what they did—their actions—and the people they knew were most important. Were they correct? Invite responses. **No. God is more concerned about what's going on in our hearts. Romans 3:23 says, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." What does that say? For all**

have sinned. Everybody. And, our sin is what keeps us from God. God sent His Son, Jesus, who lived a perfect life, to save us. He came to pay the price for our sin. What is the price of sin? Kids answer. That's right, death. Jesus is our salvation. By dying on the cross and rising again, Jesus made a way for all of us to be set free from our sin.

When Jesus came, many people rejected Him. They turned down God's invitation to be in relationship with Him. By rejecting Jesus, they were rejecting the celebration God has prepared for us in His kingdom. But God is so good. He has extended His invitation beyond the Jewish nation to the whole world. Jesus came for all people.

Jesus' invitation of salvation isn't just for you and for me. It's for all people. It's for the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. It's for the popular, the rich, the famous. It's for everyone! For those we think are important and for those who we think are least important. Storyteller points to the table. We're all unworthy to eat at God's table, but Jesus' sacrifice on the cross paid the price for our ticket to the banquet. Jesus is salvation. Share a personal story of how you experienced that Jesus is salvation.

Worship as Response

This time allows kids to respond to God through worship. Make plans for your worship time, but prepare yourself and your team to hold them loosely if the Holy Spirit leads the group in a different direction.

SUPPLIES

- Pens or markers (black)
- Tablecloth (from The Big God Story)
- Worship music (suggestion: "Sincerely Yours," TruWorship Sincerely Yours)

SET UP

Place the pens or markers near the front of the room.

RELATE

In Jesus' parable of the great banquet, we're shown that we have a choice to make. God has prepared a banquet for us. He's made the way for us to come to the banquet through Jesus' death on the cross. He has sent out the invitation of salvation to all people, but we must accept the invitation in order to join in the banquet.

Maybe today you find yourself like the Pharisees, trying to keep all the rules so you'll be invited. But you don't have to earn your invitation because Jesus has already earned it for you. Jesus is your salvation, and He offers it to you freely.

Maybe you've heard the lie that you're unworthy of the invitation. That if God really knew you, He wouldn't include you in His invitation. God knows you, He loves you, and He invites you just as you are. Jesus is your salvation. His death on the cross covers over all your sins. Or maybe today you want to pray for a friend or a loved one who hasn't accepted God's invitation. As the music plays, spend some time thanking Jesus for His gift of salvation.

Then, when you're ready, come to the table and use the markers provided to write on the tablecloth. You may want to write a prayer. You may choose to write the name of someone you're praying for to know that Jesus is her salvation. Or you can sign your own name on the tablecloth knowing you have a place at God's table. If you've never accepted God's invitation to know Jesus as your Savior and you'd like to choose this for yourself today, there are leaders at the front who would love to pray with you.

SMALL GROUP

SECTION

RESPOND//15 minutes

Children respond to what the Holy Spirit is teaching them as they reflect on the day's portion of The Big God Story, engage in relationship, and create meaningful pieces of art individually or together.

Reflect: Jesus Is Salvation

Encourage children to open their Bibles and read the suggested passages together.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER KIDS

- **Why was the master angry?** Luke 14:21–24
- **What did the guests have to do to be invited to the banquet?** 2 Timothy 1:9
- **Why is it important that the master’s invitation was opened up to everyone?** Luke 14:21–23; Romans 1:16
- **What does it mean that Jesus is salvation?** Matthew 1:21
- **How do we receive God’s invitation?** Romans 10:9–10

QUESTIONS FOR OLDER KIDS

- **In this parable, the kingdom of heaven is compared to a banquet. What do you think the kingdom of heaven will be like?** Isaiah 25:6–9
- **Why was the master angry?** Luke 14:21–24
- **What did the guests have to do to be invited to the banquet?** 2 Timothy 1:9
- **Why is it important that the master’s invitation was opened up to everyone?** Luke 14:21–23; Romans 1:16
- **Why do you think the servant had to “compel” the outcasts to come to the banquet?** Luke 14:13–14, 21–23
- **In what ways do people reject God’s invitation?** Luke 14:18–20
- **What does it mean that Jesus is salvation?** Matthew 1:21
- **How do we receive God’s invitation?** Romans 10:9–13

You’re Invited

In this game, kids switch places if a category applies to them.

SUPPLIES

- Blindfolds (3–4)

SET UP

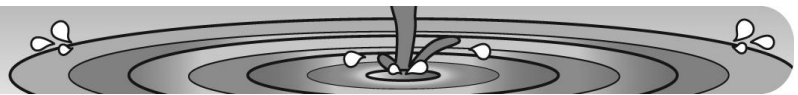
Clear out a large area in the room.

RELATE

In Jesus’ parable, the master invited the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame to the banquet. What did these people have in common? Encourage responses. **None of them were worthy of an invitation, none of them could pay back the master, and none of them ever expected to be invited to such an event. What do we have in common with these outcasts?** Invite answers. **It’s only because of Jesus and His death on the cross that we’re able to come into the presence of our holy God.**

Let’s play a game that reminds us that God’s invitation is open to all because Jesus is salvation. Have children form a large circle. Select one child to lead as she stands in the middle of the circle blindfolded. This leader calls out, “I’m having a party! You’re invited if ...” and then she completes the sentence with a requirement for the party (such as “You know how to swim,” “You’ve had a glass of milk today,” or “You’re in third grade”). This must be something you can’t see (as in, not the color of someone’s clothes or hair). If they meet the requirement, the children in the circle will run to change places with one another before the leader in the middle can tag them. Those tagged will become the next leaders. If the leader wants everyone to run, she’ll call, “You’re invited because Jesus is salvation!” and then everyone runs through the circle to find a new place.

BLESS// 5 minutes



Children receive a blessing from their leaders and sometimes one another. A blessing may be prayer of commission, a portion of Scripture, or words to encourage and guide.

SUPPLIES

- Remember Verse cards (see Resources)
- At Home Weekly: Lesson 9 (see Resources)
- Bible

RELATE

Sit in a circle together. Open a Bible and read Acts 4:12:

Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.

Have each child turn to the person next to him and tell her, "Salvation is found in no one else." Then that child will reply, "Jesus is salvation." Practice this call and response a few times, and then speak the following blessing over the group:

May you call on the name of Jesus with confidence and faith. May you receive and accept His invitation to be in relationship with Him. May you have hope for your future because Jesus is salvation.

Send home Remember Verse cards and the At Home Weekly with your kids.