Lesson 1: We Are Saved from Sin, Forgiven, and Righteous

Overview:

Key Focus: Forgiveness of sins and redemption comes only through accepting Jesus' sacrifice of His life to pay the price for all sin. We are made righteous through Christ, and this leads us to right living.

Bible Story: The Woman at the Well

Scriptures: John 4:3–19, 25–30, 39–42; 2 Corinthians 5:19, 21

Memory Verse: 1 John 1:9 (NKJV) If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Prep:

Materials Needed:

- 2 identical bowls to fill with identical amounts of water, 2 identical sponges, and 2 empty bowls
- Playdough
- Magazines or newspapers, paper, scissors, and tape or glue

Classroom Prep:

- Write the five phrases of the verse on separate papers and firmly tape on the floor: *If we confess our sins/ He is faithful and just/ to forgive us our sins/ and to cleanse us/ from all unrighteousness.*

Engage:

Some stories in books are not real but are made up or fiction. In the fiction books you read, what are some amazing ways someone has been saved from a dangerous situation? Allow several children to share something they read. **In a movie, what impossible situations have you seen someone saved from?** Select volunteers to answer. **If you were swimming in the ocean in real life and saw a shark, how do you imagine you would get saved from that situation?** Allow several responses.

Sometimes in real life, people are rescued from situations that seem impossible to be rescued. In our Bible lesson today, we will learn about an impossible real-life rescue of someone and what happened after the rescue.

Memory Verse Activity:
Display and discuss the verse. Tape the verse papers two feet apart in an open area. Have the children line up and hop alongside the verse sections as they read the verse. When they finish, they go to the end of the line. Continue this pattern and encourage them to see how many sections they can say without reading the papers.

Memory Verse: 1 John 1:9 (NKJV) If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Bible Story:

Whenever there is a story about a big rescue, the storyteller has to introduce the character and set up the situation of what happened and why the person needs to be saved. Hold up your Bible. **The first part of the Bible is the Old Testament where we learn about God the Creator and the problem of sin. What is sin?** (Sin is disobeying God.) **Sin ruined the perfect relationship that people had with God. The Old Testament shows the problem of sin and promises an answer to the sin problem. What promise does the Old Testament talk about?** (The Old Testament promised that God would send a Savior, or Messiah, to pay the price of sin.) **Now let's look at the New Testament where we read about the Savior coming to the earth. What is the Savior's name?** (Jesus) **One of Jesus' followers will tell us about the amazing rescue of someone.**

Read John 4:3–8. **Jesus and His followers, who were also called His disciples, had to travel by walking, and the most direct path was going to take three days. This journey was going to take them straight through enemy land. Already this story has danger lurking, but unlike most movies and stories—this adventure is 100% true. We can always trust what the Bible says! This was enemy territory because the people of Samaria were Jewish people who had married Gentiles, or non-Jewish people. This was wrong according to Jewish law. The Jewish people thought the Samaritans were not following Jewish customs and religion the way true Jews do. This is why the Jewish people avoided even walking through Samaria. Jesus headed straight into Samaria because He was on a rescue mission, even though His disciples didn't know it. They were traveling at the hot part of the day and Jesus stopped to rest by the famous well that had belonged to Jacob.**

Let's review some Old Testament history. Abraham was the father of Isaac, the son who was born when he was 100. Isaac was the father of twins, Jacob and Esau. Jacob was the father of 12 boys, Joseph was one of them. The sons became the 12 tribes of Israel, or the

Jewish people. So, Jacob's well had always been an important place to the Jewish people, and now they avoided it because the Samaritan people lived there.

Why aren't the disciples at the well resting? (They went to the city to buy food.) **Jesus rested and was thirsty because He had a human body and got tired and thirsty like us. Who came to the well, and what happened?** (A woman came to the well, and Jesus asked her for a drink of water.) **How would the people get water from a well?** (To get water from a well, you have a bucket that you tie to a rope, throw it down into the water, and pull it up with water inside the bucket.) Have the children pretend to get water from a well. **Why didn't Jesus just get Himself some water?** (Jesus didn't have a bucket, but the woman did.)

Let's find out more about this woman. Read John 4:9–12. **Why is the woman shocked that Jesus is asking her for water?** (Jesus is Jewish, and Jewish people avoid Samaritans.) **When Jesus tells her that He has living water, how does she react?** (She can see that He doesn't have a bucket and wonders where He will get the water.) **Something funny happens—the Samaritan woman points out that their famous ancestor Jacob drank from this water and asks Jesus if He's more famous than Jacob. Imagine if you were traveling and talked to someone famous but didn't recognize the person. Let's see how Jesus responded to her.**

Read John 4:13–15. **Jesus gently explained a spiritual truth to the woman by using the example of regular water that was in the well. If she drank water from the well, she would be thirsty again. Jesus talked about a well inside a person that gives water without having to work to get the water. She thought that sounded great and wanted some of that water. What do you think the living water is?** Allow responses. **Jesus was still on the earth, so the Holy Spirit didn't live inside people yet. We learned that when we accept Jesus' salvation, the Holy Spirit fills us and we always have part of Jesus living in us. When we have the living water inside us, we have everlasting life or a relationship with Jesus that never ends.**

Let's read further and find the plot twist. Read John 4:16–19. **The woman thought Jesus was giving her drinking water, but instead He told her words of knowledge. We talked about one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is to give messages from God that a human couldn't know. Jesus showed the dangerous situation the woman was in because of her sin. The woman knew this Jewish stranger couldn't know every detail of her life unless he was a prophet. Jesus went on to tell her that someday they would worship God the Father in spirit and in truth. This sounded great to her, but first she needed to be rescued from her sin.**

Read John 4:25–26. **Jesus finally revealed to her that He was Jesus Christ who was rescuing her.** Read John 4:27–30. **The woman was rescued by Jesus, the Messiah who they had been waiting for since the prophecies were made in the New Testament. The woman ran to tell everyone. What did she leave behind that showed she would return?** (She left her waterpot.) **She was so excited that she wanted everyone to meet her rescuer—and they came to meet Jesus.** Read John 4:39–42. **The Samaritans invited Jesus to stay with them. Why do you think they invited Him to stay?** (They wanted to hear Him speak to them.) **Who besides the woman was rescued?** (The rest of the Samaritans in the city were rescued because they

heard Jesus and believed He was the Savior.) Lead a cheer for all the Samaritans who believed in Jesus.

The rescue from sin began when Jesus came to the earth, and it was completed when He allowed Himself to be put on a cross to die for everyone's sins. Three days later He came back to life to show everyone that He had paid the price and their sins were forgiven. Jesus rescued, or saved, people from sin, but people must believe and receive His forgiveness of their sins. Once we have our sins forgiven, we start a whole new life because we are filled with living water—the exact water that Jesus offered to the Samaritan woman.

Read 2 Corinthians 5:19. **This verse tells us that Jesus took our sins on Himself, so we would be reconciled or put back into a right relationship with God.** Review together the Memory Verse, 2 Corinthians 5:21, from "Who Is God?" **When we accept Jesus' payment for sin and become forgiven, we get Jesus' righteousness or perfectness without any sin. It is like Jesus took the test for you and then erased His name on the test and wrote in your name. You get the perfect score, and you didn't even take the test! What a great ending to the sin story. When we accept Jesus as our Savior, we are saved from paying the price for sin and forgiven of all our past, present, and future sins. Plus, we become the righteousness of God through Jesus. It is like we switched roles and God no longer sees our sins—He just sees Jesus in us!** Lead a cheer for being saved from sin, forgiven, and made righteous!

Bible Story Questions:

- **Why was it unusual for Jesus to be in Samaria?** (Jewish people avoided going through Samaria because the Samaritans were Jewish people who had married non-Jews, which goes against Jewish law.)
- **What did Jesus ask the Samaritan woman?** (He asked her for a drink of water.)
- **What did she ask Jesus for?** (She wanted the living water that He said would flow out of her so she didn't need to come to the well anymore.)
- **How did the woman know that Jesus was the Messiah they were waiting for?** (Jesus told her things about herself that a stranger wouldn't know.)
- **What was the result of her talking with Jesus?** (She told everyone in the city, and they heard Jesus and believed He was the Savior.)
- **How does it feel to know that Jesus rescued you from sin and gives you His righteousness?** (Answers will vary.)
- **Who will you tell about Jesus' rescue mission and help them be rescued also?** (Answers will vary.)

Bible Story Activities:

Games:

- If possible, play outside or have towels available for any spills. Display the sponges, two bowls of water, and two empty bowls. Divide the group into two teams and have the children line up behind their team's bowl of water. The goal is to share "living water" by soaking the sponge, running to the empty bowl, and emptying as much water into the bowl as possible before running the sponge back to the next person. Continue until the original bowl of water is empty.

Craft Idea:

- Ideas for Working with Younger Kids:
  Set out the playdough and as you talk about sin, give each child a small ball of playdough as they name a sin, such as lying, being mean, or not obeying. After they get a couple of playdough balls, say together, "Jesus forgives our sins." Have the children put their balls into one blob and shape their blob into a heart.

- Ideas for Working with Older Kids:
  Have the children work with a partner to create a collage of words or statements about sin, forgiveness, and righteousness. Supply magazines or newspapers, paper, scissors, and tape or glue for each pair. Allow time for them to display and explain their creations.

Worksheet:

Read the words in boxes to the group. Have the children look up Ephesians 2:10 and put the verse in the correct order by numbering the boxes 1–12. Explain the meaning of "workmanship." **In Ephesians 2:10, the word "workmanship" in Greek is the word *poiēma*, where we get the word "poem." You are God's poem.** Have them write their name in the poem and then write three lines in the poem. Point out that the ending word of each line they write could rhyme with the ending word of the line before. After they finish their poems, have volunteers share their poems with the group. On the back of their papers, have them draw themselves choosing right living that shows they are saved, forgiven, and righteous.

Affirmation/Declaration:

Jesus paid for my sins.
When I accept His forgiveness, I get His righteousness.
God created me for good works.

Make Connections:

Biblical Worldview Connection:
News travels fast today through social media, but it is hard to know what is trustworthy. We know that the Bible is trustworthy. God's Word tells us how to be saved and forgiven from sin. Each day, believers in Jesus need to live like the Bible is true so that other people will know truth. Encourage the children to share their faith in Jesus and choose to show Christ's righteousness through living according to God's ways.

Missions Connection:
Some cultures don't understand the concept of forgiveness. They encourage revenge or completely cutting someone out of their life. Pray for missionaries to have opportunities to show forgiveness and share God's love. Remind the children that when they say "yes" to Jesus, they are part of the Great Commission to tell the world about Jesus. Their mission field is wherever their feet take them! Challenge the children to share about Jesus with at least one person this week.

Family Connection:
Drink water as you review the story of the woman at the well. Together, write a pretend social media post for the Samaritan woman to let other Samaritans know that she found Jesus Christ. Talk about ways your family can reach out and let your neighbors and others in your city know about Jesus. Determine to help rescue people around you and tell them how to be saved from sin through Jesus.

Prayer Points:
Invite children to repeat this prayer to receive God's love gift of salvation.

Dear God,
Thank You for sending Jesus to fix the sin problem
by dying on the cross for my sins.
I know that I have sinned,
and I am asking to be forgiven.
I trust in Jesus as my Savior,
and I choose to follow Him.
Thank You for loving me
and giving me the gift of eternal life.
In Jesus' name, amen.

Name _____

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Look up Ephesians 2:10 and number the word groups in order.

created in	in them.	for good works,	For we
#	#	#	#
that we	Christ Jesus	should walk	workmanship,
#	#	#	#
prepared	are His	beforehand	which God
#	#	#	#

Fill in your name and finish the lines of your poem.

God saved you from sin and has good plans for you.

You are God's poem designed for good and right living.

_____'s Poem

I am saved from sin.

I am forgiven within.

God has good plans for me.

_____

I will follow His plan.

_____

I will choose what's right.

_____

BONUS: *On the back of this page, draw yourself choosing right living that shows you are saved, forgiven, and righteous.*

ANSWERS:

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Look up Ephesians 2:10 and number the word groups in order.

created in	in them.	for good works,	For we
# 4	# 12	# 6	# 1
that we	Christ Jesus	should walk	workmanship,
# 10	# 5	# 11	# 3
prepared	are His	beforehand	which God
# 8	# 2	# 9	# 7

Fill in your name and finish the lines of your poem.

God saved you from sin and has good plans for you.

You are God's poem designed for good and right living.

_____'s Poem

I am saved from sin.

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_____

I will follow His plan.

_____

I will choose what's right.

_____

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