



WEEK ONE – DECEMBER 2018 – PRETEEN (456)

Bible Story: *The Greatest Love of All // John 3:16*

Key Question: *Why do we need to be rescued?*

Memory Verse: *“God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son. Anyone believes in him will not die but will have eternal life.” – John 3:16 NIV*

Life App: *Compassion – Caring enough to do something about someone*

Basic Truth: *I can trust God no matter what*

Summary: We kick off the month with the greatest verse in all of Scripture, John 3:16. God loves the world so much that He wants to spend forever with us. That was made possible through Jesus!

8:50–9:00 | 10:20–10:30 | 11:50–12:00 – FREE PLAY

9:00–9:10 | 10:30–10:40 | 12:00–12:10 – PRESERVICE ACTIVITY

1. Just for Fun

Imagine: an activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play

What You Need: N/A

What You Do:

- Give each kid three slips of paper and a pencil.
- Instruct them to write down three things in their house—they can be anything from snacks to toys to furniture.
- Collect the slips of paper.
- Designate one side of your space to be the “WANTS” side and the other side to be the “NEEDS” side.
- Read the slips one by one.
- After you read one, kids will run to the side of the room that they think the item on the slip fits into.
- If there are kids on both sides for the same item, ask a volunteer from each side to explain why they chose the side they did.
- Continue play as time and interest allows.

Lead your group to the Large Group area.

9:10–9:45 | 10:40–11:15 | 12:10–12:45 – LARGE GROUP

OVERVIEW:

Key Question: *Why do we need to be rescued?* As preteens start to think more deeply about their faith, we start with a big question: Why did God need to send Jesus in the first place? Our lives are wasted without Jesus. We pray that through this lesson, preteens start forming an authentic faith where they realize that Jesus came to transform their entire life.

9:45–10:05 | 11:15–11:35 | 12:45–1:05 SMALL GROUP

1. Take a Snapshot

[Application Activity]

Connect: an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

What You Need: “What Do People Need?” Activity Page; pens

What You Do:

- Sit in a circle.
- Give each student a “What Do People Need?” Activity Page and a pen.
- Explain that they will have 10 seconds to write as many things as they can think of that the person pictured on their page needs.
- Pass papers to the left when the time is up and let students add more needs to the list.
 - If they think of something already written on the page, they can “agree” by putting a check mark next to it.
- After the lists have made their way around the circle, give students a few minutes to share ways they could participate in meeting the needs of someone on one of the lists.

2. Bible Story Extension

[Bible Story Review]

Imagine: an activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play

What You Need: Bibles; timer

What You Do:

- Form two groups.
- Give each group a Bible.
- Explain that they will take turns reading portions of John 3:1–17 together. It’s the story of a man named Nicodemus who came to Jesus “undercover” to ask Him some questions.
 - Assign one group to read the words Jesus spoke and the other to read what Nicodemus said.
 - Instruct them to take turns passing the Bible and reading their team’s assigned part.
 - Choose a volunteer to be the narrator or you can personally read the verses that are not specifically spoken by Jesus or Nicodemus.
- When finished reading the story, invite students to take turns reenacting the conversation between Nicodemus and Jesus.
 - Choose one person from each of the previous groups.

- Explain that you'll set a timer and the two players must try to complete the entire conversation before the timer goes off.
- They won't know how long they have.
- When the time is up, choose two more students and reset the timer for a different amount of time.
- Repeat until everyone has had a turn to play either Jesus or Nicodemus.
- Remind students that the question Nicodemus asked Jesus was one that each of us should ask as well: "How do I have eternal life?" Nicodemus recognized that life on earth isn't forever. Eventually the timer goes off and our time on earth is over. We have no idea when that time will be. Jesus wants us to be ready.
- Ask:
 - Nicodemus was a good guy. He went to church and kept all the rules. Most people think that's the way to have eternal life. Why is that a dangerous lie?
 - How does someone receive eternal life?
- Encourage kids to ask questions about how they can believe in Jesus the way John 3:16 tells us to.

What to Say:

"The Bible tells us that God loves everyone—that includes you and me. He loved us so much that He sent Jesus here to do a job that no one else could do: take the punishment for our sin. He came to rescue us. No matter how smart, nice, talented, or cool we are. None of us can be good enough to go to heaven. We still sin. We still need a Savior. When Jesus died on the cross, He made the way for us to be forgiven. When we believe Jesus died in OUR place for OUR sin, and when we ask Him to be OUR Savior (our Rescuer), He will. He gives us the gift of eternal life to anyone who will receive it."

3. Discussion Questions

[Application Activity]

Connect: an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

What You Need: N/A

What You Do:

- ASK
 - Why does everyone need to be rescued?
 - Why can't we rescue ourselves by being really good and going to church?
 - When people say they don't need Jesus, what are some reasons they give?
 - Why is Jesus the only One who can give us eternal life?
 - What gifts are you hoping to get for Christmas? Why is Jesus better than all of them?

4. Verses To Take With You

[Memory Verse Activity]

Move: an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

What You Need: Bibles; gift bags containing cards from “1 Timothy 1:15” Activity Page

What You Do:

- Form groups of two or three students.
- Give each team one of the prepared gift bags.
- Share this clue about the contents of the bag:
 - When arranged correctly, the words on the cards in the bag will form a verse about what Christmas is really about.
- Share this rule about the activity:
 - Teams must work like silent sleuths (no talking) to figure out the correct order of the cards.
- Tell teams to shout out “Merry Christmas” (or another phrase of your choosing) when they think their cards are arranged correctly.
- Check their work and then declare a winner if the verse is correct.
- Ask:
 - If you could choose one word from 1 Timothy 1:15 that describes our greatest need, what would it be? Explain your choice.
 - If you could choose a word from this verse that describes God’s provision for our greatest need, what word would it be? Explain your choice.
 - If 1 Timothy 1:15 is the truth—what should be our response? How do we show that we believe what it says?

5. Make It Personal with Prayer

[Prayer Activity]

Reflect: an activity that creates space for personal understanding and application

What You Need: Bible; Sticky Notes; Pens

What You Do:

- Offer everyone sticky notes and pens.
 - If kids would like to write down the name of a person they know who needs to receive God’s greatest gift, Jesus, they can.
 - Or maybe they want to write down their own name.
- Read John 3:16–17 aloud then lead students in forming a prayer around the hope and promise found in those verses.
- Encourage them to hold the sticky note in their hand and pray quietly for that person or hand it to you for prayer.

What You Say:

“Dear God, thank you for giving us the greatest gift. You loved us so much that you sent Your one and only Son to rescue us. You have promised that anyone who believes in You will live forever. You know each of the names written on the papers we’re holding. Please help these people that we love to know that You love them too. We pray that they will invite You to rescue and forgive them from the things that have separated them from You. We love you. Thank you for our time together. Amen.”