



# Paul's Jailer Believes in Jesus

Acts 16:16-34

Preteens are in the process of developing new abilities to relate to others. As they develop relationally, they will also be able to relate to Jesus more intimately. As you teach this lesson, be sure to help students understand that believing in Jesus means much more than just knowledge. Believing in Jesus means developing an ongoing love relationship with him, the One who made them and holds their future in his hands.



► **Bible Point**  
Jesus saves us.

## Key Verse

"Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31).

## Weaving Faith Into Life

Kids will worship Jesus for the precious gift of salvation he offers.

LESSON	WHAT KIDS DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
<b>1</b> Getting Started	<b>Tornado Alert!</b> <i>(about 20 min.)</i> Play a simulation game, and talk about how they can be saved from certain situations.	Bible Buzz, scissors, index cards, marker, trash can	Tear out the Lesson 11 pages from each Bible Buzz student book.  Make paper "tornadoes" by cutting small triangles out of index cards. You'll need one tornado for every student. Place an empty trash can in the center of the room. Also count out one index card for each student. Write "Storm Maker" on one-third of the cards, "Storm Chaser" on another third of the cards, and "Miracle Worker" on the remaining cards.
<b>2</b> Bible Exploration	<b>Salvation Scenes</b> <i>(about 30 min.)</i> Create and perform a TV show scene depicting something people turn to for salvation and how a Bible character would respond to that kind of salvation.	newsprint, marker, Bibles, Bible Buzz, pens	

**Bold text** within the lesson is spoken text.



LESSON	WHAT KIDS DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
<b>3</b> Weaving Faith Into Life	<b>Option 1: Hope for the Hard-Pressed</b> <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Discuss situations that make it hard to believe in Jesus, and commit to believe in Jesus in the midst of their circumstances.	1 index card per person, pens, CD player, copies of the lyrics (at the end of this lesson) <b>Teacher Pack: CD</b>	
	<b>Option 2: Joy-Filled Lives</b> <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Discover how believing in Jesus can bring them joy, and then write a letter to Jesus committing to believe in him.	1 balloon, a few slips of paper, pen, and marker per student; CD player; copies of the lyrics (at the end of this lesson) <b>Teacher Pack: CD</b>	
<b>4</b> Lasting Impressions	<b>Daily Challenges</b> <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	Bible Buzz	
	<b>Weaving Faith at Home</b> <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		

**Bold text** within the lesson is spoken text.





## Tornado Alert! Supplies

Bible Buzz  
scissors  
index cards  
marker  
trash can

## Tornado Alert! Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 11 pages from each Bible Buzz student book.

Make paper “tornadoes” by cutting small triangles out of index cards. You’ll need one tornado for every student. Place an empty trash can in the center of the room. Also count out one index card for each student. Write “Storm Maker” on one-third of the cards, “Storm Chaser” on another third of the cards, and “Miracle Worker” on the remaining cards.

# 1 GETTING STARTED

## Tornado Alert!

### What You’ll Do ■■■■■■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went. When all students have arrived, invite them to form a circle around the trash can. Distribute the paper tornadoes and Bible Buzz pages, and have students find the “Tornado Briefing” section.

Say: **We’re going to play a game. A horde of tornadoes has hit the city, and buildings are being destroyed everywhere** (hold up a triangle paper tornado). **Some of you will be Storm Makers, secretly planting and protecting the tornadoes. Some of you will be Storm Chasers, seeking the tornadoes and leading the Miracle Workers to the tornadoes. Some of you will be Miracle Workers, picking up the tornadoes and tossing them into the trash can, which will destroy them.**

**The problem is that you won’t know who’s who, so communication will be tricky. If you’re a Storm Chaser and you discover a Storm Maker, the Storm Maker is out. If you’re a Storm Maker and you discover a Miracle Worker, the Miracle Worker is out. But a Storm Maker cannot discover a Storm Chaser. And Storm Chasers and Miracle Workers need each other to save the city.**

Distribute index cards to an equal number of students for each of the three roles, making sure they keep their identities a secret. You may choose to distribute one to three tornadoes, depending on how many students you have.

Say: **Now that you know your role, read the instructions listed in the “Tornado Briefing” section of your Bible Buzz.**

**You’ll have to be sneaky and quick. Any tornadoes not discovered by the end of our game will run rampant, destroying at least one entire neighborhood.**

Give students time to read the instructions in Bible Buzz and to ask any questions.

Begin the game, and ask students to carry their tornadoes around with them even if they are a Storm Chaser or a Miracle Worker so that their roles aren’t as easy to identify. Allow kids to play the game three to five minutes. As students are called out, have them sit near you. When the game is over, determine how many tornadoes were destroyed and how much of the city has been destroyed.



## Talk With Kids

Ask students to form groups of six or fewer, and tell them to discuss these questions in their groups.

Ask:

- During this game, what did you need to be saved from?
- How did it feel to have your life “threatened”?
- From what else do people need to be saved?
- How can they be saved?

Ask groups to share their responses to the last two questions with the entire group.

Say: **During your lifetime, you might need to be saved from different things such as physical harm, emotional damage, or painful situations. But the most important kind of salvation you can receive is the kind that Jesus gives. Today we’ll explore how ► JESUS SAVES US.**



## **2** BIBLE EXPLORATION

# Salvation Scenes

## What You’ll Do

Ask students to brainstorm a list of things people want to be saved from and how that might happen. For example, money could save a person from poverty, or exercise could save someone from health problems. Record their suggestions on newsprint. When you’ve listed at least 10 suggestions, say: **Almost every TV program shows people being saved from something, whether they’re delivered from problems or rescued from harm’s way. Your group is now the cast of a TV show (you can choose your favorite or make one up). Choose one suggestion from the list and create a one- to two-minute scene to illustrate how your suggestion saves people or how it doesn’t save people even though they may think it will.**

Give groups a few minutes to prepare. It’s okay if groups choose the same suggestion. Then ask them to present their scenes.

Ask:

- What did the characters in your scene need to be saved from?
- What saved them? How?
- What long-term effects will their salvation have? For example, what will their life be like in a month, a year, or five years because of their salvation?
- Is being saved in this way good, bad, or neutral? Explain.

Make sure preteens each have a Bible, Bible Buzz, and a pen.

### Salvation Scenes Supplies

- 
- newsprint
  - marker
  - Bibles
  - Bible Buzz
  - pens





Say: **In today's Bible story, the primary characters either need salvation or have salvation: a slave girl, the slave girl's owners, Paul and Silas, and a jailer. In your groups, read Acts 16:16-34 and answer the questions for each character in the "Offers of Salvation" section of Bible Buzz.**

Give groups 8 to 10 minutes to work. When they've finished, assign each group one of the characters.

Say: **The Bible character just assigned to you is now a cast member of your TV show. Write a new scene for your show including this character and what he or she would think, say, or do about the kind of salvation you presented earlier.**

Allow groups a few minutes to prepare their new scenes. When all scenes have been presented, discuss the following questions.

### Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- Did your Bible character accept or reject the type of salvation you presented in your first scene? Why?
- What do you think the Bible means when it talks about being saved?
- According to today's Bible story, how can you be saved?
- What long-term effects could this salvation have? For example, what could your life be like in a month, a year, or five years because of this salvation?

Say: **True salvation only comes from Jesus, and only Jesus' salvation can make a difference in our lives from now until eternity. ► JESUS SAVES US!**

## 3

### WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

## Option 1: Hope for the Hard-Pressed

### Talk With Kids ■■■■

Ask:

- Why do you think Paul and Silas were able to pray and sing to God in prison?
- Why do you think the jailer wanted to kill himself when he thought the prisoners had escaped?
- All three men were in difficult circumstances. What difference do you think Paul's and Silas' faith in Jesus made in their attitude about their circumstances?

#### Option 1: Hope for the Hard-Pressed Supplies

1 index card per person  
pens  
CD player  
copies of the lyrics (at  
the end of this lesson)

#### Teacher Pack

CD: "That You May  
Believe" (John 20:31)  
(track 22)



Have students find the Key Verse, Acts 16:31, in Bible Buzz, and ask them to read it aloud: “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved.”

Ask:

- **What do you think it means to believe in Jesus?**

Say: **When we believe in Jesus, we believe we will be with him forever. We also believe he is with us right now in our circumstances, whether they are good or bad. Belief in Jesus can give you hope and joy even when life seems hopeless.**

Ask preteens to find a partner and share one circumstance or problem that makes it hard for them to believe in Jesus. While they’re sharing, give an index card and pen to each student. When they’ve finished sharing, say: **I’m going to play a song for you. As you listen, write on your card reasons you hear in the song that you can have hope in Jesus.**

Pass out copies of the lyrics, and play “That You May Believe” (John 20:31) (track 22 on the CD). Have kids refer to the lyrics pages.



**But these are written that you may believe  
That Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.**  
(Repeat.)

**And that by believing, you may have life in his name.  
And that by believing, you may have life in his name.**  
(Repeat.)

*(Repeat from the beginning.)*

“That You May Believe” (John 20:31) by Dean-o. © 2003, 2006 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

After the song, ask pairs to share what they wrote on their cards. You might consider allowing a minute for discussion, and then playing the song again. Afterward, ask partners to share how those reasons can help them to believe in Jesus in their situations.

Say: **Your life may be going great. Or you might be experiencing a difficult situation. We’re going to be quiet for a minute. During the silence, talk with Jesus about your life. Ask him to give you hope. Ask him how he wants to save you in your current situation. He may not take you out of your circumstances, but like Paul and Silas in jail, Jesus can give you joy in the midst of difficult situations.**

After a minute of silence, thank God for the salvation Jesus offers.





## Option 2: Joy-Filled Lives

### Supplies

1 balloon, a few slips of paper, pen, and marker per student

CD player

copies of the lyrics (at the end of this lesson)

### Teacher Pack

CD: "That You May Believe" (John 20:31) (track 22)

### **BALLOON WARNING**

To avoid choking hazards for younger classes meeting later, be sure to pick up pieces of any broken balloons promptly. Balloons may contain latex.

## Option 2: Joy-Filled Lives

### What You'll Do

Ask:

- **How did the jailer feel about his decision to believe in Jesus? Why do you think he felt that way?**

Ask students to form pairs, and give everyone a balloon, a pen, and small slips of paper. Tell preteens to work together to write on the paper things that make people feel joyful. Then have students roll up the slips of paper and insert them into their balloons.

After a minute or so, ask:

- **How full is your balloon? How is this like trying to fill your life with things to make you joyful?**

Ask preteens to blow up the balloons and tie them. Have students find the Key Verse, Acts 16:31, in Bible Buzz, and ask them to read it aloud: "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved."

Ask:

- **How full is your balloon now? How is it different from when it just had paper in it?**
- **How is this like life when you've decided to believe in Jesus?**

Say: **While certain circumstances may give us joy for a while, they won't fill our lives with joy the way believing in Jesus will. The only way to truly be saved is to believe in Jesus.**

**I'm going to play a song for you. Listen to what the song says about how believing in Jesus can bring you life in his name.**

Pass out copies of the lyrics, and play "That You May Believe" (John 20:31) (track 22 on the CD). Have kids refer to the lyrics pages.



**But these are written that you may believe  
That Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.**

*(Repeat.)*

**And that by believing, you may have life in his name.  
And that by believing, you may have life in his name.**

*(Repeat.)*

*(Repeat from the beginning.)*

"That You May Believe" (John 20:31) by Dean-o. © 2003, 2006 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.





Ask:

- **What does this song say about how you can be saved?**

Distribute markers, and ask students to write a short letter to Jesus on their balloons.

After students have finished, thank God for the salvation Jesus offers.

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## **4** LASTING IMPRESSIONS

### Daily Challenges

#### What You'll Do

Say: **Let's each choose a Daily Challenge for the week to help us remember that**  
**▶ JESUS SAVES US.**

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges on the Bible Buzz pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- **Buy a package of Life Savers candy to share with your friends, and as you hand out the candy, remind them that Jesus has saved us.**
- **Every night this week before going to sleep, read John 20:31. Then pray and thank Jesus for saving you!**
- **Tell a close relative about Jesus, explaining that only Jesus can save us from our sins!**

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell the kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

#### Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.**

Say: **▶ JESUS SAVES US. Let's seek his salvation by following through on our Daily Challenges this week.**



#### Daily Challenges Supplies

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 Bible Buzz



## Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about salvation. Kids can also do the activities in the “HomeConnect” section of their Bible Buzz pages with their families.

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church’s families. Available at [group.com/digital](http://group.com/digital).

Close with prayer.





**Lyrics** ■■■■

# That You May Believe (John 20:31)

**But these are written that you may believe  
That Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.**  
*(Repeat.)*

**And that by believing, you may have life in his name.  
And that by believing, you may have life in his name.**  
*(Repeat.)*

*(Repeat from the beginning.)*

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