



HEROES OF THE FAITH

INTERMEDIATE
Small Group

LESSON 9: INTERMEDIATE SMALL GROUP

Paul

MAIN IDEA:

God has the power to turn his enemies into his friends. When we surrender what we have to him, he can transform something broken into something beautiful.

BIBLE PASSAGES:

- Acts 9:1-32

MEMORY VERSE:

“But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.”

Romans 5:8, NLT



Prepare your heart to teach.
Plan for the lesson.



Connect with the kids and make them feel heard and cared for. (15 minutes)



Facilitate activity and study to help kids know and love Jesus. (20-25 minutes)



Lead kids to live out the mission of the Gospel. (5-10 minutes)

Prepare



Prepare your heart to teach.
Plan for the lesson.

QUESTIONS:

- How can you be praying for the students this week?
- Are there any specific students or requests you can pray for?
- Are there any adaptations that you can make to the lesson this week to better serve the kids in your small group or make your small group more effective?
- How can you connect with the students outside of the club over the next few weeks?
- Is there a sporting event or performance you can go to? Can you plan a casual park or fast-food meet-up with them and their families (as a group or individually)?

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Bible
- Name tags
- Snacks, 1 per child
- Scissors, several pairs
- Pencils, 1 per child
- Markers and crayons, 3-4 per child
- Printout 2, 1 per child (printed on cardstock)
- Clear adhesive tape, 1 roll per small group
- Pennies, 2 per child
- Cross or picture of a cross
- Large paper or whiteboard
- (Optional) Blindfolds, 1 per child
- Index cards or small pieces of paper
- (Optional) Various textured objects (e.g., sandpaper, cotton balls, sponge, smooth stone)
- (Optional) Small items with distinct smells (e.g., orange peel, cinnamon stick, lavender)
- (Optional) Objects that make different sounds (e.g., keys, bell, maracas)

Connect



Connect with the kids and make them feel heard and cared for.
(15 minutes)

Small Group Session 1

ICE BREAKER:

Distribute name tags and snacks. Choose one of the following icebreaker activities to do together while children eat their snack:

- Option 1: Ask the children to share their highs and lows (the best and worst things that happened to them either today or from the past week).
- Option 2: Ask the children to take turns sharing how they're feeling today using the "How Are You Feeling?" chart (from the CKC Games Bag).

PRAY TOGETHER:

Collect prayer requests from the students. The leader or a student can pray for the entire group or a leader can pair up students and invite them to pray for one another.

INTRODUCTION:

Start by discussing with the class what it means to be blind and how people who are blind navigate the world.

Say: **Today we will participate in an activity to help us understand what it might be like to experience the world without using our eyes.**

Pick one of the three options below.

OPTION 1: EXPERIENCING THE WORLD BLIND

Have students put blindfolds on, and make sure they cannot see. Consider having students do this activity one at a time if you do not have blindfolds for each student. Provide various items for the students to feel, smell, and listen to. Allow them to guess what each item is.

- **Touch:** Various textured objects (e.g., sandpaper, cotton balls, sponge, smooth stone). Students will be blindfolded and will try to identify the objects just by feeling them.
- **Smell:** Small containers with items that have strong smells (e.g., orange peel, cinnamon stick, lavender). Students will try to guess the items by scent alone.
- **Sound:** Different objects that make distinct sounds (e.g., keys, bell, maracas). Students will try to identify the objects by listening carefully.

OPTION 2: PAPER BAG MYSTERY SENSORY ACTIVITY

Place each textured object into its own paper bag. Ensure the bags are opaque so students cannot see the contents.

Various textured objects, such as:

- Sandpaper
- Cotton balls
- Sponge
- Smooth stone
- Feathers
- Rubber ball
- Pinecone
- Fabric scraps (e.g., silk, velvet, burlap)
- Plastic toy with ridges or bumps

Divide students into small groups, or let them take turns one by one if you prefer a more controlled experience. Have each student reach into the paper bag and feel the object without looking inside.

Encourage the student to describe how the object feels in their hand (e.g., rough, soft, bumpy, smooth) and try to guess what the object might be based on the texture. Allow each student to guess the object before revealing what it is. Rotate the bags among the groups or students until everyone has had a chance to feel each item. After all the items have been revealed, discuss the different textures and how they help us recognize and understand things in our environment.

Ask:

- How did it feel to rely on your other senses without using your eyes?
- Did you find it easy to figure out what each item is?
- Which item was the hardest to figure out?
- Which item surprised you the most?
- Can this activity help you relate to someone who is blind?

OPTION 3: WALKING BLIND

Have the students get into pairs. One student will be blindfolded. The other student will take their hand and lead them around the room/area. Consider making a route for students to follow.

Ask:

- How did it feel to rely on your other senses without using your eyes?
- How did you feel being led around by someone else?
- Was it hard to trust the person that was leading you around?
- Can this activity help you relate to someone who is blind?

Today in Large Group we will be introduced to a man who hated Christians, people who believed in Jesus. He even tried to put them in jail and killed some Christians. One day as he was traveling, Jesus decided to reveal himself to this man. After he met Jesus, he was left blind. As we experienced, it can be very uncomfortable and disorienting being blind. We will get to hear more about his story in Large Group.

Pray and dismiss to Large Group.

Heart



Facilitate activity and study to help kids know and love Jesus.
(20-25 minutes)

Small Group Session 2

Review the main idea of the lesson with the students:

Say: **God can take his enemies and make them into his friends. God can take something ugly and useless and make something beautiful and wonderful.**

Pass out Printout 2 and allow a few minutes to write or draw in Printout 2.

One thing in God's creation that reminds us of this truth is a butterfly. A butterfly starts out as an ugly, useless caterpillar. All caterpillars do is eat and eat and eat. But then they form a chrysalis, and, in time, God transforms them into beautiful butterflies. This is what God did for Paul. He took him as an enemy and transformed him into a friend. God can do this for us as well.

We will be making a balancing butterfly to take home to remind you that God wants to make something beautiful out of your lives.

ACTIVITY: HOMEMADE BUTTERFLY

To make a perfectly symmetrical butterfly (which is necessary for this activity to work), take a piece of cardstock, and fold it in half. Trace the half butterfly pattern (pattern made from outline on Printout 2) onto the card stock.

Cut out the butterfly and decorate it using crayons, markers, or colored pencils.

Tape two pennies to the underside of the butterfly under its two wings.

Now you can balance the butterfly's head on a pencil eraser (or you can make a stand for your butterfly by putting a stick in a ball of clay). You may have to adjust the position of the coins to make the butterfly balance on the head area.

After he met Jesus, Paul, the same person who once put Christians in jail and killed them, believed in Jesus for salvation and started telling other people about Jesus. He ended up writing several books in the Bible. We will see what he writes after he believed in Jesus.

Read 2 Corinthians 5:17-21 out loud. Consider asking a student to read for the group.

Ask:

- **What does he say people are after they belong to Jesus?** (They are a new creation.)
- **How does God bring us back to himself?** (Through Jesus Christ)
- **What is the job that God has now given everyone who believes in Jesus?** (Reconcile people to God.)

- **What is the message of reconciliation?** (That those who believe in Jesus will not have their sins counted against them)
- **How did God use Jesus to make us right with God?**
- **What is the title that we are given if we believe in Jesus and share Jesus with others?** (Christ's Ambassadors)

DEFINITION

RECONCILE:

Restore friendly relations between.

ILLUSTRATION: THE CLEAN SLATE

Imagine you're at school, and you're given a brand-new whiteboard to write on. It's perfectly clean and shiny. You start using it to do your math problems, but as you work, you make some mistakes. You accidentally write the wrong numbers, and soon your whiteboard has a lot of scribbles and errors all over it.

You try to erase the mistakes, but the marks just smear and won't come off completely. No matter how hard you try, the board is still messy, and you feel frustrated because you can't make it clean again on your own.

Then, your teacher comes over. She sees you're struggling and smiles. She takes a special cleaner and wipes the board perfectly clean—every single mistake disappears, and it's like the scribbles were never there. The board is completely clean again, just like it was when it was brand new.

This is what Jesus does for us. When we make mistakes (which the Bible calls "sins"), our hearts can feel messy, like that whiteboard. We might try to fix things on our own, but we can't make our hearts perfectly clean by ourselves. But when we trust in Jesus, He comes and wipes away all our sins, making our hearts clean again.

This is what "justification" means. It's like God sees our messy hearts, but because of Jesus, he wipes them clean. When God looks at us after we've trusted in Jesus, he sees us as if we've never made any mistakes—as if we have a completely clean slate. Just like your teacher helped make your whiteboard clean, Jesus makes our hearts clean, and we're justified in God's eyes.

ACTIVITY: LOVE AND RECONCILIATION CIRCLE

Read Romans 5:6-11 out loud.

When we were utterly helpless, Christ came at just the right time and died for us sinners. Now, most people would not be willing to die for an upright person, though someone might perhaps be willing to die for a person who is especially good. But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners. And since we have been made right in God's sight by the blood of Christ, he will certainly save us from His condemnation. For since our friendship with God was restored by the death of his Son while we were still his enemies, we will certainly be saved through the life of his Son. So now we can rejoice in our wonderful new relationship with God because our Lord Jesus Christ has made us friends of God.

DEFINITION**JUSTIFIED:**

Being made right or good in God's eyes. It's like when you do something wrong but then someone forgives you and says, "It's okay, you're not in trouble anymore." When we believe in Jesus, God says we are forgiven and right with Him, even if we've made mistakes. It's like getting a fresh start!

Say: **Reconciliation is about Jesus helping to bring us back into a good relationship with God. When we believe in Jesus, the Bible says that we are justified, or made right because of him.**

- **What does this passage tell us about how much God loves us?**

Write down their responses on individual index cards. Guide them to understand that God's love is unconditional and was shown through Jesus' sacrifice.

Reconciliation means being brought back into a close relationship with God.

- **Why do we need to be reconciled with God?**
- **How does Jesus help us be close to God again?**

Give each child an index card or piece of paper. Ask them to quietly think about one thing that they feel might separate them from God, such as a sin, a fear, or something they worry about.

Have them write or draw this on their card.

Place the cross (or picture of a cross) in the center of the Small Group circle.

Say: **Jesus' death on the cross is what allows us to be reconciled with God.**

Invite each child to bring their card to the cross and place it underneath.

Say: **This symbolizes that Jesus takes away the things that separate us from God.**

After everyone has placed their cards under the cross, join hands and pray together.

Hands



Lead kids to live out the mission of the Gospel.
(5-10 minutes)

Small Group Session 2

WRAP IT UP:

Ask: **What's one thing you learned or felt during the activity?**

Say: **Keep your hearts open to God's love and remember that nothing can separate you from it because of Jesus.**

RESPONSE AND REFLECTION

Consider finishing by giving each child a small reminder, like a cross-shaped bookmark or a card with Romans 5:8 on it, to take home as a reminder of God's love and reconciliation.

Print out the memory verse.

Practice the memory verse for this unit (Romans 5:8).

Pray with the students and dismiss them.



Bible Memory Verse
Games