



GOALS

As students experience this session in Faith Basics, they will...

- Understand our need for salvation and a savior.
- Reflect on the differences between their lives before they came to know Christ and their lives after following Christ.
- Explore what the Bible teaches about the process of salvation.

MATERIALS: Group

- Whiteboard or Post-it pad (the 25" x 30" variety)
- Dry-erase markers or Sharpies for Post-it pad

MATERIALS: Each Student

- Different colored markers or colored pencils
- Student journal pages and Scripture sheets
- Bible
- Optional: Pack of Lifesavers (with several individual roles, one for each student) or survival bracelet (Read "Putting Into Practice" section below to get an idea of what works best for your group.)

OPEN

Begin this week by reviewing some of the important points from Session 2. Ask students to share one or two things they remember about the nature of sin and temptation. Below are a few bullet points you might want to mention.

- In Genesis 3 we see the origin of sin as well as the immediate impact it made on our world.
- In the same passage of Scripture we see how our adversary Satan uses sin against us, often by warping the truth to make it appear desirable.
- Sin is, at least initially, appealing to us, but ultimately separates us from God.
- Sin begins with our own broken nature, which leads us to temptation and ultimately into sin.
- Although death entered the world through one man, Adam, salvation is offered through the sacrifice of one man, Jesus.

Use the following questions to transition into study mode with a brief discussion about lifesaving.

How many of you have been trained in lifesaving techniques such as CPR or emergency first aid? Have you ever had to use the training in real life to help save someone?

Have you ever held a job like lifeguard or EMT where you were paid to save lives? What is that responsibility like?

Have you ever saved someone? (Maybe you stopped them from walking in front of car.) What happened? What prevented this person from saving themselves?

Have you ever had to be saved? (Perhaps as a child falling into a pool, or after a car crash.) What happened and who came to your rescue? How did you respond to this person (or people) afterwards? What prevented you from rescuing yourself in this situation?

Describe to the group that, like situations of life that require a rescue, sin leaves us in a state where we are helpless to save ourselves. We need someone to save us. Fortunately, God has a plan for that.

DIGGING IN

Invite students to read the passage from Romans 6:20-23 using their Scripture sheets. Explain to them that these verses paint a “before and after” picture of each of our lives. Ask students to engage in the passage in the following way:

1. **Mark in one color anything that describes the “before” or our old ways of life before we knew God.**
2. **With a second color mark anything that describes the “after” or how our lives are changed as a result of knowing Christ.**

Once students have thoroughly read the Scripture and marked it accordingly, invite them to work as a group to create a “before” and “after” column on the whiteboard, similar to the chart below. They will see room to write this info on their journal pages as well.

<u>BEFORE</u>	<u>AFTER</u>
<i>-free from control of righteousness</i>	<i>-slave to God</i>
<i>-reaps things that result in death</i>	<i>-reaps holiness and eternal life</i>
<i>-wages of sin lead to death</i>	<i>-has a gift of eternal life in Christ</i>
<i>-all the things you benefit from result in death</i>	<i>-free from sin</i>

TAKING IT INWARD

Process this passage by discussing these questions:

What’s the difference between these two ways of life? How are they distinctly different? How do these ways of life influence our actions?

Is there much about the “Before” column that seems appealing? Would you want to willingly go back to that way of life? How does sin lead us back to the old ways even if it is unwittingly on our part?

Take a moment to look back over the two columns. What’s one word or phrase from each column that you can relate to?

DIGGING DEEPER

Using their Scripture sheets, have students read the Titus 3 passage after you’ve given the following instructions:

1. **Mark any references to or descriptions of the writer of this letter. These would include pronouns like “we,” “us,” and “our.”**
2. **Using another color or symbol, mark any reference to God or anything that describes Him. Remind them to mark pronouns!**

Special note: Share with your students that when they read the word “justified,” it might help to substitute the phrase “made *just as if I’d* never sinned.” This succinct phrase helps define the concept of being justified and will help them better understand what they read.

3. **After they’ve read and marked the passage, ask them to pick an “us” characteristic and a “God” characteristic that stands out to them, for whatever reason: convicting, “wow” factor, simply cool.**

Ask for volunteers to share the “us” and “God” characteristics they chose and list these on the board. Students may want to note these in the space provided on their journal pages. Your list may look like the chart below.

Us

- at one time we were:
 - foolish
 - disobedient
 - deceived
 - enslaved by all kinds of passion
 - lived in malice
 - not able to save ourselves
- we are saved by the washing, rebirth of the Holy Spirit
- we are made just as if we'd never sinned, by God's grace
- we have the hope of eternal life

God

- has kindness and love
- is our savior
- He saved us because of His mercy
- He poured out the Holy Spirit on us generously
- He poured out salvation generously
- His grace makes us just as if we'd never sinned

CROSS CHECKING

Although the process of salvation is laid out very clearly in Scripture, students can unintentionally adopt other things that they “have” to do to receive salvation. How many times have we heard students say things like “I’d follow Christ, but first I need to stop _____” or “I haven’t been a part of this group long enough to follow Jesus.” The purpose of this portion of the session is to encourage students to see first-hand what is necessary for salvation, and peel away anything that is holding them back. We’ve given students a few Scriptures to begin with but you may want to add others that you feel will help students better understand the process.

Instruct students to individually read each of the Scriptures under the “Cross Checking” section on their journal pages. You may want to encourage them to find a place of solitude if your space allows. After an appropriate amount of time bring the group back together and as a group discuss what they have found. Below you can find the Scripture references and a few important details in the salvation process.

Matthew 4:17

Repent

Luke 13:2-3

Repent

John 5:24 (pick up at 5:19 to see who is talking)

Hear Jesus’ words

Believe God, who sent Jesus

Romans 10:9-10

Confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord

Believe in your heart that God raised Jesus from the dead

1 John 1:9

Confess your sins

After your group has discussed the passages of Scripture that relate to salvation, encourage them to partner up and take turns explaining that process with their partner. Instruct students to imagine that they are explaining salvation to someone who has never heard about Jesus or the Gospel. Encourage them to make it understandable (avoid “churchy” words that would confuse a new believer) and conversational (don’t simply repeat the words from the list they have on their journal pages).

After they have completed the activity bring everyone back together to answer the questions below.

Do you feel like the process of salvation is a simple process? Why or why not?

Why do you think each part of the process is necessary?

What part(s) of the process of salvation do you find more difficult (to obey or comply with) than others?

What was it like explaining the process to someone else? Is this something you've done before?

Were there any parts of the process of salvation that were difficult for you to explain? If so what were they and why were they difficult?

PUTTING INTO PRACTICE

Invite students to look over the list one more time. Explain that knowing the process of salvation is extremely important, however, *obeying* is vital for following Christ. This might be a good time to give students some time to meditate on these Scriptures and personally reflect to see if they have responded as the Scriptures describe. Be sensitive to the needs of your group and the moving of the Holy Spirit here as you begin to wrap up.

As you close this session reflect on your personal prep for this week. Explain to the group that the root word for “salvation” in the Greek is *sozo*, which literally means to “rescue from peril” or “bring back from the brink of destruction.” Ask them to think back to the discussion about being saved or saving someone else. Encourage them to imagine the consequences had they or someone else not intervened to *sozo* the person in need of rescue. In the same way, if Jesus had not chosen to *sozo* us, the consequences would be dire.

Options:

With this idea in mind, below are a couple of options for ending this session. Choose the approach or illustration that best fits your group.

- **Survival Bracelets:** Distribute survival bracelets (paracord bracelets) to your group. These bracelets are a multi-use rope—to hang a hammock or make a tourniquet—made of the same nylon cord used in parachutes (and woven into the size of a bracelet). You can purchase these (online or from an outfitter store) or make them on your own. These can be as elaborate or as simple as you'd like. You may even want to write *sozo* on the clasp as a reminder of this session. If time allows students could construct their own survival bracelets.
- **Lifesavers:** Distribute a roll of Lifesavers to each member of your group. Mention some key salvation points that they should remember when they see this pack of Lifesavers. You could be creative and assign a different Scripture to each color and encourage students to remember what that color represents. (For example orange: confess; red: believe).

With either of these approaches make sure students understand how the item could be used to potentially save their lives in various scenarios. Then draw the connection between the item as a physical life saving device and Jesus' desire to save each of us from sin and death.