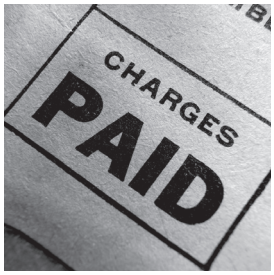
SESSION 4
LEAD IT: MIDDLE SCHOOL



GOALS

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

- Understand the link between salvation (last week's study) and redemption.
- Explore Scripture to lead them to a deeper understanding of WHY God chose to redeem us.
- Discover what God has redeemed us from as well as the life that He has redeemed us to!

MATERIALS: Group

- Whiteboard and markers

MATERIALS: Each Student

- Different colored markers or colored pencils
- Student journal pages and Scripture sheets
- Bible and pen
- **Review Item:** "Admit One/ Paid" Ticket. You can cut up tickets from the sheet provided with this Lead It guide. Also, you could pick up a roll of tickets (office supply store) that say "admit one" and either write "Paid" on them or have students rip them in half.

OPEN

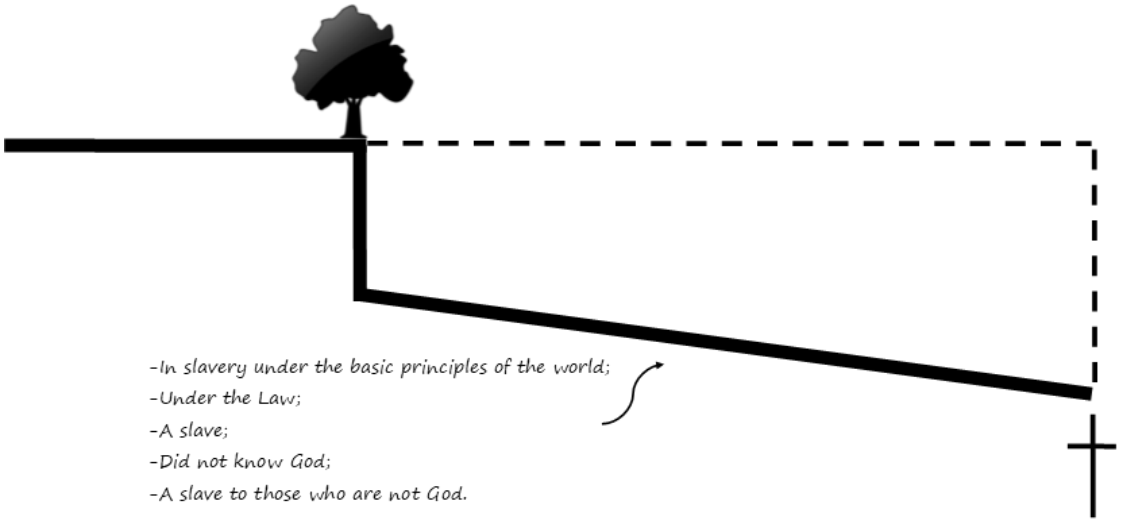
As a matter of review and for ready reference, have your students re-draw their diagram from Session 2 on their Session 4 student journal page. (You may need to remind them of the steps you took, or show them from their journal pages on Session 2.) You may also want to draw it on your whiteboard so everyone can see.

DIGGING IN

Before you ask your students to read Galatians 4:3-8 ask for suggestions of simple symbols they could draw that represent sin.

Suggestions: Pitchfork, fishing hook (from Session 2), ball and chain

As they read, ask them to choose a symbol to draw over anything that describes our life while we are separated from God. After they've finished, as a group place these descriptions where they belong on the diagram you recreated. You will also want to do this in a way the whole group can see. The result will look something like the following:



Have someone read aloud Romans 5:6-8 out of his or her Bible. Using the cross as a symbol for Christ's act of redemption, have the group discuss where on the diagram the cross should be placed so that it shows the point at which redemption happened.

Eventually, you will want to place the cross on a spot in the diagram that represents the time when we were separated from God. But let your group come up with that on their own, and let them decide why. If many of them already have the cross drawn on their diagrams, discuss as a class why the cross needs to be at a point when man was separated from God. A beautiful fact of redemption is that Christ took on our sin and died for us "while we were still sinners."

DIGGING DEEPER

Ask students to read Romans 6:6 and 6:16-18 using their Scripture sheets. As they read, have them mark any reference to slaves or slavery with the same symbol they used in Digging In above, i.e. ball and chain.

After reading, have them share with you what they learn about slaves and slavery. Write these on the whiteboard and invite students to write this info on their journal pages.

Slavery

-we are slaves to sin before our old bodies are crucified
-people are slaves to the one they obey
-slavery to sin leads to death
-we used to be slaves to sin
-we are able to be slaves to righteousness

After they have made their lists, discuss the following questions as a group:

What word best describes the condition of all people before Christ came on the scene?

What best describes our own condition before Christ comes on our scene?

What are we slaves to before we meet Christ?

How have you experienced this idea in your own life? Did you ever feel almost compelled to do a wrong thing that you knew you shouldn't do? Could it be because you were a "slave" to that sin?

It is important for students to grasp the "slavery and bondage" thing! We don't often think about slavery in our modern world, so this might be hard for a middle school student to comprehend. It's important to help them grab hold of the idea that Scripture uses this image to describe our situation when we are without Christ. The imagery of being slaves to sin sets up the meaning of redemption. Help your students understand being a slave to sin is like having a ball and chain clasped around your ankle—you can't get rid of it. It's a weight you drag around, and eventually it will drag you down. The better we understand the bondage we are in before we meet Christ, the more we will value what He did for us in setting us free from this bondage.

DIGGING EVEN DEEPER

Ask your students to read the Galatians 4 passage again. As they read this time, have them mark anything that describes us after Christ has done His work. Then have students tell you what they found and list this on your whiteboard (students may want to note this on their journal pages). Your list should look something like this:

Life After Christ

-receive the full rights of sons
-we are His children
-God has sent His Spirit of His Son into our hearts
-we are no longer slaves, but truly His children
-therefore, we are also heirs of God!

INSIGHT

Share with your group the meaning of the word "redemption." If you really want to sound intelligent, tell them what that Greek word is — *apolútrosis* (ah-pah-LOO-tro-sis), which means "to let go free for a ransom." Stress that redemption means payment for a ransom; it implies that someone was in slavery, that their freedom was paid for, and that now they are free. Have your students write this definition on their journal pages.

TAKING IT INWARD

By now the picture of redemption should be emerging. Have a little group discussion about this whole process of redemption, using the following questions as prompts:

Why is the word "freedom" so closely associated with redemption?

How is Christ able to redeem us?

FINAL DIGS

Share with your students that you're going to finish your time by giving them an opportunity to be the group's resident authority on a passage about redemption.

Point out the Bible verses listed under Final Digs on their journal pages and step through the following instructions:

- Assign each verse to a student. If you have fewer than seven students (the number of verses) give some students more than one verse.
- Explain that each verse gives unique insight on the idea of redemption. Their job is to uncover all the insight from their verse(s).
- Ask them to answer as many of the questions in the chart as they can about redemption from their verse. Point out that not every question is answered by every verse, so it's okay to leave a spot blank.

Then share in your own words:

As you read your passage from your Bible or Bible app, write in the chart any answers to the questions that your passage provides. Remember: not every question is answered by every verse, so it's okay to leave a spot blank. But each passage helps fill in the full picture of redemption.

Invite them to create a place of solitude right where they are. When they finish, have them reassemble as a group. Work together to complete the chart on the board.

Your chart should look something like this:

Why do we need redeemed?	Why did God redeem us?	How did God redeem us?	What are things we can enjoy and things to do because we are redeemed?
because all sinned *-Rom. 5:12-13* *-Rom. 3:23-24*	*-because He loves us* *-Gal. 2:20*	*-through Christ's blood, God was able to forgive us* *-Eph. 1:7-8* *-Col. 1:13-14* *-grace through Christ* *-Rom. 3:24*	*-follow God's example* *-walk in the way of love* *-Eph. 4:32-5:1-2* *-holiness, eternal life* *-Rom. 6:22*

After creating your chart, use the questions below to process the information.

Which bit of information is the most helpful for helping you understand redemption?

One of the ways we show our gratitude for redemption is found in Ephesians 4:32-5:2, "walk in the way of love." What can you do today to "walk in the way of love" and show your appreciation for redemption?
Examples: Be more loving toward my family, be more sacrificial with my friends, be someone people like to be around, be more giving, be more patient.

PUTTING INTO PRACTICE

Faith Chain Link

"Admit One: PAID" Ticket — Explain that because we have been redeemed, our freedom from sin has been paid for. You may want to have students visualize Christ handing them this ticket. Another idea: As you hand students a ticket have them rip it in half like it's done at the movies. Invite them to visualize Jesus ripping the ticket and handing it back to them as if it has been "paid." Use this time to lock in on the key points of redemption.