



All Christians' Fellowship International

INTERACTIVE SUNDAY SCHOOL OUTLINE FOR YOUTHS AND YOUNG ADULTS

Foundations Freed to Follow

Overview

Summary

In this fifth lesson of the Foundations series, you and your students will consider what it means that God “saves” us. Salvation isn’t just about the afterlife. God’s salvation starts transforming our lives here and now when we believe Jesus is raised from the dead and declare him the Lord of our lives. Salvation isn’t just a cosmic status change; it’s a process through which God heals us from the damage done by sin and restores us to the fullness of life. When we are saved and transformed, we shine God’s light into the dark world. We aren’t just saved from sin, but we are saved for a full life. We live out our salvation by taking up our cross and following Jesus.

Key Takeaways

1. We need to believe and declare that Jesus is raised and is Lord.
2. God’s salvation transforms us.
3. We don’t have to wait.

Scriptures

Ephesians 2:2,4,8-9 / Ezekiel 36:26 / Luke 9:23-25 / Matthew 5:14-16

Lesson 2 Script

Introduction

Have you or someone you know ever made a big change in your life and you find yourself asking, “What now?” Maybe you stopped something that before had taken a lot of your time, like a sport. Or you went through an unfortunate long-term sickness and you were finally cleared by the doctors to do anything you like. Or maybe you made a move to a new city where you didn’t know anyone.

“What...Now?”

For the last few weeks, we’ve been talking about Christianity using Plato’s cave story. [Recap the story if necessary.] This week, we turn our attention to life outside the cave. We get to talk about salvation— a life lived in the glorious light of God. We’ve discussed previously how the shadows of the cave had us deceived, but the captors of the darkness can’t keep us chained. We’ve also noted that running into the freedom of the real world can be a little disorienting. The

good news is that the same God who rescues us from our chains walks with us and teaches us how to live in the light. See, that's the thing of salvation: It answers, "What now?" We aren't just saved from the cave; we're saved for something. We're saved for a new life, peace with God, and friendship with the rest of God's creation.

If you've grown up in church, you've probably heard this "salvation" word a lot. Maybe you know what it means "to be saved" or you've "asked Jesus into your heart." God's people talk about salvation in a lot of different ways, but one thing is for sure: We don't have to wait until heaven for eternal life to begin. Being reunited with God in the resurrection life is the end result of our salvation. Salvation is so much more than a future destination. It's an ongoing process that we get to experience daily as we follow Jesus.

Think of yourself back in that cave for a moment. Imagine if you were freed from your chains, led to the exit of the cave, saw the whole world of freedom... and then decided to go back into the darkness. No way! This light calls us into a big life, one you were created for. It's never going to be a perfect life, but with God, it really is good. You were made for peace, joy, and love - for work and relationships that are life-giving and fulfilling! You were made to reflect God's light into the darkness.

Transition

This is the really wild part of the Good News... God doesn't just save us, pat himself on the back, and then put us up on a shelf for safe keeping. God saves us and then calls us to get to work with him! God asks us to help take the light of Jesus all over the world. Have you ever heard the children's song, "This little light of mine"? You've got to let it shine!

So, let's talk about learning to live in light. Ready?

Point #1: We need to believe and declare that Jesus is raised and is Lord.

It's pretty amazing that for all God offers us, he doesn't make us jump through a bunch of hoops to achieve it. God simply wants us to believe in his truth and trust him. We can be saved when we confess Jesus as Lord and believe that God raised him from the dead. Romans 10:9-10 says, *If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved.* It's as simple as that! God has done the hard work, making it all possible because of the work Jesus did for us on the cross and in the resurrection.

Ephesians 2:8-9 tells us, *God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it.* Salvation isn't something we can earn by being smart enough or good enough. In fact, that's getting it backwards. We can't work our way into it. Jesus' resurrected life is for us to share in, offered to us as a free gift. We only need to accept it!

When we accept it, we make Jesus the Lord of our lives. This is like him being King; we live according to his rules and his ways in every area of our lives. This is because believing isn't just a mental note of a fact. It's a deep recognition of the reality of God's truth and the call to accept a new life. It's a total reorientation of our thinking and living around God. As some have said, it's a "new way to be human." The Bible teaches that God cares about who we are and what we do in all arenas of our lives, not just at church. Faith isn't just something our brain buys into; faith is something we do with our whole selves.

God's salvation isn't just for us to get the "religion" part of life right. It's not just about what we do on Sundays or where we're going when we die.

This leads us to some more good news about the Good News...

Point #2: God's salvation transforms us.

Let's think about this word, saved, again. We are saved from something, yes. We are saved from our sins, hell, and the devil. But we are also saved for something— a whole new way to be human! Salvation is about re-orienting our lives to the light. Ephesians 2:2,4 says it like this:

You used to live in sin, just like the rest of the world, obeying the devil—the commander of the powers in the unseen world. He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God... But God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so much, that even though we were dead because of our sins, he gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead.

Our new life is our whole life, not just our time at church or reading our Bibles. God cares about how we treat our family, friends, and strangers. God cares about how we spend our time and our money. God cares about what we think of ourselves and how we use our talents and abilities. God's salvation helps us do all of these things in a way that pleases him.

Have you ever been really sick? Like the kind of sick where your whole-body hurts, and you can't even think straight? When we're sick, it doesn't just affect our bodies; it affects our minds, work, and relationships, too. When we're sick, we can't do everything we're supposed to be able to do. But then do you know how it feels when you wake up one day, and you're finally better? It's like you can get back to being you. This is how it is with sin and salvation. Sin makes us sick. It debilitates us from the good work God has for us, but salvation is a process of healing. God restores us so we feel like we're supposed to, and we can live life with strength and joy.

Salvation isn't just a cosmic status change. God changes us. We are transformed by the marvelous light. We can see the world clearly, so we can walk rightly. Our minds and our hearts are renewed. You've heard it said that people can't change. That's absolutely not true. It's like God said through the prophet Ezekiel to the people of his day when God was going to restore them: "And I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit in you. I will take out your stony, stubborn heart and give you a tender, responsive heart." (Ezekiel 36:26) Salvation is not just stepping into the light. It's letting the light get into you! God pulls us out of darkness and pulls the darkness out of us.

This transformation is not just for when we make it to heaven. This new heart is for now and leads us to more good news....

Point #3: We don't have to wait.

Picture for a moment when you saved someone from drowning. You pulled them up and out of the water, got them to dry land, and then did CPR until they started breathing again. When they came to, what would you want them to do? Wouldn't you be disappointed if they just wanted to sit by the water forever? What if they said, "Well, I'm still going to die one day..." You'd be like, *hey! But you're alive right now! You've got another chance at life! Go live it to the fullest!* This is what it's like for us when we step into the light. Eternal life has already begun! And God has good, meaningful works planned for us to do here and now!

Remember how we spoke last week about Jesus as King and his kingdom being here on earth? The moment we trust Jesus, we become citizens of this kingdom. Being a Christian is not just about our own spirituality; it's about joining the mission of Jesus, being his image bearers to the world still stuck in the cave. When we follow Jesus, we are his *disciples*. Salvation is about the life-long process of learning to follow him. The words of Jesus in Luke 9:23-25 still ring true for us today:

Then he said to the crowd, "If any of you want to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross daily, and follow me. If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it. And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but are yourself lost or destroyed?"

When we declare and confess Jesus is Lord, our salvation is complete, but also it's just the beginning of learning to live in the light. Christians don't just get to live any-old way we want and then throw a Jesus stamp on it. God's Holy Spirit dwells with us and helps us to learn the ways of the kingdom. We learn to see people as God sees them and follow Jesus' model of treating people with compassion and working for justice.

Before we conclude [tonight], I want you to hear these words of Jesus recorded in Matthew 5:14–16. Jesus, the true light of the world says to us, "You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father."

What now? When God saves and heals us, we become living testimonies of God's transforming rescue.

Closing

Let's end with the courage to ask ourselves some pretty big questions. I have three for us.

First, what do you need Jesus to save you from? We all need to be saved from something. Do you need God to bring you out of the cave for the very first time? Maybe you need God to save you from the memories of the cave that still haunt you. Whatever you need to be rescued from, Jesus is the one for the job.

Secondly, what do you think Jesus has saved you for? Are you trying to live outside the cave but struggling to find peace, joy, or meaning? God is here to help you walk in your new identity.

And lastly, where is Jesus asking you to shine his light? Is there somewhere that you sense God asking you to take up your cross? Is there somewhere you need to let your light shine for all to see? Jesus will go with you. You will never be alone.

Remember the kingdom is here, salvation is now. Eternal life has already begun. Let's be sure to live it!

Discussion Questions

1. What might Jesus be calling you to surrender or turn away from so that you can experience his transformation more fully as you live out your salvation? (e.g., Lies).
2. How does your future hope in resurrection life after death give you hope now, for your life before death? How should this hope affect the way we live?