

Hey ClubE!

Woohoo! It's the Fourth of July weekend. I hope you're having an amazing weekend and are staying cool. With all the fun and celebration, remember that this is our time to refocus. We need to be honoring and glorifying God through ALL things and it's our time to learn what He has to teach us.

1. Watch my [short video](#) & introduction to the lesson today.
2. Sharing time. Our question today: What's the best gift you've ever received? What about given?
3. Read the story together as a family (or listen to it [here](#)) & go through the discussion questions to talk about what you've learned.
4. Pray together as a family.
5. Optional: Do experiment/activity!

If you have questions or just want to share your learning, you can email me cas66852@gmail.com or text/call at 612-310-2363

Storytime!

We're talking about what happened with the people who believed in Jesus AFTER Jesus died, came back to life, and went to heaven. We've talked a lot recently about a man named Paul, who was also called Saul. Paul traveled around and shared the message of Jesus with people all over the place. He also wrote a bunch of letters to encourage the believers in different churches. Many of his letters became books of the Bible. One of Paul's letters was to the people in Ephesus. We call it the book of Ephesians. Let's read a part of it. Ephesians 2:8-9 (NIRV) says, "God's grace has saved you because of your faith in Christ. Your salvation doesn't come from anything you do. It is God's gift. It is not based on anything you have done. No one can brag about earning it.

I bet the Ephesians needed to hear that. I know I do. You see, we all mess up. We make mistakes. We fail at things. We DON'T do things we know we're supposed to do. And that can make us feel pretty crummy about ourselves. When we look at the people around us, that can make us feel like we've messed up. We think, 'I wish I could be more like him,' or 'She always does everything perfectly. It can seem like everyone else has it all together and never messes up like I do. That can especially seem true when we're at church. But the truth is, EVERYONE has messed up. Even though other people may seem to have everything all together and seem to do everything right, that's just not the case. Nobody is perfect—except Jesus. We ALL mess up.

Sometimes, we feel like we have to fix things when we've done something wrong. So, we don't ask for help, and we don't let God fix anything. We try to fix it ourselves. We might try to make up for what we've done wrong. We can try to cover it up by doing good things. Or we can try to hide it from others. We can try to do a lot of good things to make up for the bad things we've done. But the truth is, none of that makes the bad things go away. Here's the really good news. It's not our job to fix what's wrong. That's why God sent Jesus. You don't have to do everything perfectly to fit in. God loves you and accepts you, no matter what you've done or will do. You can't work to earn His love. Everyone messes up. Everyone. It's easy for us to think everyone else seems better than us, but they aren't. We all mess up and make mistakes. That's why God gave us the best gift ever when He gave us Jesus.

Let's take another look at what Paul wrote in his letter. Ephesians 2:8 (NIRV) says, "God's grace has saved you because of your faith in Christ. Your salvation doesn't come from anything you do. It is God's gift, (NIRV).

Let's stop there. Salvation is God's gift. That means that when we put our trust in Jesus, God FORGIVES us of all the wrong things we've done and will do. When we put our faith in Jesus, we believe that He died on the cross to pay the price for our sins. He paid the price for every single sin we have already committed and every sin we will ever commit in the future. Jesus did all of the work of paying for our sins. We didn't do anything! That means that there's nothing we can do to earn God's love, and there's nothing we can do that will cause Him NOT to love us. Jesus paid for our sin and made us right with God. And that is a free gift.

Jesus is a gift for everyone. He fixes the mess we've made and turns it into something beautiful. Of course, as we follow Jesus, we're going to mess up. When we do, we can say we're sorry and accept God's forgiveness that we have through Jesus. We should always try to live the way God wants us to. We should always try to make the wise choice. We should always try to do the right thing. We should always do our best to treat others with love and kindness. But we don't do those good things just to EARN something. We do those good things because we already know how much God loves us! Every day, we can choose to live His way because we're so thankful that He sent Jesus to be our Savior. That's the great news: Jesus is a gift for everyone.

Let's talk about it!

- Fourth of July is fun, but Christmas is my favorite. I love the tradition and receiving gifts. Why do you think Christians may have this as a tradition in their home?
- How do you feel when you receive a gift? Was there ever a time that you didn't expect a gift and you got it?
- When you've gotten a special gift, what do you do with it? Share it? Hide it away? Take special care of it?
- The ultimate gift has already been given-- the gift of Jesus! What are you supposed to do with this special gift?
- God wants EVERYONE to receive the gift of Jesus. What actions can you take to share this good news with others?

Pray

“Dear God, thank You for giving us the gift of salvation and forgiveness through Jesus. Thank You for making it a gift for everyone. Help us to remember that it’s not something that we earn, but that You love us no matter what. Please forgive us when we mess up, and help us to live Your way every day. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus’ name, amen.”

Game time!

EVERYBODY’S IT TAG!

Typically, when you play tag, only one or a few people are ‘it.’ But in this game, who is it? Everyone! That ‘everyone’ idea applies to faith, too. Jesus came for everyone. There isn’t anything you can do to make God love you more than He already does. Jesus gave His life so that EVERYONE could be forgiven and have a relationship with God forever. Just like you don’t have to do anything to ‘earn’ the gifts you receive on your birthday or at Christmas, Jesus is a gift for everyone.

WHAT YOU NEED: No supplies needed

WHAT YOU DO:

- Spread out in your area and make it clear where the boundaries are for your group.
- You will play a version of tag where everyone is it.
- When you say, “Go!” every player can tag any other player.
- Each time they tag someone, they get a point. Keep track of their own points.
- But every time you GET tagged, you must take a point away from your total.

Good luck and have fun!