



**Educate
+ Engage**



THE LOVE
OF GOD



The Rescue: Love
That came for you

OVERVIEW

The gospel is the greatest rescue mission in history. Jesus didn't come to condemn the world but to save it—not because we were perfect or ready, but because He loved us first. His love won then, and it still wins today.

Scripture Passages

John 3:16–17

Romans 5:8

Luke 4:18

Isaiah 53

Isaiah 59:2

EDUCATE

In our last lesson we discussed how God is love and how His love rescues us from sin.

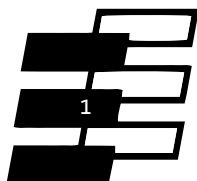
Teacher note: You can tell the story of a rescue story from your local town, or possibly use the Lost Sheep from Luke 15 to set up the rescue Jesus did for us.

Point 1: We were separated, but love came after us.

Sin didn't just make life hard—it made a relationship with God impossible. It didn't just bruise us—it broke the connection between us and the One who created us. Scripture says, “Your sins have cut you off from God” (Isaiah 59:2, NLT). We were never meant to live at a distance, but sin kidnapped us and chained us in shame, fear, and lies. And the worst part? It whispered that we deserved to stay there.

But God never agreed with that. The entire Bible tells a beautiful story of how much God loves us and the great lengths He will go to show His love for us. Time and time again, He did act after act to restore relationship with His people and came to rescue us from sin and shame and restore the connection between us and Him.

Luke 4:18 says, “He has sent me to proclaim that captives will be released, that the blind will see, that the oppressed will be set free” (NLT). Jesus didn't ignore our chains. He came for us. He didn't ask us to climb out. He didn't wait for us to prove we were worth it. He stepped into the darkness we were trapped in and broke the chains Himself.



Lesson 2

We were held hostage by things we didn't even understand—past pain, cycles of sin, habits we couldn't shake, lies we believed about who we were. Some of us didn't even know what it felt like to be loved. But Jesus refused to leave us there. And here's what's wild: He didn't send a prophet. He didn't send an angel. He came in person. Because love doesn't send someone else. Love shows up.

(Teacher Note: You can share the whole gospel story of Jesus dying on the cross and what that means. It depends on your audience and how deep you want to dig in here.)

Have you ever felt “trapped” in shame, sin, or fear? Did God come help you out?

Point 2: Jesus paid the price to restore relationship.

This wasn't just a heroic act—it was a deeply personal sacrifice.

Romans 5:8 says, “While we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (ESV). That means God didn't wait for us to get cleaned up. He didn't say, “Let me know when you're ready.” He saw us in our sin and still said, “I'll go.”

He didn't just carry our sin—He carried our shame. The shame that makes us afraid to pray. The shame that says, “I'm too far gone.” He carried it all. Isaiah 53 says He was “wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities.” The crushing weight of our guilt didn't break us because it broke Him first.

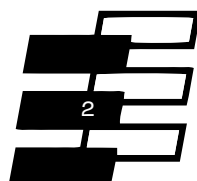
Jesus chose the cross, not just to suffer, but to remove the wall between us and God. The same veil in the Temple that said, “Stay back,” was torn in two the moment Jesus died. That moment meant: You have access now. The barrier was broken. The way was made. Relationship was restored.

This wasn't a rescue because you got it together.

This was a rescue because He couldn't bear the thought of eternity without you.

John 3:16–17 reminds us: “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him” (ESV). This is the gospel—not that you climbed your way to God, but that God ran toward you. With bloodied hands and relentless love, He said: “You're coming home.”

What does it mean to you that Jesus didn't wait for you to be “good enough” before rescuing you?



Point 3: We don't earn rescue—we receive it.

Let's be honest. Many of us have grown up believing some version of this lie: "If I try hard enough, God will love me more." Maybe we don't say it out loud, but we feel it. When we mess up, we pull away from God. When we get it right, we feel closer. Like God is grading us on a spiritual scoreboard.

But that's not the gospel.

The gospel isn't "try harder and He'll love you."

The gospel is: He loved you first. He came for you. He always will.

John 3:16–17 is the heart of the rescue story: God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son... not to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

Let that settle in: not to condemn, but to save. That means God's mission wasn't to scold you—it was to restore you.

Even now—if you've walked away, if you feel numb, if you've gotten tangled up in sin or shame—God hasn't turned His back. He is still pursuing. Still initiating the rescue. He doesn't wait for you to be ready or for you to say the perfect prayer. He moves first.

That's unconditional love: love that doesn't change with your performance.

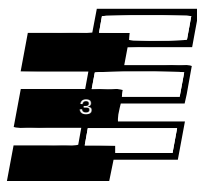
Romans 5:8 reminds us: "While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (NIV). Not *after* we prayed. Not *after* we got clean. While we were still stuck, still distant, still doubting—He said, "I'm going anyway."

But here's the part that's hard to accept: Sometimes, we don't want to receive that kind of love.

If God's love is unconditional, what keeps us from accepting it sometimes?

Why? Because we feel unworthy. Or because we're used to earning everything else. Or because we've been burned by love before and we're scared to trust again.

Maybe it's guilt. Maybe it's fear of being disappointed. Maybe we're afraid to be known, really known. But the truth is: you can't out-sin the love of God. You can't out-run it, out-fail it, or out-hide it.



Lesson 2

He doesn't love a future version of you.

He loves you right now—with the mess, the doubts, the walls, and the wonder.

All you have to do is receive it. Not achieve it. Not perform for it. Just receive it.

So stop trying to earn what was never meant to be earned.

And start responding to the love that keeps coming for you.

Closing

Teacher Note This is the perfect time to share your own personal story of being rescued by God's love.

Let's pull it all together. From the very beginning, we were created for relationship with God. Not a list of rules. Relationship. But sin broke that connection. And because God is holy, and sin separates, we couldn't fix it ourselves. No amount of trying, no perfect behavior, no good intentions could bridge that gap.

So what did God do?

He came for us.

Not with judgment in His eyes—but with love.

Not with a checklist—but with a cross.

Jesus didn't rescue you just to save you from something—He came to save you *for* something: relationship.

And that love? It doesn't stop.

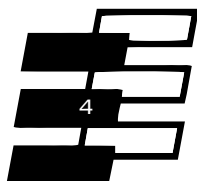
It keeps reaching.

It keeps pursuing.

It keeps rescuing.

Even if you've wandered. Even if you've doubted. Even if you've failed. He comes again.

And here's what you need to know deep in your soul:



Lesson 2

You don't have to earn His love.
You don't have to perform your way into His arms.
You don't have to fix yourself first.

He already came.
He already paid the price.
And He's standing here now—still reaching for you.

The only question is: Will you let yourself be rescued?

ENGAGE

Write down the things—shame, fear, sin, doubt—that might be keeping you from receiving God's love. Now write this truth under it: "I am loved. I am not forgotten. Jesus came for me."

Walk the students through a time of allowing the love of God to restore them and pour over them.

Teacher Note: You could build this message up at the end to allow for God to move in and do some healing for your students.

