LESSON PLAN

CRIMINAL ON THE CROSS

SERIES: Suit Up - Helmet of Salvation
THE POINT: I have Salvation by Grace
BIBLE STORY: Criminal on the Cross || Luke 23:32-43
AGE: Grade 3 - Grade 6

ABOUT THIS LESSON

In Week 5 of the "SUIT UP" series, children focus on the Helmet of Salvation. Through the story of the criminal on the cross, children will learn that salvation is not earned by good behaviour, achievements or effort, it is a gift from Jesus. Even in his final moments, the criminal turned to Jesus in faith and was welcomed into God's kingdom. This lesson helps children understand that salvation comes through believing in Jesus alone.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this lesson, students will:

- Learn, understand and retell the story of the criminal on the cross
- Understand that they can turn from sin, ask for forgiveness and be saved by Jesus
- Recognise that salvation is not based on what they do, but on believing in Jesus as the Son of God

BIBLE CONTEXT

Luke 23 tells the story of Jesus being crucified between two criminals. One criminal mocked Jesus, while the other recognised who Jesus truly was. He admitted his wrongdoing, showed humility and asked Jesus to remember him. Jesus responded with grace and promise, telling him that he would be with Him in paradise. This moment powerfully shows that salvation is a gift of grace, not a reward for good behaviour. Jesus saves those who turn to Him in faith, no matter their past.

SERIES MEMORY VERSE

Ephesians 6:11 (NIV) "Put on the full armour of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes."

Pages 2-4 have a variety of different activities to add onto the Link Crew Video!

Make this toolbox your own! Use it in whatever way helps your group dive deeper into the lesson. The goal is deep understanding and great discussions.

Page Number	Name	Activity Description
2	Discussion Guide	Discussions guides, application "Faith in Action" statements and prayer pointers to help facilitate a greater discussion.
3	Activities Page	Fun, topic based activities like a craft, game, quiz and Memory verse activity that bring the learning to life.

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DISCUSSION GUIDE

CRIMINAL ON THE CROSS

START THE CONVERSATION

"Did you know by law you need to wear a helmet while riding a bike? The helmet of salvation is equally if not more important than that!"

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS, GRADE 3 - 4

1. The criminal knew he had done wrong and asked Jesus for help. Jesus forgave him straight away. What does this teach you about Jesus' love and forgiveness? How does it make you feel knowing Jesus forgives when we ask?

2. The criminal could not fix his mistakes, but he trusted Jesus instead. Why is it important to trust Jesus rather than trying to fix everything ourselves? When can you ask Jesus for help?

3. The Helmet of Salvation reminds us who we belong to. What lies or doubts might try to attack your thoughts? How can remembering your salvation protect your mind?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS, GRADE 5 - 6

1. The criminal did not have time to do good works or prove himself — he simply believed in Jesus. What does this teach you about how salvation works? Why is this good news for everyone?

2. One criminal rejected Jesus, while the other turned to Him. Why do you think people respond differently to Jesus? What helps someone choose faith instead of rejection?

3. Salvation changes how we see ourselves — not as people who must earn God's love, but as people who receive it. How does understanding salvation by grace change the way you live each day?

FAITH IN ACTION

The Helmet of Salvation reminds us that Jesus saves us by grace. When we remember what Jesus has done for us, our minds are protected from fear, shame and lies. Think of one way you can live confidently in your salvation this week.

- "I can thank Jesus for saving me."
- "I can ask Jesus for forgiveness when I mess up."
- "I can remember in everything I do, I belong to God."
- "I can share God's grace and salvation with others."

Pray

Go around the class asking your kids if there is anything they would like prayer for. Ask if anyone would like to pray for each other, and give them the opportunity to. If not, then pray for the needs as the teacher / facilitator. Remember to pray for the children to ask for forgiveness of their sins and say yes to Jesus as their Lord and saviour.

Take note of any prayer requests to be passed onto your child's support network.

Lesson Wrap-up

The criminal on the cross reminds us that salvation is a gift from Jesus. We do not earn it, we receive it. When we put on the Helmet of Salvation, we acknowledge that we are a part of Jesus' family and are saved Him alone.

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ACTIVITIES PAGE

CRIMINAL ON THE CROSS

ACTIVITY - CREATE YOUR ARMOUR OF GOD AVATAR (SERIES ACTIVITY)

Supplies Needed: A3 Paper, Colouring Pens or Pencils

Children will get to create their own Avatar. The children can create themselves through drawing, painting, on the computer or with 3D objects like LEGO or clay. Each week the children will add a suit of armour to their character that reminds them of what they are learning about. This week it is the Helmet of Salvation. Have them add an awesome helmet that helps remind them it is called the helmet of SALVATION.

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY: Helmet of Salvation (celebrity heads addition)
Have the children create a headband that would have the ability to put a larger piece of paper at the front of it. Write on a piece of paper, (Saved) or (helmet of salvation) or (Jesus follower). They have now created their own helmet of salvation.

GAME - BIBLE CHARACTERS CELEBRITY HEADS

Have a few children stand at the front of the room. Write the name of a Bible character above each child's head without letting them see it. Choose people who show different responses to God, such as the criminal on the cross, Peter, Zacchaeus, Paul, the prodigal son, or one of the disciples.
The group gives clues to help each child guess who they are. After a few rounds, change the words above their heads to salvation truths such as "Saved by Grace," "Forgiven," "Loved by Jesus," "Belongs to God," or "Jesus Saves Me."
After the reveal, explain that salvation is not about being famous, good enough, or better than other people. The criminal on the cross had no time to prove himself with good works, but he turned to Jesus in faith and Jesus welcomed him. The Helmet of Salvation reminds us that salvation comes only from Jesus. When we trust Him, we can know we are forgiven, loved, and part of God's family.

BIBLE QUIZ

1. True or False: Both criminals believed in Jesus. (False)

2. Multiple Choice: What did the criminal ask Jesus to do? (b)
   a) Save him from the cross
   b) Remember him
   c) Punish the other criminal

3. Short Answer: What did Jesus say to the criminal? (That he would be with Him in paradise).

4. Short Answer: Why was the criminal saved? (He believed in Jesus)

5. Multiple Choice: What does the Helmet of Salvation remind us? (b)
   a) We save ourselves
   b) Salvation comes from Jesus alone
   c) We must be perfect

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY: TURN OVER VERSE

Memory Verse: Ephesians 6:11 (NIV) "Put on the full armour of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes."

Supplies Needed: Small pieces of paper (One for each word)

Have each word written on each piece of paper. Then put them face up in the right order. Then whatever the age of each child is flip that many pieces of paper face down so that those words cannot be seen anymore. Then have that child read the memory verse saying the parts that are face up and down. You could also do this in rounds of age groups.

GAME

You can find a list of small group games at https://lmnetwork.com.au/small-group-games/

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