



Children's Lesson: The Gospel

This lesson is adaptable for children in a variety of age groups.

OBJECTIVE:

Teach children about how Jesus is the only Way to be saved.

KEY VERSES: ISAIAH 53:6, JOHN 14:6

"All of us are like sheep. We have wandered away from God. All of us have turned to our own way. And the LORD has placed on his servant the sins of all of us."

Isaiah 53:6, NIV

"Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'"

John 14:6, NIV

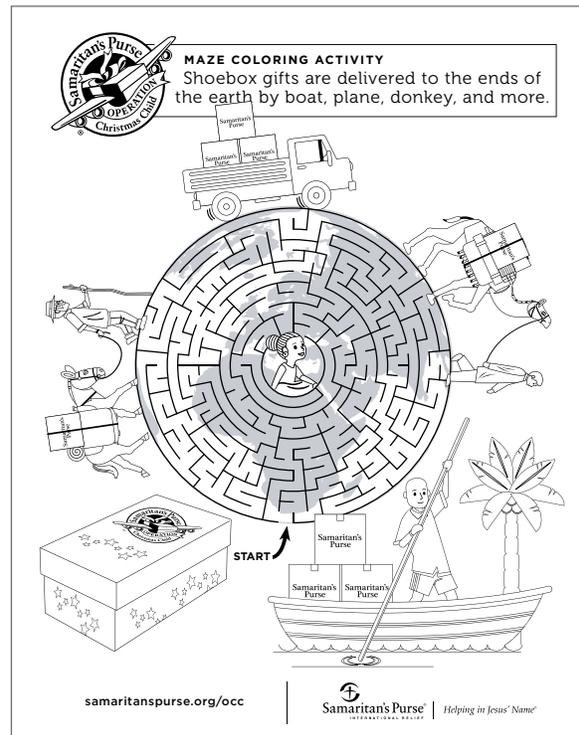
KEY ILLUSTRATION: THE MAZE

Before we meet Christ, we are lost. Our sin separates us from a holy and perfect God. If we are separated from God, we won't have the opportunity to be with Him in Heaven forever. That's why Jesus came! The Bible says that Jesus is *"the way and the truth and the life"* (John 14:6, NIV). How is Jesus the way? And what does His life, death, and resurrection mean for our future?

Teach your kids about the power of the Gospel through a maze activity and corresponding discussion. Just as there is only one way through the maze, there is only one way to be restored to right relationship with God—Jesus Christ!

ILLUSTRATION INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Download the [Maze worksheet](#) and allow students time to work on it before beginning the class discussion. Operation Christmas Child shoebox gifts provide a way for children around the world to learn about Jesus. Shoeboxes are filled with toys, school supplies, and other items for boys and girls. Giving them a gift is an opportunity to tell them about how God offers each person the greatest gift they could ever receive—Jesus! Each person has a choice whether to accept God's gift of Jesus and to be His friend forever or reject the gift of Jesus and be separated from God forever.





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UNPACKING THE ILLUSTRATION:

1. After the children have had some time to complete the maze handout, discuss with them how, much like in a maze, we are all lost without Christ.
 - a. "Lost" is the word used to describe people before they accept Christ. We are naturally sinful people, meaning that we speak, think, and live in ways that make God sad. This is what the Bible calls sin. This sin creates a divide between us and God, because God is holy. "Holy" means "set apart" and "sacred"—two words that show that God cannot be around sin. But since God is the Creator who loves us and wants a relationship with us, how are we supposed to get to Him? What are we supposed to do with our sin?
 - b. Lesson integration question: How many ways were there to get through the maze? *There was only one way to get out of the maze.*
2. Read key verses Isaiah 53:6 and John 14:6 with the children.
 - a. Bible discovery question: Who does the Bible say we have wandered away from? *We have wandered away from God.*
 - b. Concept comprehension question: What does it mean to wander? *The Merriam-Webster's Dictionary for Children defines wander as: "to move about without a purpose" or "to get off the right course."*
 - i. When the Bible says we have wandered away from God, it means that we have walked away from our good Father who loves us and wants a relationship with us.
 - c. Lesson integration question: If you have wandered, you have lost your way. Who does the Bible say is the way? *Jesus is the way.*
 - i. The Bible says that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. Just like there is only one way to complete the maze, there is only one way to be forgiven of your sins and welcomed into friendship with your Heavenly Father—Jesus!
3. Talk to the children about the Gospel.
 - a. Even though we are all lost without Christ, we do not have to stay that way! We are born sinful, meaning we live, act, and think in ways that do not make God happy. God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to become a man and live a perfect life on earth. The Bible says that He became sin on the cross for us. After living a perfect life, He took on all the bad parts of us! He died on the cross and was buried for three days. After the third day, He rose back to life! His death and resurrection won the war against sin and death. Because of His sacrifice, we can be called children of God!
 - b. The Bible says that, *"If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved."* (Romans 10:9, ESV). Just like there is only one way through the maze, Jesus is the only way to God.
 - i. "The Bible tells us that Jesus is God and was with God when God created everything. Jesus was both fully God and fully man. He is the greatest gift! Jesus coming to earth is God's solution for our sin problem. This is why Jesus is called 'Savior'—it means He came to save us from our sin. Jesus came to restore the relationship between God and us." —*The Greatest Journey* discipleship coursebook, Page 22



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OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD CONNECTION

TEACHER NOTE: Follow the speaking points in this section if you'd like to incorporate this lesson into your church's or group's Operation Christmas Child project.

Imagine visiting a farm with your family and wandering through the corn maze. After an hour, you still can't find your way out. It's hard to see over the tall stalks of corn, and the twists and turns have you confused! What if you had a friend nearby that you knew had completed the maze? Wouldn't you want them to tell you how to get out?

It is the same with knowing Jesus. If you have accepted Him as your Savior, you know the way to have a relationship with God! The Bible tells us in Acts 1:8 that we are to be God's "witnesses." Just like you would want someone to tell you the way out of a difficult maze, God wants us to tell others how to have a relationship with Him. Romans 10:14 (NIV) says, "How can they call on him unless they believe in him? How can they believe in him unless they hear about him? How can they hear about him unless someone preaches to them?"

VIDEO OPTION: "KEVIN'S STORY: THE GIFT OF NEW LIFE"

(This video contains subtitles, so it is only suitable for children who are able to read.)

Follow-up Questions:

1. What bad activity did Kevin practice before he received the shoebox gift?
Stealing.
2. How did the shoebox gift make Kevin and his family feel?
Happy.
3. What did Kevin learn in his church?
How to follow Christ.
4. When Kevin accepted Christ, what did his family notice about him?
He changed and did not steal anymore.
5. What did Kevin's father learn about Christ when he also accepted Him?
That He is good.
6. Why did Kevin's father want to build a church?
He wanted to provide a place where those who were still lost could learn about the only way to salvation, Jesus Christ.



Scan to view.



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STORYTIME OPTION:

A little boy named Karolis lives in Europe in a country called Lithuania. He had a difficult time and was often unkind—even destructive—toward people around him, because he did not know what it was like to feel loved! He attended a lesson of The Greatest Journey, a discipleship course for boys and girls who receive shoebox gifts, and heard about God's love for the first time. The teachers and children prayed for Karolis, and when he learned that Jesus even came to earth to die for him, the Lord changed his heart. Karolis has since accepted Jesus as his Savior, and now chooses to forgive others, rather than staying angry.

As you heard in the story, God's love and gift of salvation change lives! There are boys and girls all around the world who do not yet know the way, Jesus Christ. You can send the Gospel and open the door to true joy for a little boy or girl by packing a shoebox gift.