

Rescued | Revelation 21:1-5

What's the answer to sin?

"The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom."

-2 Timothy 4:18

Lesson Overview

In this lesson, students will discover that the Bible is not a collection of separate stories, but one unified story of rescue and restoration. Students will explore the powerful parallels between Noah's Ark and the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Just as God provided the Ark to save Noah and his family from judgement, God sent Jesus to rescue and save humanity.

But the story doesn't end there. Students will learn that one day, Jesus will return to restore all of creation, bring an end to sin, death, and suffering, and make all things new, just as He did during the time of Noah.

Lesson Objectives

What: The Bible is one unified story of rescue and restoration, from Noah to Jesus to His return.

Why: The problem of sin has an answer... and it's on every single page of the Bible. This lesson explores how we *need* a savior in order to be in right relationship with God.

How: Students will play a game in which there is no way to win, no matter how good they perform. At the end, everyone is rewarded due to grace being offered to them.

Primary Scripture

Revelation 21:1-5 : *"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband... He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore..."*

The Game - The Carnival of Fate (~30 mins)

- Overview:
 - # of Participants: **Minimum of 4, Recommended 8+**
 - Where to Play: **Indoors / Outdoors**
 - Age of Participants: **Middle / High School**
 - Materials: **Tokens (small squares of paper), [Multiplication sheets](#), [pens/pencils](#), a laptop or phone to play [Wordle](#), [Basketball](#), [Angel Costume](#) (optional)**

To set up The Carnival of Fate, you will need access to two different rooms. In one room, you will set up a variety of stations that participants will get to compete at in order to earn tokens. In the other room, you should set up a *surprise party*! Think: ice cream or snacks, maybe some fun decorations... something that your group will be excited to walk into.

During each round, players have 5 minutes to race around and visit as many stations as possible (listed below), earning tokens at each. You can only visit each station once per round, which means you'll need to think carefully about where you spend your time. Some stations are quick but low-reward, others take longer but can earn you a lot more. To represent tokens, you can simply cut up some colorful construction paper into little squares, and hand those out to players as they earn them. At the end of each round, players with the least tokens will be eliminated. The number of players that get eliminated will be based on how large your group is, but the idea is that you should play 5 or 6 rounds total.

When a player gets eliminated, they are to be escorted to the room with the party. If you want to make a player's elimination particularly memorable, you can consider purchasing an [Angel Costume](#), and having one of your adult leaders wear it as they accompany players from one room to the other. In the moment, they won't know where they are going, and will probably be a little disappointed, considering that they just lost the game. However, when they arrive at their reward, they will see that things are actually really nice here!

Tokens reset completely at the start of every round, so whatever you earned last round doesn't carry over. Every round is a fresh fight. Now that you understand how the game works, let's take a look at a list of suggested stations that you could have:



Station 1 (Push-Ups): Drop down and do as many push-ups as you can. You earn 1 token for every 5 push-ups you complete.

Station 2 (Multiplication): You have exactly 1 minute to work through a [multiplication sheet](#) and answer as many problems correctly as you can, earning 1 token for every 10 right answers. We've provided 6 different sheets with answer keys for you to print.

Station 3 (Wordle): Play one full game of Wordle on [this website](#) and earn tokens based on how many guesses it takes you: 6 guesses = 3 tokens, 5 = 4 tokens, 4 = 6 tokens, 3 = 8 tokens, 2 = 12 tokens, and an incredible 1 guess = 20 tokens. If you don't solve it, you walk away with nothing!

Station 4 (Plank Wager): Find another player willing to go head-to-head in a plank-off. Before you start, each of you decides how many of your current round tokens you want to bet. Then you both get into a plank position at the same time and hold it as long as you can. Whoever gives out first loses, and the winner takes all of the wagered tokens. There's a catch though: if the round timer ends and both of you are still holding your planks, you both lose every token you wagered.... So you'll have to decide whether to hold on the whole time, or drop out so that at least someone gets tokens.

Station 5 (Free Throws): If you're in a gym, grab a ball and shoot from the free throw line. You earn 1 token for every 2 shots you make.

Station 6 (Laps): Run laps around a designated route, earning 1 token per lap with a maximum of 10 tokens from this station per round.

When the 5 minutes are up, have everyone count their tokens and announce what they've earned. Eliminate the bottom players, and escort them to the other room. The remaining players will start a new round, while the eliminated players enjoy hangout out at their party. Once everyone has been eliminated, you can roll right into the discussion questions below.

As a note: the more adult leaders you have to help facilitate this game, the better. If you have a smaller group, or fewer leaders to oversee each station, consider breaking the round up into segments, where only certain stations are available at any given time.



The Breakdown (~30 mins)

- Overview:
 - # of Participants: **Any**
 - Where to Play: **Indoors**
 - Age of Participants: **Elementary / Middle / High School**
 - Materials: **Some way to watch a video (laptop, tv/projector, speaker, internet connection, etc.)**

Ask:

- **What did it feel like when you were eliminated from the Carnival of Fate?**
 - Responses may vary, but most players will probably have tried to stay in the game for as long as possible, stressing over having enough tokens to keep going.
 - When they didn't have enough and were eliminated, they were probably bummed.
- **How did your perspective change when you realized that the party was actually better?**
 - Most people would say that they were much happier at the party than playing the game.

Say:

- In many ways, this game is meant to reflect what heaven is going to be like. But before we get into that idea further, we're going to look at another story...
- This meeting is going to be broken up into three sections: past, present and future. For the past, we're going to look at Noah's Ark, and what that story tells us about God.

The Past - Noah's Ark

Say:

- Most people know this story, but in case you don't... here's the 60-second version:
 - People had turned away from God, and the world was full of violence and corruption. Seeing this broke God's heart.
 - Humanity deserved to be punished, and so God sent a huge flood that covered the whole earth, powerful enough to kill everything.



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- But even though humanity deserved to be punished (as the last meeting, *Fallen*, talked about), God provided a way for us to be saved.
 - He did this by commanding Noah to build an Ark, which carried him, his family, and creation through the floodwaters.
 - At the end, God promised to never destroy the earth like that again.

Ask:

- So humanity deserves punishment, but God chose mercy instead. Why do you think God would make this promise?
 - God is perfect, and therefore can't be in the presence of sin. *But* He loves us too much to give up on us. His goal isn't destruction, it's *restoration*.
- Does this idea of "God loves us so much He sent us a way to be forgiven" sound familiar? Where else do we see this in the Bible?
 - Obviously, Jesus's entire mission was to do exactly this.
- How does Noah's Ark point us to Jesus? What similarities do you see between how God saved Noah's family and how He saves us through Jesus?
 - **Faith in God's Promises:** Noah and his family were saved by stepping into God's promise; in the same way, we are saved by putting our faith in Jesus.
 - **One way:** The ark had only one door, showing only one way into salvation. Jesus is the only door to heaven.
 - **Judgement and mercy:** God judged sin through the flood but showed mercy through the ark; at the cross, God judges sin and shows mercy through Jesus.
 - **A new life:** After the flood, Noah's family stepped into a renewed world; in Christ, we become a "new creation" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Say:

- The Ark wasn't just built to *survive* the flood, but to carry us to a new way of life.
- Just as the Ark didn't end with the destruction of the flood, Jesus' story didn't end with His death on the cross. Both became the means by which God carries His people into a new life.
- Now, in the present, we have baptism. When we are baptized, our old life is washed away, and we are carried to our new lives.

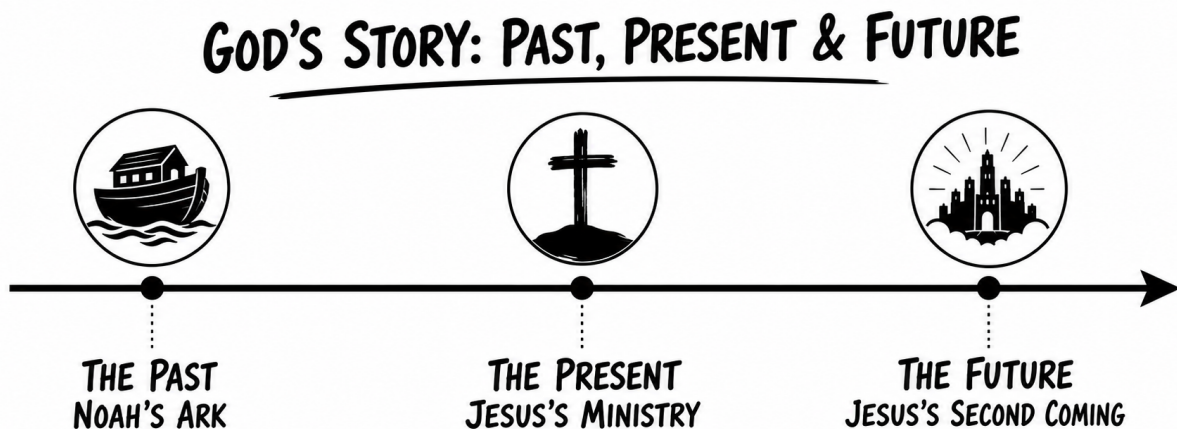


The Present - Jesus, the Cross and Baptism

Ask:

- **Who here has been baptized? If so, when?**
 - There will be a mix of responses; some people will have been baptized, some not. Some maybe when they were older, some maybe when they were babies.
- **When you think of how your life is different *now* compared to *before* you put your faith in God, what has been the biggest change?**
 - Answers here will be personal, but likely they will focus on what things they put value on, how they interact with each other, and how they deal with difficult times.
- **What do you think is the hardest part about living a life committed to God?**
 - Give some space for their answers, be prepared to go a bit off-topic if the opportunity presents itself.

Draw a timeline up on a whiteboard in front of the group. The timeline should have three events: Noah's Ark, Jesus's Ministry, and Jesus's Second Coming.



- So to recap, before Noah there was sin running rampant. God judged creation fairly, but made a promise to Noah that there would be a new way of living. One where if you followed God, you would be brought to safety.
- Then we have Jesus. Even after God's promise to Noah, there was still sin in the world, but God, in His love, provided us with our own Ark: Jesus, in order to be carried to

safety. We don't have to do anything to earn this, but because of this free gift we've been given, we're called to reflect that same love to the people around us.

- And finally is a section of time we don't always talk about in church, because there's a lot we don't know about it. That's because it's in the future, but there are some hints in the Bible as to what we should expect...

The Future - Jesus' Second Coming

Ask:

- **Who knows what the book Revelation is about in the Bible?**
 - Revelation is the last book in the Bible. The traditional view is that it was written by the apostle John (author of John, 1 John, 2 John, and 3 John) towards the end of his life. It affirms Jesus as Messiah, and that God will have victory over all evil.

Say:

- **Let's read a specific passage from Revelation. This is from Chapter 21, the second-to-last chapter in the whole Bible:**

Have someone from your group read the following scripture:

21 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. **2** And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. **3** And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. **4** He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away."

5 And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." **Revelation 21:1-5**



Ask:

- **When you look at the world, what are some things you see that make you think “This isn’t how it’s supposed to be?”**
 - This could be things like death, sickness, good things happening to people who do bad things, bad things happening to people who do good things, etc.
- **Knowing that God has given us this *new* promise, how does it change the way you’re living your life today?**
 - Having an eternal mindset doesn’t remove the pain from your life, but it can make it easier. It also changes your perspective on what’s truly important.

Say:

- **When we think about our lives, we tend to think about our time *here* on earth as the full story. This makes it easier for us to fall into the temptations of the world, and makes difficult times hurt much more. But thankfully our story is much longer than this.**

Ask:

- **Think about the Carnival of Fate game again, how many of you were so desperate to cling to your tokens, focusing solely on accumulating as much as you could?**
 - Most people’s instinct was probably to do so.
- **Yet how many tokens did you bring with you when you were eliminated?**
 - No one brought any tokens. In fact, some people might have even been upset that they were eliminated despite having more tokens than others. How many tokens you earned had absolutely no bearing on what your experience at the party was like.

Say:

- **This game reminds us of the importance of having an eternal mindset. None of us are guaranteed 80 healthy, pain-free years on this earth. It is up to God and God alone to determine what your years look like. What is within your control is how you interact with the people around you during this time.**
- *(Rhetorical, but have them consider it):* **Who do you know that’s suffering right now? Who do you know that has no hope, or has their priorities in the wrong places?**
- **God has given you a tremendous gift in this group. You have been given the words of *eternal life*, ETERNAL! When you realize this, it should make you want to share it with as many people as you possibly can, because what else is your time here on earth for?**



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- When you look at your goals, are they Christ-centered, or you-centered? We all know people who need God's love in their life. Often these people are desperate for hope, but don't know where to find it, but you've got the answer.
 - As we close today, think about something you're going through. Picture it in front of you and ask yourself: does this difficulty have the final say over my life? Or does Jesus, and what He did on the cross, have the final say over who I am and where my life is going?
 - If you're struggling or feel trapped, bring that to Jesus and ask Him to help you. He is able to meet you right where you are.

Closing Prayer

Dear God, thank you for rescuing us from our sin. Through Christ we are a new creation. Lord, help us to live with an eternal perspective, remembering that You have the final say over this world and over our lives. Jesus, meet us in our struggles and strengthen us where we feel weak. We believe You are making all things new. As we leave today, help us to live with hope for the future and to grow closer to You each day. We love You. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Rescued (adj) - to be saved or delivered from danger, harm, or a difficult situation

per [Oxford Languages](#)

