

We're Rescued!

By Caroline Ferdinandsen

for use as

STEP 1



Lesson 1

Focus:

Jesus rescued us from sin.

Lesson 1

Bible Basis:

Transmission of the Scriptures (Isaiah 40:8; Matthew 5:18; John 14:25-26; 17:7-8, 20; 2 Timothy 2:2) Luke 23:33-34; Colossians 1:13-22

Lesson 1

Memory Verse:

For he [God] has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. —Colossians 1:13-14

Students will watch and discuss a family member's offer of forgiveness during a court trial.

Materials:

Internet access

You've seen the movies. You've read the Shakespeare plays. You've heard the news. Human beings seem to be hardwired for revenge. When someone hurts us deeply, our first impulse might be to seek retribution. Let's see what happened last year when this cycle was turned upside down.

Watch the following video with your class and then discuss the questions that follow [3:14]:

“Brandt Jean to Amber Guyger: ‘I forgive you’”

https://pwww.youtube.com/watch?v=NkoE_GQsbNA

Amber Guyger, a former Dallas police officer, entered what she says she thought was her apartment and shot and killed Botham Jean, someone she said she thought was an intruder. But it turned out that Amber had mistakenly entered Botham's own apartment and shot him in his living room. He was unarmed.

➤ **Why do you think this court video touched so many people?** (We seldom see the narrative end this way; most of the time, media coverage focuses on the cycle of revenge, not forgiveness. It's an unnatural response.)

➤ **Many news outlets edited this video to include only the hug. But after listening to his entire statement, what can we conclude is the source of the man's forgiveness?** (He is clearly motivated by his relationship with Jesus Christ.)

What would cause this young man to plead with the judge for a chance to hug his brother's murderer rather than ask for a life sentence? Let's take a look in the Bible to see what this involves.

Additional resources:

Murder of Botham Jean

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Murder_of_Botham_Jean

(Continue on to Steps 2 and 3 in your teacher's guide; your Step 4 appears below.)

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STEP 4 

Lesson 1**Focus:**

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Lesson 1**Bible Basis:**

Luke 23:33-34;
Colossians 1:13-22

Lesson 1**Memory Verse:**

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Materials:

- White and black construction paper or cardstock (1 sheet of each per student)
- White chalk
- Black markers or pens
- Stapler (or double-sided tape)

Teens are acutely aware of the tug-of-war between right and wrong, good and evil, sin and redemption. The values of their culture often stand in contrast to the values of their churches and families.

Start by giving each member of your class a sheet of black paper. Prompt them to use white chalk to write down words and phrases that they associate with the sin and darkness in the world. These can be synonyms like *immorality*, *guilt*, *disobedience*, etc. or they can include personal transgressions like *lying*, *lust*, *pride*, and so forth.

Encourage them to share ideas with a partner or even look up synonyms on their smartphones. When students are finished filling this first sheet with words, discuss the following questions:

➤ **Most people are more comfortable writing down sins that plague other people rather than being honest with their own struggles. Why do we often think of sin that way?** (There is something about finger-pointing that makes us feel more comfortable. We are generally more self-righteous than we are self-aware.)

➤ **On the other hand, some people go to the other extreme, thinking of themselves as worthless and unlovable due to their mistakes. Why is this line of thinking equally dangerous?** (If Jesus really has paid the penalty for our sin, then we must trust that his mercy has truly redeemed us. We are not worthless or unlovable when we've been forgiven.)

Next, give each student a sheet of white paper. With a black marker or pen, write down all the ways that Jesus has covered the darkness of this world. These will be a counterbalance to the previous list, including words like *forgiveness*, *mercy*, *sacrifice*, and so forth. When they are finished, they will staple or tape the white sheet over the black pieces of paper, covering the

previous set of words.

When we see how merciful God is in light of our disobedience and mistakes, we are inspired to model that sort of grace with others. If we're honest with ourselves, we probably have some unforgiveness in our hearts against someone who has hurt us. One way we can be freed from this bitterness is to ask Jesus for a merciful spirit.

(Due to the chance of gossip and oversharing, it is probably unwise to have students share openly or write down names or situations that require forgiveness.) In the remaining class time, encourage students to spend some time alone in prayer. As they are reminded of people who have hurt them, prompt them to ask God for His spirit of mercy.

Close in prayer after challenging your students to resubmit these issues to God in prayer each time the unforgiveness tries to re-establish itself. Ask God for His spirit of mercy throughout the next week.

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