

“Basic Training” - LESSON 1

“Born Again?”

Main Focus:

We must receive Jesus as our Savior in order to become a Christian.



Power Verse:

“Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

- Romans 10:13



Watt’s Up:

“If I Want To Go To Heaven, I Gotta Be Born Again!”

LEADER’S INFO

The story of Nicodemus is a great example of what it takes to become a Christian. Nicodemus was a religious scholar. He knew a lot about the Bible. He was “in church” all the time. Jesus told him that it takes more than going to church to get to Heaven.

Nicodemus was a Pharisee. They were required to give to the poor and do good deeds. Jesus told him that it takes more than doing good deeds to get to Heaven.

There is only ONE WAY to Heaven—forgiveness of sin through Jesus Christ. In today’s lesson, the children will learn what it means to be “born again.” Salvation is a foundational truth when it comes to the “Basics of Faith.”



“The Spark” Intro Video

Frankie starts his “Basic Training”



“Watt’s Up?” Teaching Video

Skittles teaches “Watt’s Up?”



Character Skit

“Cadet Corey”



Offering Time



Game On!

“Where Is The King?”



Bible Story

“Nic’ At Night”



Power Verse Video

“Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

- Romans 10:13



Call To Action

“Born Again?”



Brain Drain

PowerPoint Review Game



Small Group Experience

Main Focus:

We must receive Jesus as our Savior in order to become a Christian.



Power Verse:

“Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”
- Romans 10:13



Watt’s Up:

“If I Want To Go To Heaven, I Gotta Be Born Again!”

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CHARACTER SKIT

Character: “**Cadet Corey**” (an enthusiastic army cadet who is desperate to make it thru “The Academy” but always complicates things more than necessary)

(Play “**Cadet Corey’s Video Intro**” off the DVD as he enters)

COREY: *(marches out in time with his music; wearing camouflage pants, green t-shirt, and an army helmet)* CADET COREY, REPORTING FOR DUTY, SIR! *(makes a salute but does it way too hard, smacking himself on the helmet)* Owwww!

Leader: Yikes! Are you okay? Who are you again?

COREY: Cadet Corey, SIR! *(salutes, smacks himself on the helmet again)* It’s okay, I meant to do that.

Leader: You MEANT to do that? You MEANT to smack yourself in the head?

COREY: An army cadet is ALWAYS prepared! Those were army exercises!

Leader: What kind of army exercise involves smacking yourself in the head??

COREY: One that I invented! I’m trying to prove myself at The Academy!

Leader: *(sighs)* What are you trying to prove by SMACKING YOURSELF IN THE HEAD?

COREY: I’m trying to prove that I’m ready for anything, SIR! *(stands in attention, goes to smack himself in the head again, but this time blocks it.)* HA! Gotcha! *(sticks his tongue out at his hand, blowing a raspberry. His hand grabs onto his tongue and pulls)*

Leader: STOP IT! That HAS to hurt! Why do you keep doing that to yourself?

COREY: *(tries to talk with his tongue still out, but just speaks gibberish)*

Leader: What’d you say?

COREY: *(let’s go of his tongue)* What I was TRYING to say was that I’m just trying to be a new person!

Leader: A new person?

COREY: I’m always getting made fun of by the other cadets at The Academy! They say I’m CLUMSY! Can you imagine that? Me? CLUMSY?!

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CHARACTER SKIT

(continued)

Leader: Ummm...

COREY: *(ignores the leader)* Well, I'm SICK of it. I want to be a new person, on the inside and out!

Leader: You know, Corey, it's funny that you should say that. We're actually talking about how JESUS can make us a new person!

COREY: Really??

Leader: Really! In fact, when you get Jesus into your life, it's like being BORN AGAIN! You want to be in the army, right?

COREY: YES SIR! *(salutes, smacking themselves yet again)*

Leader: Well, we're talking about how to get into GOD'S ARMY!

COREY: Oh man! How can I do THAT?! Do I have to do a million pushups? Do I have to run through the desert on one leg? Do I have to swallow a gallon of Pistachio Pudding without throwing up?!

Leader: No, no, and EW – NO! You don't have to do ANY of that stuff!

COREY: Well, what do you have to do?? I want God to make me a new person!

Leader: All you have to do is ask Jesus into your heart! The kids are going to hear ALL about it in a little bit! Why don't you hang around and listen?

COREY: YES, SIR! *(goes to salute, ducks out of the way of his hand before it smacks his head. Points at his hand and laughs. His pointing hand turns around and pokes him in the eye.)* It's okay! I meant to do that!
CADET COREY, FALLLLLLLLLL OUT!

(Corey exits as his theme music plays)



GAME ON!

“Where Is The King?”

Items Needed For Game:

1 pack of standard playing cards

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Preparation:

Before the service begins, open the pack of card and remove ALL of the Kings except for the “King of Hearts.” Choose two boys and two girls to play in this game. As you explain the game, have an assistant place all of the playing cards spread out and face down on the floor across the stage.

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How To Play:

Explain to the players that there is only 1 King among all of those cards. When you say “GO”, the children must crawl all over the stage, flipping the cards over as fast as they can until someone finds the King. Whoever finds the King the fastest – is the winner!

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After the game, say:

“Today, we are learning that there is only ONE way to receive Salvation and become a Christian. That is to make JESUS the King of your heart. There is only ONE King of Kings! His name is JESUS!”



Bible Story

“Nic’ At Night”

Materials Needed:

The Data Disc; the PowerPoint presentation for Lesson 1; begin with the slide that says “Bible Story”; follow the instructions below, changing the slides to follow along with the story (as shown)

Preparation:

Familiarize yourself with the story in John 3; have your open Bible in your hands as you tell the story

The Story:

Today, we are going to learn all about a man named Nicodemus. We find his story in the book of John, chapter 3. Nicodemus was a very important man in Jesus’ time. He was what was known as a Pharisee. The Pharisees were the religious leaders of that time. Pharisees knew a lot about the scriptures – what we would now call The Old Testament. They went to the synagogue, or Church, regularly. They were respected by all the Jewish people.

Nicodemus came to Jesus at night, after it was very dark. This was most likely because he did not want to be seen talking to Jesus. He was afraid of what the other religious leaders, the ones who hated Jesus, would think. *(begin “sneaking” as you tell the story)* So, Nicodemus sneaked very carefully through the town and found Jesus. *(show pic)*

Nicodemus met with Jesus and asked him about what it would take to receive Salvation. He had very specific questions. Jesus knew that Nicodemus was a “good” man, a Pharisee. Jesus knew that Nicodemus had served people, done good deeds, and been to church more times than most people could count. But, Jesus spoke very directly to Nicodemus. *(show pic)*

Jesus said, “Unless you are born again, you can never see the Kingdom of God.” This was very confusing to Nicodemus. He was thinking, “Born again? What in the world does Jesus mean when He says ‘born again?’” *(show pic)* So, Nicodemus asked, “How can an old man go back into his mother’s womb and be born again?” Nicodemus was thinking, “Does Jesus want me to crawl back into my Mommy’s tummy? That would be impossible. I wouldn’t fit since I am so big and old now!”

But, Jesus explained that God can give NEW life. Even though we are all born in a natural, human way from our mothers – when we receive Salvation from God, we are given a brand new spiritual life. All of our sins are forgiven! We are BORN AGAIN! *(show pic)* Jesus said, “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.” Nicodemus learned that day what you and I are going to learn all about today – being BORN AGAIN is the only way to get to Heaven. We must receive Jesus as the KING and Savior of our lives!





Call To Action

“Born Again?”

Materials Needed:

The Data Disc; a box of diapers; a large “McDonald’s” paper sack

Preparation:

Open the PowerPoint presentation on the Data Disc titled “Lesson One,” begin with the slide titled “Born Again?”

The Message: *(title slide)*



We are starting our series about getting back to the “basics of faith” today by talking about something very important...salvation. We have already heard about a guy in the Bible named Nicodemus. Nicodemus was one of the big-time religious leaders called a Pharisee. He knew a lot about the Bible, but he came to Jesus with a question. What do I need to do to be saved?

Jesus told him, “Unless a man be born again he cannot enter the Kingdom of God.” WOW! Born again? Does that mean that we all must turn back into babies? Does that mean we all have to go back to wearing THESE? *(hold up the box of diapers and let the kids react to it)* Not at all. Jesus didn’t mean that you have to become a baby again in order to receive salvation and become a Christian. So, what does it mean to be born again? What does it take to become a Christian? Well, by looking at Nicodemus’ life, we can learn something...

Going To Church Doesn’t Make You A Christian *(slide)*



There are many people who think all you have to do to become a Christian is go to church. Although going to church is a good thing, going to church is not what makes you a Christian. Let me show you what I mean. *(Choose a child volunteer to come up to the front. Pull out the McDonald’s sack and show it to them.)* Do you know what restaurant this is from? *(allow them to answer)* Have you ever been to McDonald’s? *(allow them to answer)* How many times? Once? Or many times? *(most likely they will answer “many times.” Turn to the audience.)* “Boys and girls, I have an announcement to make. This person has been to McDonald’s many times. Do you know what that makes him/her? A Happy Meal. *(Place the sack over the child’s head and go on and on about how they are a Happy Meal because they have been to McDonald’s. Then, remove the sack.)*

Of course, they are not a Happy Meal. Going to McDonald’s doesn’t make you a Happy Meal any more than going to church automatically makes you a Christian. You see, Nicodemus was a Pharisee. He went to church all the time. He was required to attend services at the synagogue several times a week. He knew a lot about the Bible and could even quote a lot of the Old Testament scriptures.

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Call To Action (Continued)

But, still he went to Jesus and asked what it takes to go to Heaven. He knew that going to church wasn't enough, and Jesus proves that. There's another lesson we can learn from Nicodemus' life...

Doing Good Deeds Doesn't Make You A Christian *(slide)*



Many people in the world think that they will make it to Heaven simply because they are “nice people.” They do good deeds. They help other people. They give to the poor. They love their neighbors. All of these things are good, but by themselves they do not make you a Christian.

Nicodemus did good deeds as well. He was commanded by the law of the Pharisees to give to the needy and help the poor. He did this all the time. Yet, Jesus says that there's something else that must be done in order for him to be saved. What is it?

Receiving Jesus' Forgiveness Makes You A Christian *(slide)*

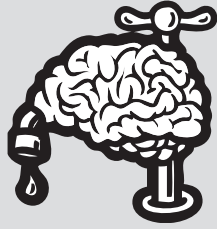


Boys and girls, there is only **ONE WAY** to be saved. It's not by going to church. It's not by doing good deeds. There's only **ONE WAY** a person can be truly “born again.” You must ask Jesus to forgive you of your sins. We all have sinned. The Bible tells us that. It also tells us that it only takes **ONE** sin for us to deserve death in Hell forever.

But, God did not want that. So, He sent His Son, Jesus, to come to Earth, live a perfect life without sin, and then die on a cross to pay the price for our sins. All we must do is believe in Jesus and ask Him to forgive us of our sins. When we do that, our sins are washed away, and our entire lives become brand new. It's like we are born all over again. A brand new start to a brand new life.

ALTAR RESPONSE: *(play soft music)*

Allow the children who are present that have not received Jesus as their Savior to do so. Pray with them to receive forgiveness of their sins. Celebrate their brand new life in Christ! Remind them that this is the **FIRST** step in building a solid foundation of faith. But, there are many more “basic” things that will help them build on this first “brick” in the foundation. They will learn about those in the coming weeks.



BRAIN DRAIN

Materials Needed:

The Data Disc; The DVD

Preparation:

Play the “Brain Drain” Video Intro off the DVD; Open the PowerPoint presentation on the Data Disc titled “Lesson One,” begin with the slide titled “Brain Drain”; there is a slide for each question

1. Watt’s Up today?

Answer: “If I Wanna Go To Heaven, I Gotta Be Born Again!”

2. What is the name of the boy in the video who wants to be in the Army?

Answer: Frankie

3. Who taught us our Power Verse?

Answer: Sgt. Scripture

4. What is the name of the Pharisee who came to Jesus at night?

Answer: Nicodemus

5. Do we have to become babies again in order to be “born again?”

Answer: No

6. True or False: Going to church makes you a Christian.

Answer: False

7. What do you have to do in order to become a Christian?

Answer: Accept Jesus’ forgiveness

8. What does Frankie call his “G-Pop?”

Answer: Popkern

9. Our Power Verse says, “_____ who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

Answer: Everyone

10. Where was our Power Verse found?

Answer: Romans 10:13

Small Group Experience

LESSON 1 - "Born Again?"



Watt's Up:

"If I Want To Go To Heaven, I Gotta Be Born Again!"



Power Verse:

"Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

- Romans 10:13

Retelling The Bible Story

SUPPLY LIST:

- * Bible Story Cue Cards (provided; print enough for each member of the group to have of each card)
- * Scissors (enough for the group to share)
- * Craft sticks (enough for each child to have 4 sticks)
- * Tape or Glue (enough for the group to share)

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS:

As the group enters, give each child a set of the Bible Story Cue Card printable. Tell them to cut out the four pictures and attach them to a craft stick. They will use these cards to help tell the Bible story. Tell them that the different Cue Cards represent different parts of the story. Each card has a Cue word written on it. Their job is to listen for Cue words as you read. The Cue words are highlighted green in the script so you will know when to slightly pause for the kids to respond. When they hear the Cue they should hold up the card and keep holding it up until they hear the next Cue. Have fun as you say the opening by delivering it, "motivational military style!"

Say - "Hello Recruits! You are now a part of Basic Training. Over the next few weeks you will learn what it means to be a follower of Jesus. It will take guts, courage, commitment and a willingness to learn. Do you recruits have what it takes? Let's get started. Today, we look at the very first step any 'Jesus recruit' must take on his/her journey. Each of you has been given four Cue Cards. Cut them out and attach them to the craft sticks, and then we will begin."

- Allow time for the kids to cut out the pictures and attach to craft sticks. -

Say - "Now it's time for your first recruit exercise! I am going to read the Bible story. Each of your cards has a word written on it. These are Cue words and you need to listen carefully for them. When you hear a cue word, hold the matching Cue Card in the air and leave it there until you hear the next cue word."

Retell the Bible Story...

Read - "Nicodemus came to Jesus at night, after it was very dark. This was most likely because he did not want to be seen talking to Jesus. He was afraid of what the other religious leaders, the ones who hated Jesus, would think. So, Nicodemus **SNEAKED** very carefully through the town and found Jesus.

Nicodemus met with Jesus and asked him about what it would take to receive Salvation. He had very specific questions. Jesus knew that Nicodemus was a "**GOOD**" **MAN**, a Pharisee. Jesus knew that Nicodemus had served people, done good deeds, and been to church more times than most people could count. But, Jesus spoke very directly to Nicodemus.

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Jesus said, “Unless you are born again, you can never see the Kingdom of God.” This was very **CONFUSING** to Nicodemus. He was thinking, “Born again? What in the world does Jesus mean when He says ‘born again?’” So, Nicodemus asked, “How can an old man go back into his mother’s womb and be born again?” Nicodemus was thinking, “Does Jesus want me to crawl back into my Mommy’s tummy? That would be impossible. I wouldn’t fit since I am so big and old now!”

But, Jesus explained that God can give **NEW LIFE**. Even though we are all born in a natural, human way from our mothers – when we receive Salvation from God, we are given a brand new spiritual life. All of our sins are forgiven! We are BORN AGAIN! Jesus said, “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.” Nicodemus learned that day what you and I are going to learn all about today – being BORN AGAIN is the only way to get to Heaven. We must receive Jesus as the KING and Savior of our lives!

Ask - “Why do you think Jesus calls it being, ‘born again?’”

Say - “When a baby is born it has a fresh start on life full of all sorts of opportunities and possibilities. When we ask Jesus to be our Savior, we are born again. We have a brand new life full of all sorts of opportunities and possibilities with God!

Game/Activity

SUPPLY LIST:

- * Diaper Bag print pieces (*provided; print one per team*)
- * Diaper Power Verse print pieces (*provided; print one set per team*)
- * Scissors (*several pairs for the group to share*)
- * Glue

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS:

Group kids together in teams. Give each group a Diaper Bag print piece, Diaper print piece, scissors and glue.

Say - “When Nicodemus first heard the words, “Born again,” he thought that Jesus wanted him to change back into a little newborn baby. I am so glad that Jesus did NOT mean we should all go back to being newborn babies! Babies can be super needy. They need to be held all the time, they need special food and milk, and they need lots of diapers! Each of your teams has a diaper bag, but there is a problem, the diaper bag is empty! That will not work at all. Cut out the diaper pictures and glue them in the diaper bag. The diapers should be glued in order to say the words of the power verse. The first team to correctly complete their diaper bag wins!”

- Allow the kids’ time to play the diaper bag game -

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Group Sharing

SUPPLY LIST:

- * “NEW” print piece (*provided; print one per person*)
- * Pens, pencils, or markers (*one per person, or they can share*)
- * Bibles (*several for the group to share*)

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS:

Before class begins cut out the NEW print pieces. Place the kids into pairs or small teams. Once group sharing begins, give each kid a NEW print piece and something to write with.

Say - “During our game we reviewed our power verse, ‘Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.’”

Ask - “What does this verse mean to you?”

Say - “Salvation comes from God alone. Once we ask Him to be our Savior, we are changed into a new person! The bible describes this new person. Look up **2 Corinthians 5:17** with your group and read it together. Discuss what you think the verse means.”

- Allow the groups time to look up the verse and discuss. -

Say - “You each have a paper with the word NEW printed on it. Inside the letters of the word, I want you to write ways that Jesus makes us NEW!”

- Allow the groups time to write their lists. -

Ask - “Would anyone like to share something from their list?”

Say - “How awesome that Jesus can take our mistakes, wrong choices, bad attitudes, and hurtful times and wash them all away! If we did not have salvation through Jesus, our life would be stuck with all those sad and dark things. Our future would be hopeless. Jesus came so that our future could be full of hope! When we ask Jesus into our life, he makes us totally new and gives us the awesome promise of spending forever with Him in Heaven!”

Prayer Time

Say - “We are going to do two things in our prayer time today. First, if you still have not asked Jesus to be your savior and you would like to do that now, I want to pray with you. Everyone please close your eyes. If you have never given your heart to Jesus and you would like to, please raise your hand. Let’s all pray together.” (PRAY)

Say - “Next, I want us to thank God for the awesome gift of salvation. He sent us His Son, Jesus, so that we could have NEW life! Let’s pray and thank God for this amazing gift.” (PRAY)

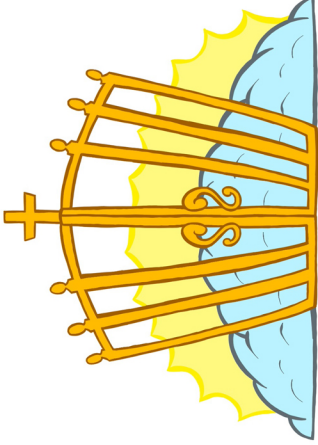
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Closing

Say - “Basic training is just getting started. You recruits did a great job on your first day. You took the most important step by asking Jesus to be your Savior. Nicodemus searched for the answer of what it meant to be born again and found out that God will make you totally new! Salvation means you now have a life full of exciting opportunities and potential for God to use you to do amazing things for him! Report back here next week for the second step of your training. Have a great week as NEW CREATIONS in JESUS!”



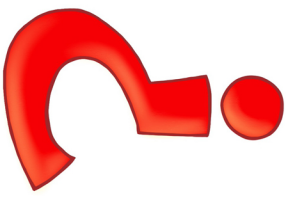
good man



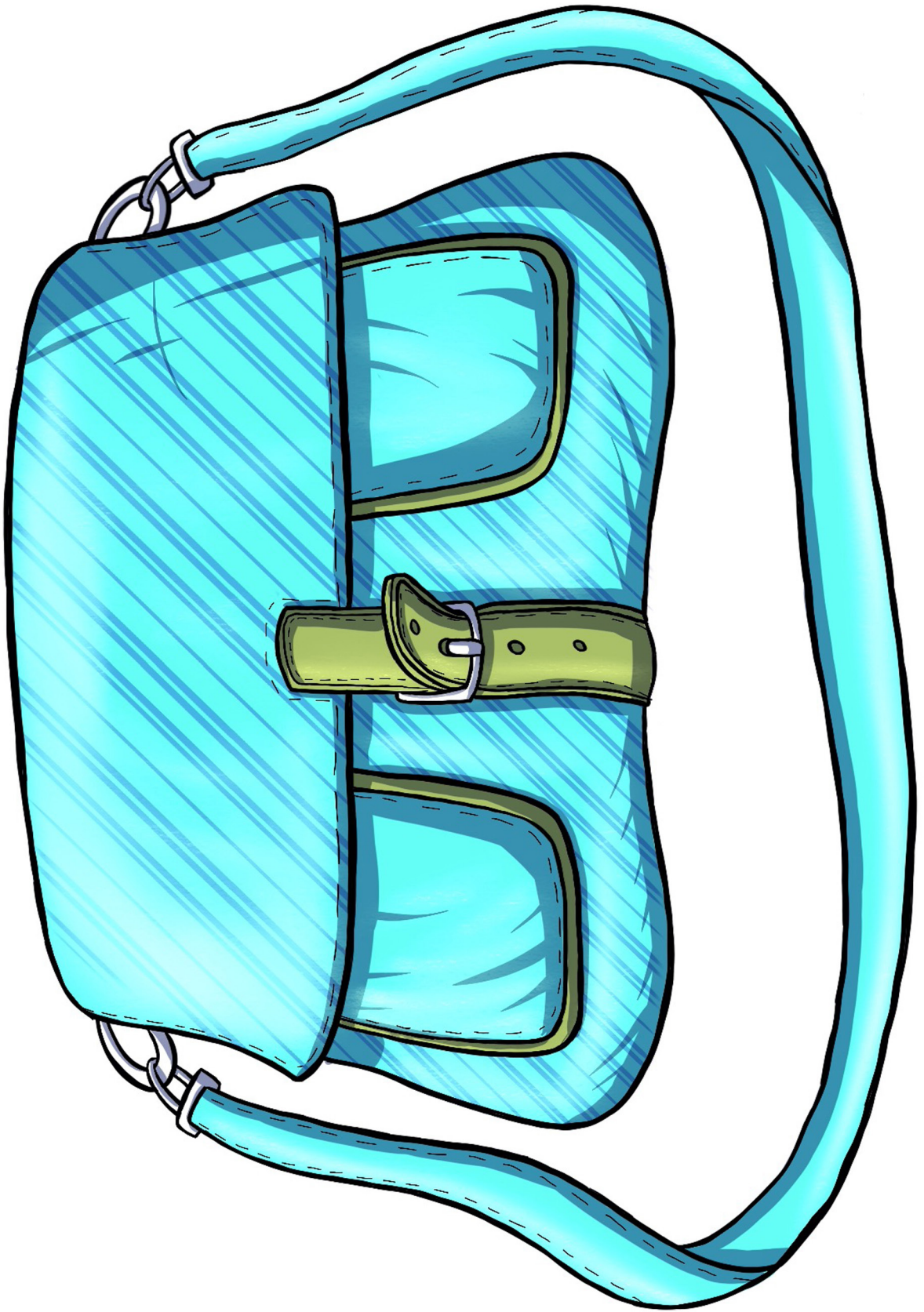
new life

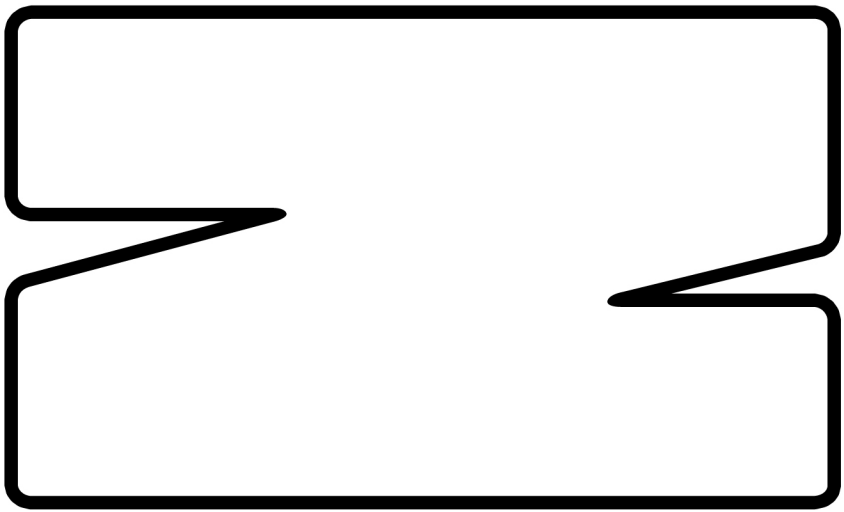
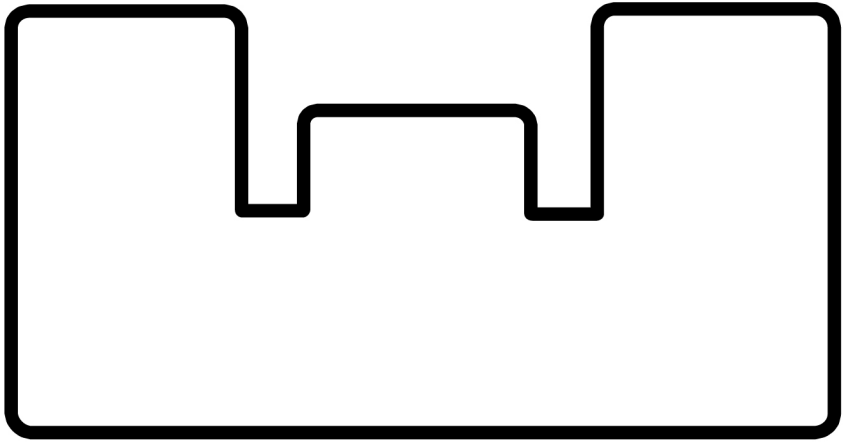
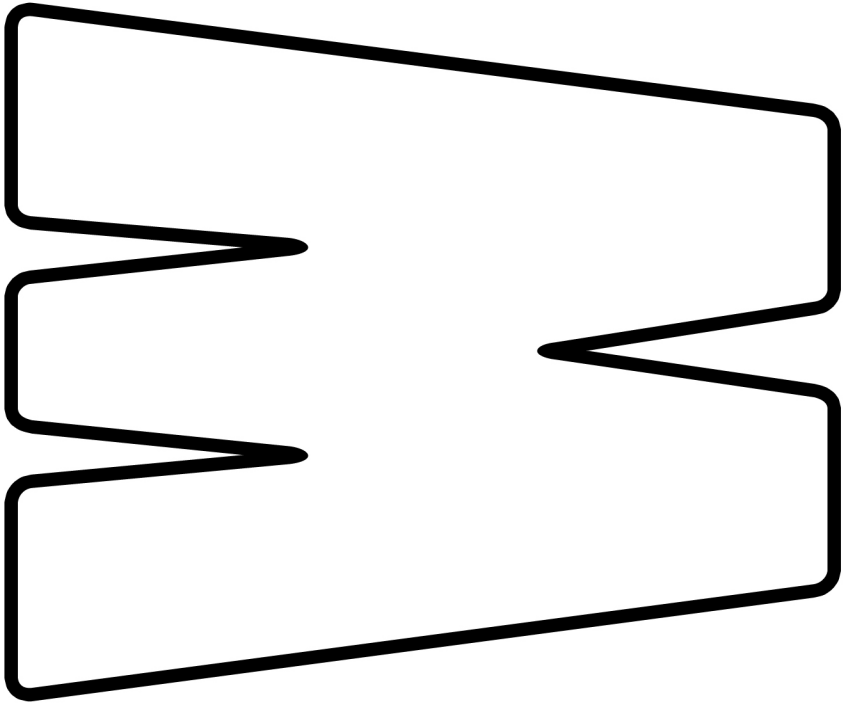


sneaked



confusing





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10:13**

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Family Devotion

“Born Again?”



Watt's Up:

“If I Want To Go To Heaven, I Gotta Be Born Again!”



Power Verse:

“Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

- Romans 10:13

For this devotion, you will need:

- * a large rock, brick, or some other object that's heavy and water proof
- * a cup of sand, loose dirt, or powdered laundry detergent
- * two shallow pans
- * a large cup of water

Read Matthew 7:24-27 to your children. Then, hand them the rock and cup of sand (*or whatever you've chosen to use*). Have them place the rock in one pan and the sand in the other and do the following things:

- * blow on the rock and on the sand
- * pour water over the rock and on the sand
- * optional: if your washer or dryer vibrates quite a bit, have them place both pans on top while the machine is running

Discuss with your children what happened to the rock and the sand in each of the situations. Discuss the following questions:

- Which was more affected by the wind and the water, the rock or the sand? Why do you think that's true?
- If you were going to build a house, would you rather have a foundation made out of rock or sand? Why?
- Do you think it's easier to make a foundation out of rock or sand? (*You might want to remind your children of the story of the Three Little Pigs. It might require more work to build a foundation out of rock, but it's worth it.*)
- Do you think it's easier to fix a bad foundation once the house has been built or make a good foundation before starting the house?
- According to Matthew 7:24, what can we do so that Jesus is the foundation of our lives?

Pray together, asking God to help you put His Word into practice so your life will be built on a strong foundation.