

Sunday morning
teaching plan

Date:
2/11/25

TITLE:	How to become a Christian
THEME:	Christian Foundations
AIM:	Introducing the idea that it is their decision to become a Christian, what this looks like and how and they can do it

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Many young people today are at a stage where they are exploring their identity, values, and beliefs. They have heard about Jesus at church, but they often face distractions, doubts, or pressures—such as school, friendships, social media, family expectations, or fear of rejection—that make it hard to commit to faith. Some may be lukewarm in their belief, unsure what it really means to follow Jesus, or feel that their mistakes or weaknesses put God’s love out of reach. Others might see Christianity as something for other people but not relevant to their own lives. This session is designed to meet young people where they are, help them recognize what is holding them back, and show that a real, life-changing relationship with Jesus is possible for anyone.

WARM UP

Guess the Price

Play the price is right with the PPT and the items from Tesco.

Teaching point: There is a cost to being a Christian. Jesus said He wants your whole life. He wants you to be fully in. but also He paid a great price for you to become a Christian...Jesus’ death on the cross. It’s worth remembering the reward is great though.

MAIN TEACHING

Activity: it can’t be earned

Read **Luke 19:1-10**

Questions:

- What had Zacchaeus done wrong in his life?
- How do you think Zacchaeus felt about his job and what people thought of him?
- How did Jesus show love and acceptance to Zacchaeus?
- Having been forgiven by Jesus, how did Zacchaeus show what difference that had made to his life?

Questions for discussion:

- What is it that separates us from God?
- What are the things that we carry around with us?
- What do we need forgiveness for?

Teaching Point: To help people understand that God can forgive our sin. Zacchaeus would have been hated by the Jews because he was a tax collector working for the Romans who were their enemies. Zacchaeus wasn't trying to earn God's forgiveness by repaying people the money. There's nothing we can do to deal with our sin and get right with God: Jesus has done it all. But, having realised how much Jesus loved him and having responded to that, Zacchaeus was a changed man. All of us have sinned – even if we have never done anything particularly 'bad'. We all carry round a burdens that we need to be freed from. We can find freedom from these things through asking for forgiveness and receiving it, like Zacchaeus did.

Activity: acts from Acts

Each group is given a passage:

- **Acts 8:26-40** – Philip and the Ethiopian.
- **Acts 9:1-22** – Saul.
- **Acts 16:16-34** – The Jailer.

Questions:

- What happened before this person became a Christian?
- What helped them become a Christian?
- What difference did it make in their life?

Note: Saul had a very dramatic conversion, as did the jailer. The Ethiopian was just reading his Bible. All of them needed Christians to help them understand what was happening and what being a Christian was all about. All of them had their behaviour affected by the decision to follow Christ. The Ethiopian and the Jailer were joyful; Saul stopped persecuting Christians and started preaching.

Ask: think about who they are most like in these stories: are they like Saul and against Christianity; are they like the Ethiopian, who reads their Bible but hasn't accepted Jesus into their lives; or are they like Philip and Paul, telling others the Good News?

Teaching point: Knowing Jesus changes people. It transformed people's lives who were against God, and who were lukewarm towards him. What we learn from this will help us to see that our lives will be transformed after we have met Him. Becoming a Christian is the beginning of a lifetime of following Jesus. Whether we have made that decision or not, it is really great to try and always be challenging ourselves and moving forward spiritually.

Activity: Swimming Pool.

Consider where they are in the swimming pool. For example, if they are a Christian and they try and live their lives for Jesus every day then they are swimming in the deep end. If they are a little bit interested in becoming a Christian but not too sure then they are in the changing rooms peeping out. If they think Jesus is a no go area for them then they will be heading out of the exit door. If they want to be around Christians, finding out more about Jesus but not too sure if they want to make that decision yet then they could be sitting on the edge or dipping their toes in at the shallow end.

If they want to become a Christian but not sure how to go about it, then they are poised on the edge of the diving board ready to jump in.

Activity: You have heard

You have heard about Jesus. How Christians believe that He is the Son of God.

You have heard how Jesus was born in a stable in Bethlehem and there was a bit of a fuss with angels and shepherds and foreign kings and how He was brought up by Mary and Joseph in a small town called Nazareth. You have heard that when He was about thirty years old He started preaching and teaching, telling stories about His Father God and His Kingdom, healing people, even making people alive again. You have heard how He loved being with people, how He made friends with people no-one would want to befriend and how He irritated and annoyed the religious leaders of the day.

You will certainly have heard how He died. A cruel, excruciating death. How Jesus was given the ultimate punishment for absolutely no crime because His life had been blameless. You will have heard how He asked His Father God to forgive those who had nailed Him to the cross and you may have heard how the Roman centurion standing close by suddenly realised as Jesus died, that He was in fact the Son of God.

Finally, you may have heard that, three days later, Jesus came alive again.

We've discussed how sin separates us from God. But through Jesus' death, He took the punishment for our sin upon Himself. Because of this, we can now have a personal relationship with God and the gift of eternal life. So what now....

Talk to them about how to become a Christian using ABC

- Acknowledge your sin and your need of God.
- Believe in your heart that Jesus is Lord and that he died to save you from your sin.
- Confess with your lips that you have decided to follow Christ – in other words, let someone else know that you have committed your life to Christ.

Prayer

Pray for them. Say a prayer for

- 1) those who are in a relationship with Jesus and want to get to know him more,
- 2) those who want to start a relationship with Jesus,
- 3) those who are interested in finding out more.

Anyone who gave their life to Jesus might want to stay behind and talk to the leaders about it.

TAKEAWAY

If there is time

Activity: you've got mail.

Consider and write down where you would like to be with God in 6 months' time.

Examples include: read one or two of the gospel accounts of Jesus. Write down questions and ask someone about it. Spend 10 minutes with Jesus every day, reading and praying. Working on a habit or thought that doesn't fit with being a Christian. Tell someone close to them about Jesus.

Collect them in and don't forget to hand them out in 6 months' time!! Discuss whether they're where they thought they would be. What helped or hindered them along the way?

Teaching Point: To challenge the young people to continue to move forward in their spiritual lives.

EXTRA INFORMATION