

God Doesn't Play Favorites

Bible Lesson: Acts 10:1-48

PREPARATION

Objective

Students will understand that God desires for all peoples to be saved.

Outcomes

1. Students will understand that faith in Jesus is God's plan for people to know him.
2. Students will be able to use their memory verse to explain how to be saved.

Memory Verse

Romans 10:9 "Say with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord.' Believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead. Then you will be saved." (NIRV)

Directions

1. Cut out the two helmets for the Roman soldiers. To add a simple headband, center a construction paper strip on the back, near the bottom of the helmets. Staple the headband to the bottom corners of the helmet. Fit the headbands to the students' heads and tape.
2. Cut out and construct the two hats for the servants. Make headbands using directions in #1. Fit the headbands to the students' heads and tape.
3. Copy the angel onto an overhead transparency. Project the overhead transparency sheet onto a piece of large chart paper taped to a wall. Trace the angel onto the chart paper. Decorate the angel.
4. Cut out pictures of unclean animals. Pin each picture onto the bed sheet.
5. Review the words and hand motions for the song "Then You Will Be Saved."
6. Place "God's Story Bookmarks" #1-4 in your Bible.
7. Before class, direct one helper to play the part of the angel. When the Bible story begins, have him take the angel picture and wait outside the room. When you read about Cornelius having a vision, he should hold the angel paper in front of him, run into the room, and stand in front of Cornelius.



PREPARATION: 15 min.

TEACHING: 30 min.

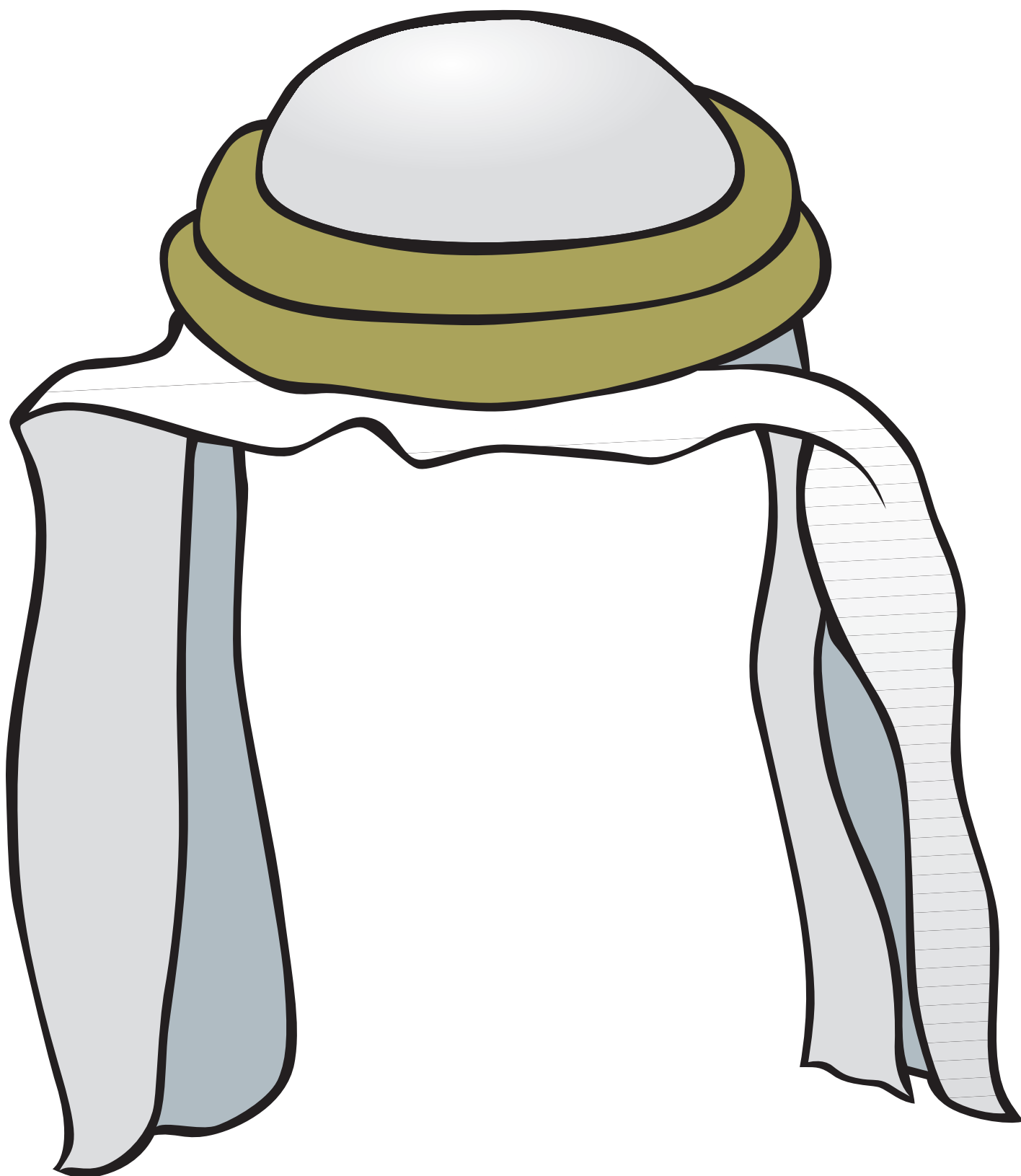
Materials

- Bible
- "God's Story Bookmarks" #1-4 (Introduction pp. 23-24)
- two copies of "Roman Soldier Helmet" (p. 2)
- two copies of "Servant Hat" (p. 3)
- one copy of "Angel" (p. 4)
- one copy of "Unclean Animals 1 and 2" (pp. 5-6)
- scissors, glitter, colored paper, and glue to decorate angel
- overhead projector and transparency sheet
- one piece of large white chart paper
- tape
- four 2 x 20-inch construction paper strips, any color
- bath towel or pillowcase for head covering drape
- bed sheet
- straight pins
- "Then You Will Be Saved" song (MS)
- TV/DVD player

Roman Soldier Helmet



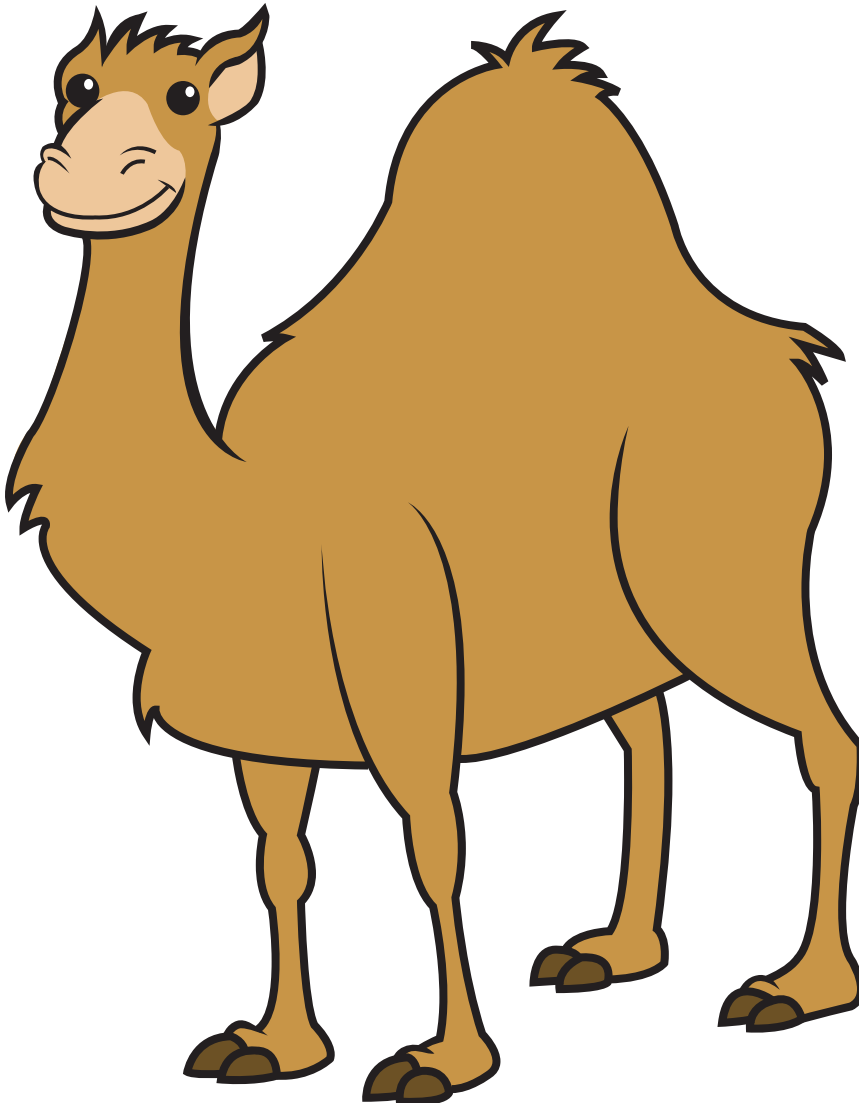
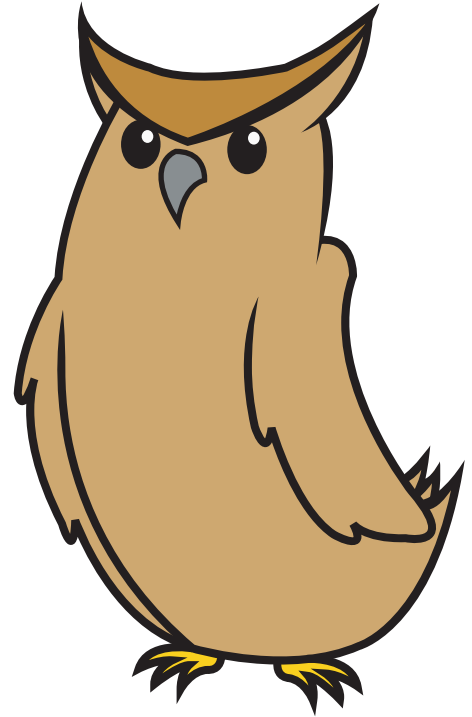
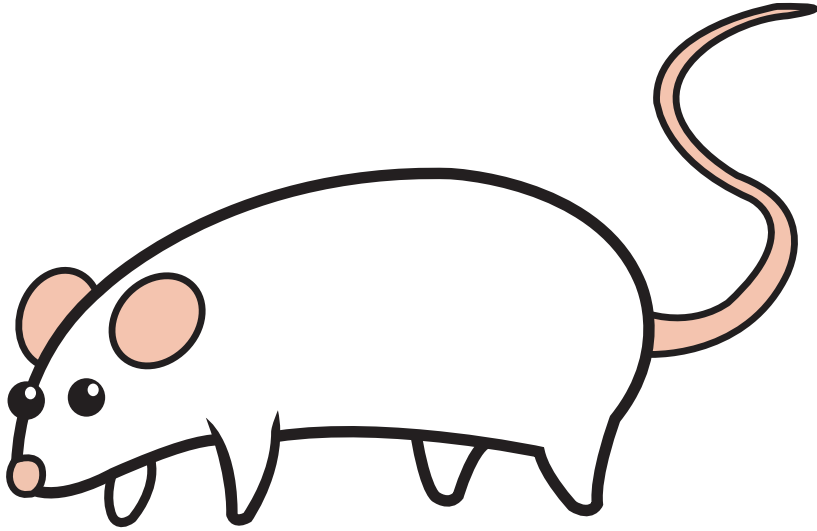
Servant Hat



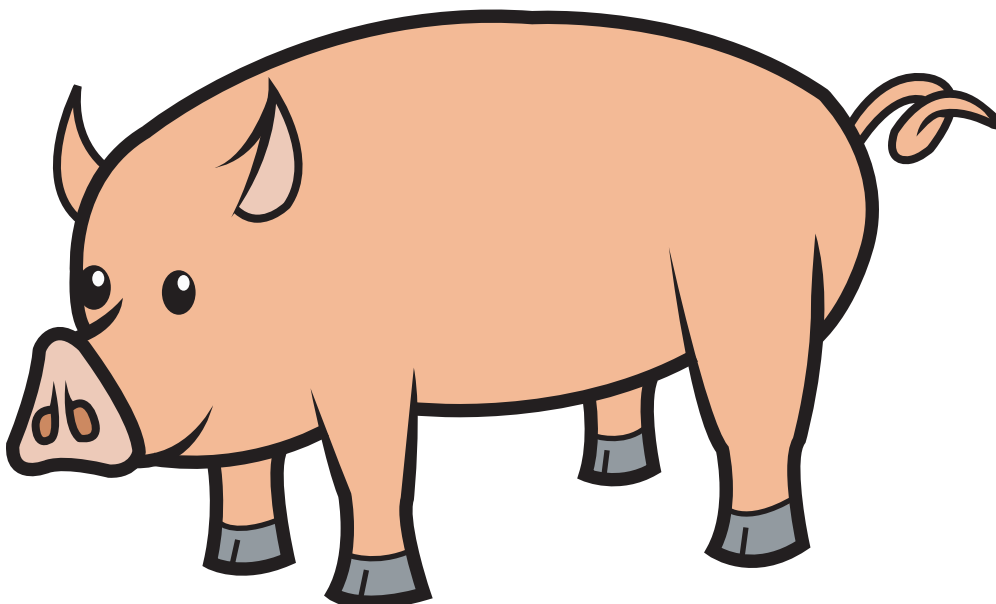
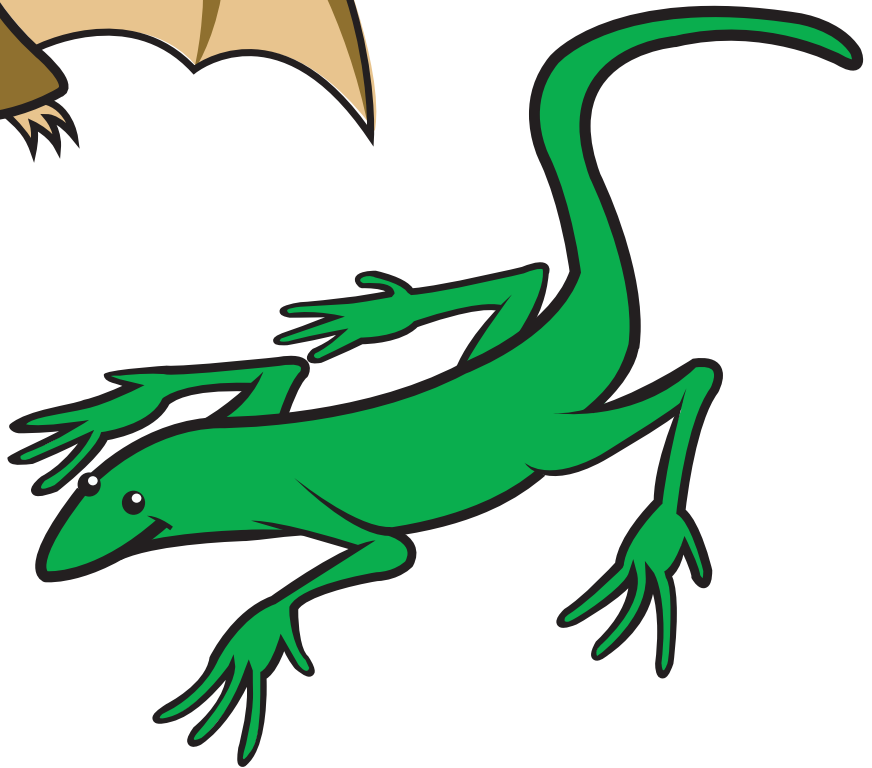
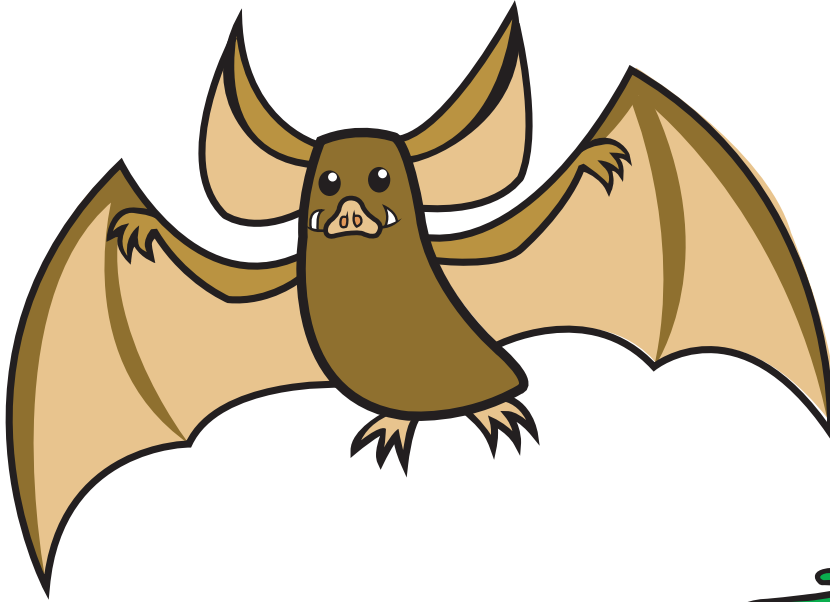
Angel



Unclean Animals 1



Unclean Animals 2



TEACHING (CORE)

MEMORY VERSE SONG: THEN YOU WILL BE SAVED

Romans 10:9 “Say with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord.’ Believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead. Then you will be saved.” (NIRV)

Directions

1. Have students sit down in a circle.
2. Open your Bible and read Romans 10:9.
3. Play the DVD. First sing the song through twice, then add motions. Explain the motions as you add them as needed. For instance, ask students how many fingers they are holding up in the first motion (10). Then fold down your thumb and ask them, “*How many now?*”

BIBLE LESSON: BELIEVE IN JESUS

Directions

1. Seat students in a group, looking forward toward you, the teacher. Leave enough room for them to spread their arms out widely without hitting one another.
2. Review bookmarks once again. Open your Bible, fold out bookmark #1, and say, “*Do you remember the words and motions for this first bookmark? What part of God’s story does it tell?*”
3. Allow time for responses, and then say, “*Yes, we clasp our hands, as if shaking hands with a good friend and say, ‘In the beginning, God created a strong friendship with people.’*”
4. Fold out bookmark #2 and ask, “*What part of God’s story does this bookmark tell?*” Allow time for response.
5. Lead students to review the motions and words: Break your hands apart, cover your eyes with your hands. Repeat the sentence, “*People sinned and broke this friendship with God.*” Tell students, “*Adam and Eve listened to the serpent’s evil plan. They disobeyed God and ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Adam and Eve broke their strong friendship with God. Our memory verse says that God came looking for Adam and Eve after they disobeyed.*”
6. Say, “*Let’s review Genesis 3:8-9. It starts out talking about Adam and Eve, ‘They hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called out ... “Where are you?”’ Genesis 3:8-9.*”
7. Continue, “*God made Adam and Eve leave the garden. Their sin separated them from God, which made them very sad. Now, all people start out life separated from God.*”
8. Ask, “*But is that the end of the story? Will people always be separated from God, or did he give a promise?*” Allow time for response and then continue, “*God promised to send a Son who would win over the serpent’s evil plan. God had the winning plan in mind even from the very beginning!*”
9. Fold out bookmark #3 and ask, “*What part of God’s story does this*

Materials

- Bible
- “Then You Will Be Saved” song (MS)
- TV/DVD player

Materials

- Bible
- “God’s Story Bookmarks” #1-4 (Introduction pp. 23-24)
- two “Roman Soldier Helmets” (p. 2)
- two “Servant Hats” (p. 3)
- one “Angel” (p. 4)
- pictures of “Unclean Animals 1 & 2” (pp. 5-6)
- bath towel or pillowcase for head covering drape
- bed sheet

bookmark tell?” Allow time for response. Lead students to review the motions and words for bookmark #3: Raise arms above head and flex fingers to represent stars. Say, “God blessed Abraham so that he would bless the nations. God blesses us so that we can bless the nations, too.”

10. Tell students, *“Today’s Bible lesson is all about bookmark #4! What part of God’s story does this bookmark tell?”* Allow time for response. Say, *“Yes, this bookmark tells us that Jesus is God’s biggest blessing. Jesus takes our punishment for our sin, dying, but then living again.”*
11. Lead students to review the motions and words for bookmark #4. Form your hands into fists and cross your arms in front of your chest. Then release your arms, extending both outward to shoulder height. Lower arms and sweep upwards in front of body, raising hands above your head.
12. Open your Bible to Acts 10:1 and ask, *“Did you know that there are people all over the world who do not know that Jesus is God’s biggest blessing? Could there actually be people who do not know that Jesus takes the punishment for our sins? Yes, it is true! You and I can go to church any time we want and learn about Jesus, but many people around the world still have never heard that God sent his Son, Jesus, to be our Savior and Lord. Today’s Bible lesson tells us about a man who did not know about Jesus. He was a soldier named was Cornelius.”*
13. Choose four volunteers to play these parts: Cornelius, two servants, and one soldier. Give them their paper hats to wear. Tell them, *“Please listen carefully to the story and act out your parts as well as you can. If I say you are kind and give to the poor, can you make your faces look kind and pretend to pass out money and food to people? How about if you are supposed to look afraid? Can you look afraid?”* If they have trouble, make suggestions, or ask a helper to assist them.
14. Ask the Roman soldier and two servants to sit down with their hats on and listen carefully. They should be ready to come when Cornelius calls them.
15. Have Cornelius sit down about 10 feet in front of the main group of students to their far left. He should be in front of the group, separated from them by about 10 feet. Cornelius should be seated perpendicular to the group. The audience can see what Cornelius sees, and they can also see the side of his face.
16. Tell the students that they are playing the part of Cornelius’ friends and family.
17. Read Acts 10:1-2. Cue your helper with the angel picture to come running in carefully, hiding behind the paper cut out. Cornelius should look frightened at first.
18. Then read Acts 10:3-6 and instruct the helper to take the angel away.
19. Ask students, *“What time of day did this happen? Was Cornelius asleep? Did he just have a dream and imagine all of this?”*
20. Re-read the first part of verse three and remind students that God appeared to Cornelius while he was wide awake in the afternoon.
21. Read Acts 10:7-8. Direct Cornelius to call his two servants and soldier. Then he should send the three off on a journey to find Peter. Ask the trio

to just pretend they are walking on a long journey. They can quietly walk in place while you read on to Peter's part of the story.

22. Choose a volunteer to play Peter. Give him a towel or pillowcase to drape over his head while he prays. Explain that Jewish men in that day covered their heads when they prayed. Even today, devout Jewish men cover their heads when they pray. Ask Peter to go to a far corner of the room, kneel down, and bow his head.
23. Read Acts 10:9. Ask students, *"What time of day did the Bible say it was? Yes, it was about noon, so it was probably bright and sunny again that next day while Peter prayed."*
24. Cue helpers to bring the sheet and unclean animal paper cutouts to where Peter is praying and act out the scene as you read Acts 10:10-16.
25. Make sure helpers repeat the sheet-lowering three times. Each time they lower the sheet, you should read again, *"Get up Peter. Kill and eat."* And each time, encourage Peter to shake his head and refuse as you read Peter's reply: *"No, Lord! I will not! I have never eaten anything that is not pure and 'clean.'"*
26. Ask helpers to take the sheet away. Tell students, *"This was so surprising to Peter. Would this have surprised you to see such a thing in the middle of the day?"*
27. Continue with, *"Peter, can you look confused? The Israelites did not eat these animals because God had told them not to. Peter had always obeyed God and by not eating these 'unclean' foods. Now it seemed that God wanted Peter to eat them. How confusing! Was God changing what he wanted from Peter? Let's read on to find out!"*
28. Tell the Roman soldier and two servants, *"Here comes another part for you three to play."* As you read Acts 10:17-20 motion for them to walk up to Peter, stop, and act as if they are calling out.
29. As you read Acts 10:21-23a, motion for Peter to get up, pretend to speak to the trio, and then beckon them into his house as guests. Say, *"This is another surprise! The Jewish law did not allow Peter to invite these non-Jewish men into his house. It looks like Peter really listened to what God said with the vision of the sheet."*
30. Tell Peter and the three others, *"OK, you four, it is time to go to sleep."* They should lie down. Then say, *"Now morning comes and you stretch to wake up."*
31. Turn to Cornelius and say, *"Cornelius, you wake up, too, in your city. Now start looking to see if your messengers are bringing Peter back."*
32. Read Acts 10:23b-27, reminding the rest of the students, *"Remember, you are all close relatives and friends of Cornelius."* Encourage students to act out their parts as you read the rest of the story in Acts 10:28-48.

QUESTION AND ANSWER EXERCISES

Directions

1. Help the students stand up in a large circle. Make sure they have enough room to move their arms and legs without bumping into each other.

2. Tell students, *“We are going to play a short game to see what you remember from our story. Listen carefully.”*
3. Say, *“What did our Bible lesson say today? If it told you that Cornelius was a very bad, no good, selfish, mean man, sit down.”* (No one should sit down.)
4. Remind students, *“No the Bible says Cornelius gave generously to people in need and that he and his family worshipped God. But they did not know about Jesus, God’s Son.”*
5. Say, *“At three o’clock one day, Cornelius saw something clearly. He saw something very unusual. If you know what he saw, raise both your hands high in the air.”* (Someone will probably burst out that it was an angel.)
6. Call on one student to tell you what Cornelius saw.
7. Say, *“Cornelius saw an angel of God, very clearly. In fact the angel spoke to Cornelius.”* Ask, *“How did Cornelius feel? If you think he felt afraid, squat down and wrap your arms around your knees.”* (Students should squat down.)
8. Say, *“Yes, Cornelius felt afraid, but he listened. If you think the angel told Cornelius to go take a bath, jump up.”* (No one should jump up.)
9. Say, *“If you think the angel told Cornelius to send some men to go get Peter, jump up!”* (All should jump up.)
10. Tell students, *“While Peter was praying, he saw something strange, too. If you think Peter saw the same angel that appeared to Cornelius, start turning around in circles.”* (No one should turn.)
11. Say, *“If you think Peter saw heaven open up and a sheet come down, full of animals, reptiles, and birds that he was not supposed to eat, turn around two times and then stop.”* (Turn.)
12. Say, *“It was against Jewish law for a Jew, like Peter, to have anything to do with people who were not Jews. But God taught Peter something new. If you think God taught Peter that he still should never be friends with people who were not Jews, hop up and down on one foot.”* (No one should hop.)
13. Say, *“If you think God was telling Peter that God treats all people from every nation the same, start doing deep knee bends like this.”* (Demonstrate. Everyone bends.)
14. Tell students, *“If the Bible says that all who believe in Jesus have their sins forgiven through his name, stand up and clasp your hands high over your head.”* (All stand up.)
15. Say, *“If God wants people from all nations to hear about Jesus, so that they can have their sins forgiven, sit down cross-legged and fold your hands in prayer.”* (All sit.)
16. Tells students, *“Yes, the Bible lesson teaches us that God accepts people from every nation. He accepts us here. And God accepts people far away. God accepts all people who believe in Jesus. Acts 10:43 says that ‘all who believe in Jesus have their sins forgiven through his name.’ Jesus came to take the punishment for our sins.”*
17. Ask students, *“If someone asked you about Jesus, would you be ready to explain to them how to be saved?”* Allow time for responses.

18. Say, “*You know a Bible verse that explains how to be saved. Raise your hand if you know the one I’m thinking of.*”
19. Say, “*Yes it is Romans 10:9.*”

IN CLOSING ...

Review the memory verse song, “Then You Will Be Saved.”

Materials

- “Then You Will Be Saved” song (MS)
- TV/DVD player



CRAFT: STORY MAZE

Before the Activity Directions

1. Copy the “A-maze-ing Story” sheet onto white card stock for each student.
2. Copy “Maze Pictures,” one for every four students. Cut sheets in quarters, so that each student has #1-6.

Directions

1. Pass crayons, scissors, and the “Maze Pictures” sheet to each student. Direct them to color and cut out the six maze squares.
2. Have the students look at the number on each picture and lay their pictures out in front of them in order by number.
3. Pass out a maze and glue to each student.
4. Point out the numbers on the maze. Have the students look at the numbers on their pictures and glue them on top of the matching numbers on the maze.
5. If time permits, have partners tell each other God’s amazing story using their maze.

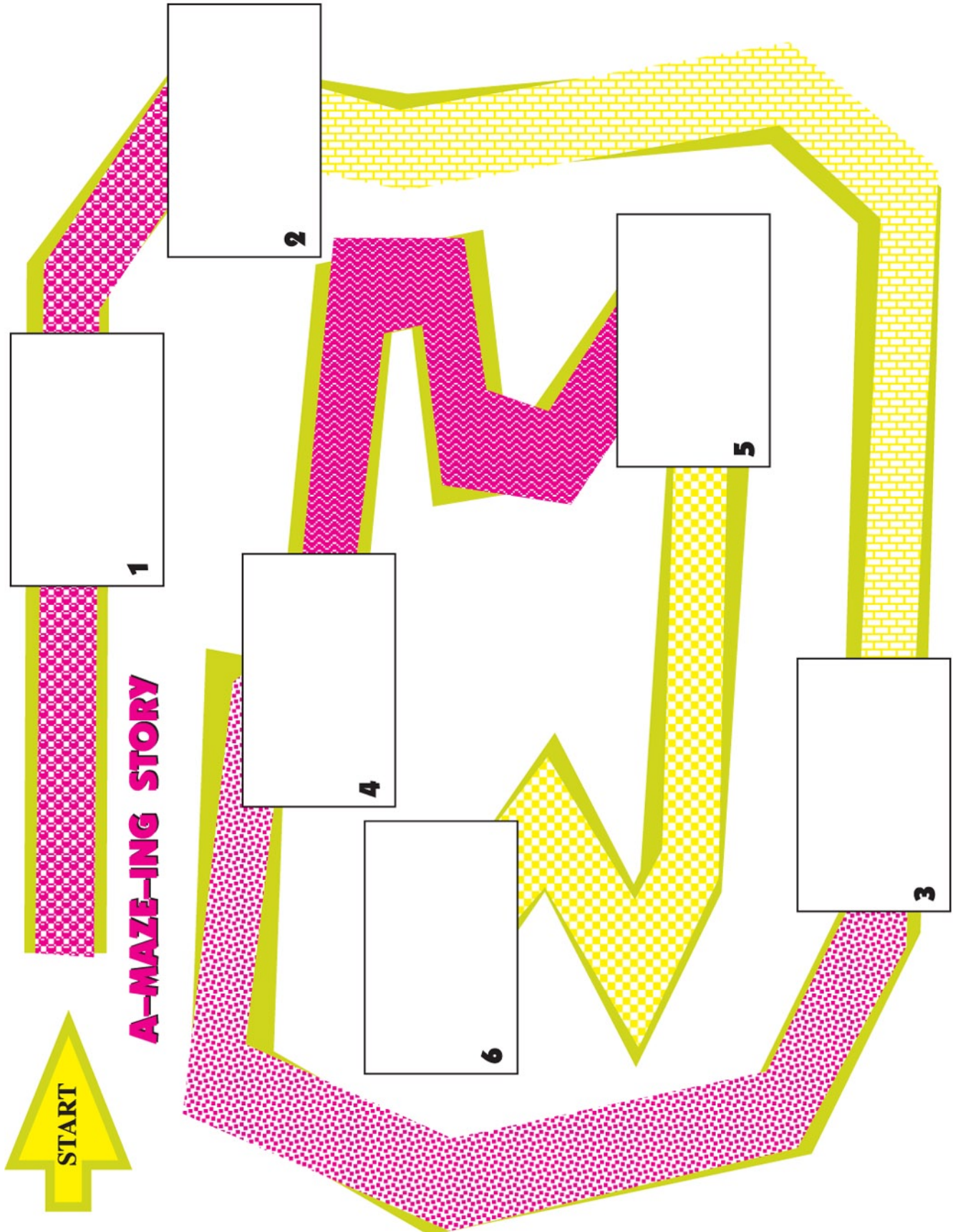


PREPARATION: 15 min.

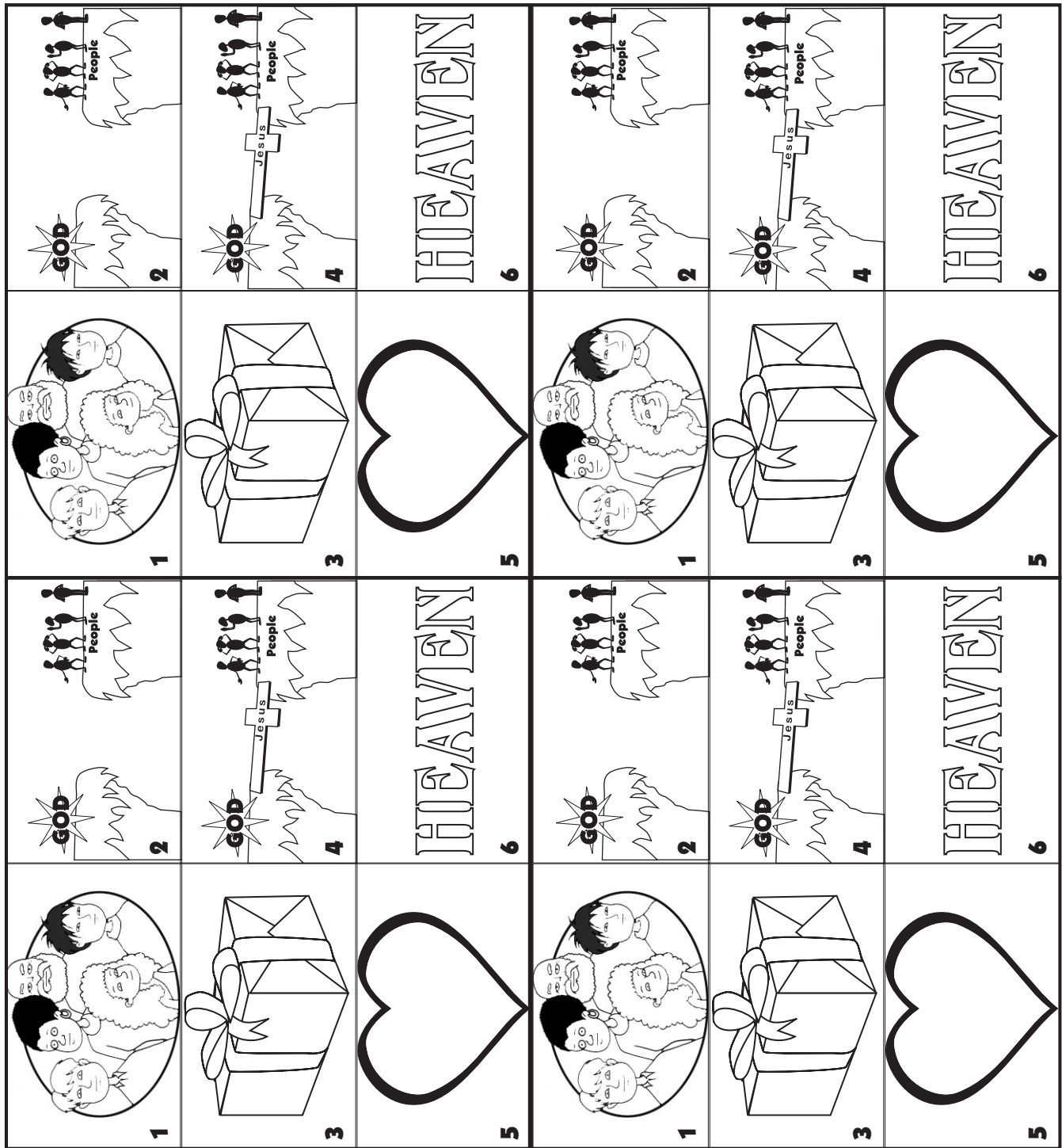
TEACHING: 20 min.

Materials

- white card stock
- “A-maze-ing Story” (p. 13)
- “Maze Pictures” (p. 14)
- crayons or colored markers
- scissors
- glue



Maze Pictures





GAME: PASS THE GIFT

Before the Activity Directions

1. Copy and cut out the “Pass the Gift Verses” to make cards.
2. Place the John 14:2-3 card in the box with the treats.
3. Wrap the box with colorful wrapping paper.
4. Tape the Romans 10:9 card on top of the wrapped box and wrap with a second layer of wrapping paper. Tape the wrapping paper securely so that students do not tear two layers by accident.
5. Continue to tape each verse to the box and wrap with another layer of wrapping paper. Here is the order of the remaining four verse cards: Romans 5:8, Romans 6:23b, Romans 6:23a, and Romans 3:23.

Directions

1. Direct the students to sit in a circle.
2. Show them the gift. Explain that when they hear the music start, they will begin to pass the gift around the circle.
3. When the music stops, they should stop passing the gift. Whoever has the gift will carefully unwrap one layer of wrapping paper and find the verse card. Show them the sample verse card.
4. A teacher or helper will read the verse.
5. When the music starts again, the students should begin passing the gift around the circle again.
6. When the music stops, the student with the gift will carefully unwrap the next layer of wrapping paper and find a new verse card.
7. As the game continues, keep stressing that God gave Jesus to us as a gift and it is our privilege to share the gift with other people who don't know Jesus yet.
8. When the box is unwrapped, read the verse card and show students the treat. Invite the student with the box to pass out the treats.
9. Explain that, just as the student is sharing the treats in the box, God wants us to share the good news about Jesus with people who don't know him.



PREPARATION: 15 min.

TEACHING: 15 min.

Materials

- “Pass the Gift Verses” (p. 16)
- small box
- six pieces of wrapping paper or bright colored tissue paper
- small, individual treat for each student (these must fit in the box)
- scissors
- scotch tape
- CD or cassette (your choice)
- CD or cassette player

Pass the Gift Verses

John 14:2-3

In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.

Romans 10:9

If you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Romans 5:8

But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 6:23b

... but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 6:23a

For the wages of sin is death ...

Romans 3:23

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.



SNACK: "HOW'S MY HEART?" COOKIES

Makes 30 servings (one serving = two cookies)

Directions

1. Put the cookie decorating supplies into small bowls for each table.
2. Divide the frosting into small portions for each table and place in small bowls.
3. Give a paper towel to each student and place two cookies on it.
4. Give each student a plastic spoon and knife.
5. Pass out bowls of frosting and decorating supplies to each table.
6. Assign an adult helper to every ten students.
7. Remind students that the inside of our hearts are dark with sin like the cookie filling. No matter how many good things we do to try to look good on the outside, we can not change our heart. Thank God for sending Jesus to die for our sin and give us a clean heart. Thank Jesus for dying not only for our sins, but for the sins of peoples from all nations.
8. Direct the students to frost their cookies first.
9. Then they can add decorations of their choosing.



PREPARATION: 5 min.

TEACHING: 15 min.

Materials

- one 32-ounce package of vanilla sandwich cookies with chocolate filling
- two cans of white frosting
- sprinkles, nonpareils, colored sugar crystals, etc.
- plastic knives and spoons
- paper bowls
- napkins or paper towels
- one adult helper for every ten students



PRAYER ACTIVITY: JESUS TAKES AWAY SIN

Before the Activity Directions

1. Make a simple poster. Fold the piece of butcher paper in half and open it up.
2. Label the left half of the page SIN. On the right-hand side, draw a large simple cross.

Directions

1. Remind students that God wants all people to know and worship him, but because of sin, many people do not worship God.
2. Have students share feelings or actions that are examples of sin.
3. As each student shares, draw a simple stick figure drawing of his idea on a sticky note. Choose another student to stick the drawing on the left side of the poster labeled SIN.
4. After all students have had an opportunity to share, remind them that Jesus came to die on the cross for sin. Ask, “*Did Jesus die for the sins of people in ____ (insert the name of your town)?*” Let the students respond, “Yes.” Transfer one sticky note onto the cross.
5. Then ask, “*Did Jesus die for the sins of people in the United States?*” After the students respond, remove a second sticky note and put it on the cross. Continue this pattern, inserting the names of countries or people groups into the question.
6. When all of the sticky notes have been transferred to the cross, pray together. Let the students thank God for sending Jesus to die for the sins of people from all over the world.



PREPARATION: 5 min.

TEACHING: 10 min.

Materials

- large piece of white butcher paper
- marker
- sticky notes
- pen