

# LESSON 1:

## Your New Life with Jesus

### LESSON OBJECTIVES:

- To guide young believers to understand important truths about their new lives in Christ:
  - They are part of God's forever family
  - They have assurance of salvation
  - God is always with them
  - They will grow and change
- To discuss practical ways in which children can begin to grow in their own personal relationships with Christ.

### KEY VERSES:

**JOHN 1:12 NIV** – “Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.”

**2 CORINTHIANS 5:17 NIV** – “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!”

### INTRODUCTION FOR LEADERS

In this lesson, you have the incredible privilege of helping young believers in Christ get a healthy start in their personal relationships with him.

Scripture presented in this lesson is not designed to overwhelm students, but to give them perspective. The key is you and your gentle, guiding discussion.

Above all, avoid the temptation to make this life with Jesus all about things a child “must do” (pray, read God's Word, go to church). Focus instead on this brand-new, wonderful relationship with Jesus. The rest will follow soon enough. Let your love for him shine through to the children today.

### Lesson Overview

#### Welcome, Introduction & Review (10-20 minutes)

Welcome (Stories of coming to Christ)  
Prayer

#### Scripture, Background & Discussion (20-30 minutes)

Your New Family (Circle Discussion)  
So, What's New? (Scripture & Discussion)  
God Is With You (Scripture & Discussion)  
What's the Difference? (Scripture & Discussion)

#### Bible Story & Discussion (10-20 minutes)

A Bible Story (Zacchaeus & Discussion)

#### Response & Application Options (20-30 minutes)

How Will YOU Change? (Morning, Day, Evening)  
Something to Do (Journals, Questions, Prayer)

**TOTAL TIME: 60-90 minutes**

### Materials Needed

#### BASIC SUPPLIES:

(best for settings with non-readers and limited supplies)

- Lesson Outline for Lesson 1
- A copy of *Your New Life with Jesus* Lesson 1 student booklet for leader reference
- Bible for leader
- An erasable board and writing supplies OR paper and pen/pencil

#### ADDITIONAL

#### SUPPLY OPTIONS:

(for settings with students who can read/write and where supplies are more readily available)

- A copy of *Your New Life with Jesus* Lesson 1 student booklet for each student
- A Bible or New Testament/Psalms for each student (easy-to-read for children)
- Blank paper or tablets for journals for each student
- Pens or pencils for each student

# Welcome, Introduction & Review

(10-20 minutes)

## Welcome (Introductions; Stories of coming to Christ)

**Materials:** *Your New Life with Jesus* student booklets/pages  
for each student (optional)

Pens or pencils for each student (optional)

### ☺ FRIENDSHIP & CONVERSATION

- Warmly welcome students. Tell them you are glad they have come. Help them to feel at ease. Introduce children to each other.
- Congratulate children on beginning their new lives of following Jesus. Welcome them into God's forever family.
- Explain that in this lesson, children will get to understand more about who they are in this family.

### ?? DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Spend time getting acquainted with the children and share stories of how they came to know Christ. At some point, briefly tell your own story of starting to follow Christ, too.
- Ask the following questions:
  - **When did you come to know Jesus?**
  - **Where were you? Do you remember?**
- NOTE: Some children may not remember a time and place. Or they are still gaining an understanding of their response to Christ. Be gentle and invitational as you converse with children about these stories. If they wish, they may write down today's time and place as a beginning.

### ♥ PRAYER

- Open with a simple prayer. Ask God to give your students understanding from his Word about their new life in Christ and their new place in God's forever family.

### 📖 BOOKLET OPTION

- If booklets are available, invite children to fill in the blanks at the bottom of the first page.
- All lessons are designed to be presented with or without student booklets.
- Leaders may find it helpful to have a copy of the booklet as a reference while leading children through the discussion, even if students do not have booklets.
- If using booklets, continue to refer to lesson plans for additional notes, comments, scriptures and questions for students to consider.



# Scripture, Background & Discussion

(20-30 minutes)

## Your New Family (Circle Activity)

**Materials:** Erasable board or large paper and writing utensils

Piece of paper for each student, pen or pencil

### ☺ FRIENDSHIP & CONVERSATION

- Guide students in a discussion introducing them to their new role as a member of God's forever family.
- On board or large paper, draw a very large circle with a smaller circle inside. Give a paper to each student (if available). Invite students to draw circles like yours on their own papers.
- Invite each child to draw a simple stick figure representing themselves inside the smaller circle.
- What are some of the names used to describe you?** Give examples from your own life: mother, daughter, student, friend, etc. Invite children to each think of several words they could use to describe themselves. Write these down in the smaller circle.
- Look at the circles. Share answers with others in the class. Give time for this activity. Encourage and affirm every child as you get acquainted. Some may need more help to finish this.
- Next, look at the larger circle. Explain that when they trusted in Christ as Savior, God puts them in his forever family. Instruct them to write "God's Forever Family" in the bigger circle. Believing in Jesus places us and all we are into God's bigger family.
- Inside the larger circle, write some names of people that you and children know, who are part of God's forever family.

## So, What's New? (Scripture & Discussion)

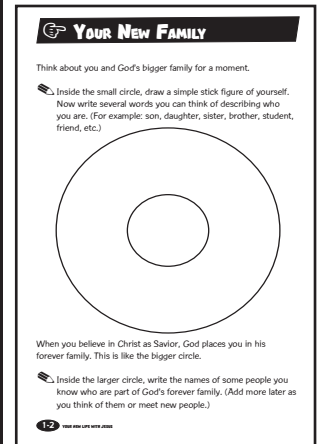
**Materials:** Bible for teacher (or for every reading student, if available)

### 📖 BIBLE LOOK-UP

- Celebrate the truth about being part of God's forever family. Teach children that they can never be taken out of this family. How do we know this? We learn it from the Bible, God's Word.
- Show Bible. Some may never have been introduced to this book before. Explain that it is a book filled with words, stories and messages from God to us. Show how to find a book, a chapter and a verse in the Bible.
- Look up several verses listed below. As students listen to these being read, ask them to help you discover what the verses teach in answer to "what is new?" because they have believed in Christ.
  - 2 Corinthians 5:17** – We are a new creation.
  - John 1:12** – We are children of God.
  - 2 Peter 2:9** – We are chosen people, we are holy.
  - John 15:15** – We are friends with Jesus.

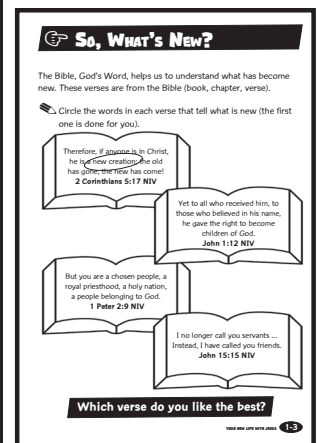
### ?? DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Define words in these verses as you present them: new creation, believe, holy, etc. Assure children that any changes will be good changes, and not frightening for them.
- Help children personalize these. **Which verse do you like the best? Which has the most meaning for you right now?**



### 📖 BOOKLET OPTION

- If using booklets, students may do all of the activities above in the circle provided on page 1-2 of their booklets.



### 📖 BOOKLET OPTION

- If using booklets, students may read the scriptures and consider these questions on page 1-3.

**God Is with You**

Because you believe in Jesus, God's Spirit lives with you and in you. Read the Bible verses below. Underline words that tell about God's Spirit. (If you have your own Bible, look these up there, too. Find the book name, look for the chapter number, then find the verse.)

Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." So you are no longer a slave, but a son. **Galatians 4:6-7a NIV**

He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Titus 3:5-6 NIV**

**THINK ABOUT THIS** What will you enjoy about God being close to you?

1-4

- BOOKLET OPTION**
- If using booklets, students may read these scriptures and consider this question on page 1-4.

**What's the Difference?**

With the Spirit of God living in you and with you, life will not stay the same. Read these Bible verses, then answer the question below.

For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline. **2 Timothy 1:7 NIV**

You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. **Romans 8:9 NIV**

But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. **John 16:13a NIV**

What good things will God's Spirit bring to your life? In your own words, list what you learn from these verses:

1-5

- BOOKLET OPTION**
- If using booklets, students may read these scriptures and write what they learn on page 1-5.

## God Is with You (Scripture & Discussion)

**Materials:** Bible for leader (and for every reading student, if available)

### BIBLE LOOK-UP

- When we believe in Jesus, God's Spirit lives with us and in us. He is always with us. He never leaves us alone. His Spirit is good and wonderful.
- How do we know? The Bible, God's Word, tells us so.
- Read these verses and notice what they teach us about God's Spirit.
  - Galatians 4:6** – The Spirit of God's Son is in our hearts making us his children. Who is God's Son? Jesus!
  - Titus 3:5** – He saved us by the Holy Spirit, poured out on us through Jesus Christ our Savior.
- God's Spirit is invisible. He is in us and with us, even though we cannot see him. His spirit does not bring fear, but joy and peace to our lives.

### ?? DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Define words in these verses as you discuss them: Spirit, heart, Holy Spirit, God's Son, poured out, etc.
- What will you enjoy about God being close to you at all times?**

## What's the Difference? (Scripture & Discussion)

**Materials:** Bible for leader (or for every reading student, if available)

Paper (same paper as circle activity, optional)

Pens and pencils for each student (optional)

### BIBLE LOOK-UP

- Discuss what difference it might make to have God's Spirit living in us and with us all the time.
- Discover that with the Spirit of God living in us and with us, life will not stay the same. **What will change?** Discover some answers from the Bible, God's Word.
  - 2 Timothy 1:7** – God helps us not to be afraid, but to feel his power, love and self-discipline.
  - Romans 8:9** – We are controlled by the Spirit of God, rather than our old, sinful nature (God's Spirit reminds us to do right things).
  - John 16:13** – The Spirit of God guides us into truth: he helps us understand the Bible (God's Word) and also to understand his direction for our lives when we have questions.
- Define words in these verses as you discuss them: sinful nature, old nature, direction, etc.
- How do we know that God's Spirit is speaking to us?** He speaks quietly and gently. **Have you ever felt badly after doing something wrong?** This might be God speaking to you about your sin. **Have you ever seen someone in need and felt like you needed to help?** This might be God speaking to you to show his love.

### WRITING/RESPONSE

- If students have paper and pencils, invite them to write down what they learn from these verses on the back of the papers that have their "family" circles. Share answers together. Consider other things that might change.

# Bible Story & Discussion

(10-20 minutes)

## A Bible Story (Zacchaeus: Luke 19:1-10)

**Materials:** Bible for leader (or for every reading student, if available)



### BIBLE READING

- Read and discuss the story of Zacchaeus, a man who started to follow Jesus and began to change right away.
- These notes are meant to guide your discussion. Students do not need you to retell the story.
- As you present this story, children will also begin to notice how to read a passage of scripture, think about it and consider lessons from it for their lives. Do not overwhelm them with this lesson, simply demonstrate good learning attitudes as you read this story together.

### 1. Zacchaeus was a tax collector.

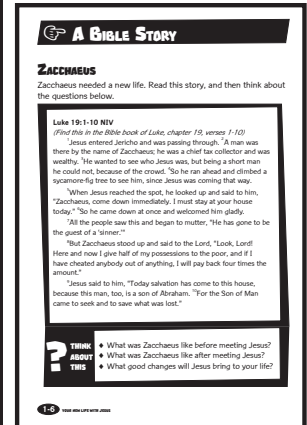
- Did people like Zacchaeus?** No. **Why not?** First, they had to pay taxes to him. But also because he often cheated.
- He lived a selfish, sinful life. As a result, people did not like him.
- What was Zacchaeus' biggest need?** He was lost from God.

### 2. Jesus helped Zacchaeus.

- Jesus came to his town.
- Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus. But he was short. He could not see over the heads of people in the crowd. **What did Zacchaeus do?** He climbed a sycamore-fig tree.
- Jesus knew Zacchaeus was lost from God. He knew that he needed help. He told him to come down. He also said he would come to his house to visit.
- What did the people think about Jesus paying attention to Zacchaeus?** People were upset. It surprised them that Jesus loved someone who was as imperfect and unpleasant as Zacchaeus.
- When the people complained, Jesus told them he came for the lost. (*Read Luke 19:9-10.*)

### ?? DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What was Zacchaeus like before he met Jesus?**
- What was he like after he met Jesus?**
- Will Jesus bring good changes to your life? What kinds of changes?**



### BOOKLET OPTION

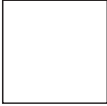


- If using booklets, students may read the Bible story and consider discussion questions on page 1-6.

# Response & Application Activities

(20-30 minutes)

**How Will YOU Change?**

Now that you are following Jesus, your days will be different. What might you do in the morning, during the day and in the evening? Write or draw your ideas in the boxes.

<b>THE MORNING:</b> Give each day to God	<b>DURING THE DAY:</b> Think about others
	
<b>THE EVENING:</b> Think about your day	

God has said: "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." **Hebrews 13:5b NIV**

No matter what time of day, God is always with you!

## BOOKLET OPTION

- If using booklets, children may write/draw their ideas on how their days will be different on page 1-7.

**SOMETHING TO DO...**

**START A JOURNAL**  
If you can, buy or make a small booklet of paper as a prayer book or journal. Write your prayers, your thoughts or your questions in it. Or draw pictures of yourself learning about this new life with Jesus.

**ASK YOUR QUESTIONS**  
Do you have questions about your new life with Jesus? Write your questions here or in your journal. Ask another person in God's family to help you find answers.

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**TAKE TIME TO PRAY**  
Talk to God anywhere. Ask him to help you find answers to your questions. Pray for others that you meet in God's family. Thank Jesus for anything you can think of that is good.

**A Bible Verse to Remember**

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! **2 Corinthians 5:17 NIV**

## BOOKLET OPTION

- If using booklets, work through these final activities on page 1-8.

## How Will YOU Change? (Morning, Day, Evening Activities)

**Materials:** Paper for each student (same paper as circle activity, optional)  
Pens or pencils  
Bible for leader (or each reading student, if available)

### ✍ WRITING/RESPONSE

- When people follow Jesus, the way they live their days becomes different.
- Guide children to consider how their mornings, days and evenings will be different now that God is with them all the time and they are following Jesus. (Give time to think about it. Some may be silent to begin with.)
- With God's Spirit living in us, we find our days look something like this:
  - MORNING:** We might say, "God, this is your day. Help me to live it for you and to do what you want me to do."
  - DURING THE DAY:** **Read Philippians 2:3-4.** Throughout the day it means looking for chances to show Jesus' love to others, to think about others first. **What does that mean for your family, your school, your neighbors, your community?**
  - EVENING:** We find ourselves thanking God for the day and thinking back over it to see what God was doing in us and through us.
- Turn papers over. Invite students to draw themselves in the morning, day and evening, as they live their days differently in their new life with Jesus.
- Read Hebrews 13:5b.** Define words in this verse as you discuss it.

## Something to Do: (Start a Journal, Questions, Prayer)

**Materials:** Blank notebook or tablet of paper (optional), pens or pencils

### ✍ WRITING/RESPONSE

- Invite children to decorate the outside of a notebook as a journal. They may bring these back each time you meet.
  - Each day (morning or evening) invite children to write down things they are learning, questions or thoughts about life with Jesus, and prayers to God. If children do not write yet, invite them to draw pictures of their thoughts about these things instead.
  - If possible, show an example of a journal or booklet you have made. Help children realize that it does not need to be hard or long. It simply includes writing down a few important thoughts.

### ♥ PRAYER

- Introduce the concept of prayer as talking with God.
  - Children can talk to God anywhere, anytime. He helps with questions.
  - We can pray for our needs and the needs of others. We can pray for our new brothers and sisters in God's family.
  - Is there something we can pray together about for you?** Pray for each other to grow strong in love for Jesus.

### 😊 FRIENDSHIP & CLOSING

- As children prepare to leave, remind them about the circles on their papers. Invite them to look at the circles each evening and remember who they are in Christ. **Read 1 Corinthians 5:17 to close.** If possible, write this verse down for each child to take home and remember.
- Tell children it is wonderful to have them as part of the family.