

God is Merciful!

Bible Lesson: Saul Trusts Jesus as His Savior – Acts 8:3-4; 9:1-22

Main Teaching: God can save anyone who trusts in Jesus!

Word Up: God can save anyone!

Supplies:

- Word Up Booklet – Word Up (Resource Pack)
- Eph 2:8-9 paper, blindfold, candy or small prize for each – Small Group
- Recording for “He is God” and “God Shows His Love” - Worship (Sing About the King 1 CD)
- Two white cardstock hearts, white crayon and washable marker – Object Lesson
- Saul Skit Paper – Bible Lesson (Resource Pack)
- Optional Saul Costume
- Flashcards for Bible Story “Saul Trusts Jesus as His Savior” – Bible Lesson
- Wacky Workout Cards – Review Game (Resource Pack)
- Salvation Finger Puzzle – Small Group (End of Lesson)
- John Cook Missionary Story Visual – Missionary Story
- Quiet Time Sheets Lesson 4 – Dismissal (Resource Pack)

Schedule at a Glance (75 min club):

- 15 min – Small Group
- 10 min – Word Up / Worship
- 10 min – Object Lesson
- 15 min – Bible Lesson
- 10 min – Review Game
- 5 min – Missionary Story
- 10 min – Small Group



SMALL GROUP

Say Memory Verse

Have kids say their memory verse from last week to their small group leader

Impossible Task

Materials Needed: Paper with Ephesians 2:8-9 printed on it, blindfold, and small candy or other prize

What You Do: Tell the kids you have a special candy you are going to give them today, but you need one person from the group to earn the prize for everyone. Pick out a child from your group who wants to try to earn the candy. After choosing the child, tell them that in order to earn the prize for everyone, they must first be blindfolded. After blindfolding the child, tell them that the way they can earn the candy for everyone is by reading the verse on the paper that you are holding up. They clearly will not be able to read the verse, because they are blindfolded! Continue to reiterate, that the deal was that the group could only get the candy if he or she earned it for them. They must complete the task to earn the candy!

After realizing they can't do it, take the blindfold off of the child and tell them that you decided to give the candy to everyone anyways. You know they don't deserve it, but you are going to give grace. Explain to the children that grace is getting something you do not deserve. In the same way you gave grace to the kids and gave them the

candy even though they didn't earn it, God gives us grace. Read Ephesians 2:8-9 from the paper and talk with the kids about how God gives us grace even when we don't deserve it.

WORSHIP

"He is God"

"God Shows His Love"



WORD UP!

"God can save anyone!"

I'm going to list off some types of people, and if you think God can love and save them, put your thumbs up. If you think God can't love and save them, put your thumbs down.

Children

Famous athletes

People that are mean and tease others

People that commit crimes and are in jail

The truth is **God can save anyone!** It doesn't matter how mean you are, or what you have done, God loves you and wants to forgive your sins. We are going to learn about someone today that was killing people. Could God save him?

RULES

Go over club rules with the class

OBJECT LESSON

Heart Change

Materials Needed: Two pieces of white cardstock (cut in the shape of hearts), white crayon, colored washable marker

What You Do: Before the kids arrive, use the white crayon to write messages on the hearts. On one heart, write "sin" words such as lying, cheating, stealing, disobeying, etc. On the other heart, write the words "blood of Jesus." (Be sure to remember which heart has the sin words, and which heart says "blood of Jesus." You should not be able to see the words after you write them, since you used a white crayon on white paper.)

What You Say: "I brought two hearts with me today. The first heart is going to represent a person who doesn't follow Jesus. (Hold up the sin heart) This person is choosing to live in sin. They have not put their trust in Jesus. The Bible, God's true Word, says 'For all have sinned.' And sin is anything we think, see, say, or do that makes God sad or breaks His laws. Our sin separates us from the perfect and holy God. And because this person has

not put their trust in Jesus and is choosing to continue to live in sin, when God looks at their heart, what do you think He sees?" (Take the colored marker and begin to color over the entire heart to reveal the sin words.) "God sees their sin. No matter how hard they try, they can never be good enough on their own for God's standard of holiness."

"This second heart represents the person who once also lived in sin. But this person knows that Jesus is the only One who can take away sins. They believe that Jesus died on the cross and came alive again after three days. They have admitted their sin to Jesus and asked for forgiveness. And now, when God looks at this person's heart, what do you think He sees?" (Color the second heart to reveal the message written.) "God sees the blood of Jesus! The Bible says that 'without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness.' Because of what Jesus has done for you on the cross, your sins can be forgiven, and wiped clean! This does not mean that you will stop sinning. But now, when God looks at your heart, he no longer sees all the sin, but He instead sees the blood of Jesus that makes you clean!"

"What if you've done some really bad things? Do you think Jesus can still wipe all those sins away? He can!

Word Up! God can save anyone! If you have a willing and repentant heart, there is no sin too big for Jesus to forgive. Today in our Bible story, we are going to learn about a man who had messed up BIG time. But Jesus was ready and willing to make his heart clean. Let's find out what happens!"



BIBLE LESSON

"Saul" skit (use Saul costume if you have one)

My name is Saul, and I am going to arrest as many people as I can who believe in this Jesus! I can't imagine how anybody could believe that He is really the Son of God and that He actually came back to life from the dead. Those believers are causing nothing but trouble. They must be stopped!"

How frightening it must have been for the first people who believed in Jesus as Savior to find out what Saul was going to do to them. But who was this man named Saul?

PROGRESSION OF EVENTS

Saul was a young man and a Pharisee—an important religious leader of the Jews. He was very careful to try and keep all the rules of the Scriptures. The Pharisees had made even more rules for people to follow. Saul tried to keep all those too, thinking he was pleasing God. He thought he was trying to follow God's directions but he was adding his own rules to God's.

Flashcard 4-1

Saul was angry at the people who were trusting in Jesus as their Savior and following Him. *They are wrong!* Saul thought. He didn't believe Jesus was the one God promised to send to save people from sin. He thought punishing Jesus' followers was pleasing to God. Saul went to house after house, hurting the Christians (people who believe in Jesus as their Savior) by putting them in chains and in prison. He was persecuting them—hurting them because of what they believed.

Because Saul didn't believe that Jesus is the Savior who died for sin and rose again, he was going against Jesus' followers. By hurting Jesus' followers, Saul was going against God Himself and that is sin.



Sin is going your own way and not God's way. Sometimes you think you are doing a good thing but you trick yourself like Saul did. (*Read Jeremiah 17:9.*) We can trick ourselves into thinking we're not that bad because we compare ourselves to others instead of to God, who is perfect. God's Word says each one of us has been born with a desire to do things our own way. Maybe you are nice to someone because you want others to think you are kind but you don't really mean the nice things you say. Or you find out a boy in your class never has a snack. You think your mom won't miss it if you take some extra cookies to him but you don't ask your mom because she might say no. You just take them and hope she doesn't notice. After all, you are doing a good thing to share! Wouldn't that be alright? (*Allow response.*) Sin can be tricky. The punishment for sin is to be separated from God forever. The Bible says we all are sinners who fool ourselves into thinking we are not that bad. But you go against God every time you sin.

Saul didn't realize he was going against God when he persecuted Jesus' followers. Many of Jesus' followers heard what Saul was doing and escaped to other cities.

Flashcard 4-2

One day Saul decided to go after the Christians who lived in Damascus (*duh-MASS-cuss*). Damascus was about 135 miles away from Jerusalem. It would take at least five days to get there. That didn't matter to Saul. He felt he must stop the Christians from growing in number! He would bring them back to Jerusalem for punishment.

Because Damascus had different leaders, Saul couldn't go there and arrest the Christians on his own. He needed letters from the most powerful religious leader in Jerusalem—the high priest. The letters would give him authority to arrest the Christians. After receiving these letters, Saul began his journey. Let's pretend we are traveling to Damascus. How do you think he traveled? (*Allow response then act out with children; e.g. walk, ride horses, etc.*) About noon on the last day as Saul and his men were nearing the city of Damascus, something unusual happened!

Flashcard 4-3

A dazzling light, much brighter than the sun, appeared suddenly in the sky near Saul. He had never seen such light! Listen to what Saul did. (*Read Acts 9:4-5a.*) He fell to the ground and heard a voice say, "Why are you persecuting Me?"

When Saul asked, "Who are you?" he heard, "I am Jesus, the one you are persecuting." By hurting the Christians, Saul was hurting Jesus, God's Son. Jesus was alive! God wanted Saul to believe that Jesus really is the one God had promised to send. And He wanted Saul to believe that Jesus really had died and come alive again to save people from sin.



God wants you to believe Jesus died and came alive again to save you from sin. Jesus, God Himself who lived on Earth as a man, is the only one who has never sinned. Because of His love for you, He was willing to come from Heaven to Earth so He could take the punishment of death for your sin. When He was nailed to the cross, blood came from Jesus' hands and feet. (*Read Ephesians 1:7.*) To redeem means "to buy back." The blood of the Lord Jesus redeemed us—paid the price we owed for our sin. After Jesus died for you and me, He was buried. On the third day He came alive again. Say "Jesus is alive!" with me three times. (*Do with children.*) After He lived another 40 days on Earth, Jesus went back to Heaven where He is alive today. God wants you to believe Jesus is the Savior who died and came alive again.

Jesus appeared in this amazing way so Saul would believe Jesus died and came alive for him too. Saul realized he had been wrong! Something amazing had happened to Saul. He had spoken to the Lord Jesus Christ! Now Saul was convinced that Jesus is alive, as the Christians had said. He was a new person, a believer, just like those he had persecuted. Now he was willing to do exactly what Jesus wanted him to do. Before, Saul was hurting Christians. Now he had become a Christian! **God can save anyone who trusts in Jesus!**

Flashcard 4-4

The dazzling light disappeared. Saul slowly got up and tried to look around. But he couldn't see anything. He was blind! Close your eyes and think about what it would be like to be blind. (*Do with children.*) You may open your eyes. He had to be taken by the hand and led into the city. Saul's friends led him to the home of a man named Judas.

For three days Saul sat in Judas's house without eating or drinking. Saul prayed and waited. While he was praying, the Lord showed Saul a vision—a kind of dream. In this vision he saw that a man named Ananias (*an-uh-NYE-us*) was going to come and help him.

In another part of the city God spoke to Ananias, who was a believer in Jesus. "Get up and go to the home of Judas and ask to see a man named Saul. He is praying and he has seen in a vision that you are going to heal him of his blindness."

What? Ananias must have thought. *Visit Saul? He is the one who orders Christians to be beaten and put in prison!* Ananias was afraid. He said to the Lord, "I have heard about this man and the terrible things he has done to harm Christians. He has come here to arrest all those who believe in You." Ananias must have been very scared. Show me what face you make when you are scared. (*Do with children.*)

But the Lord said, "Go, for I have chosen Saul to tell others about Me." The Lord was telling Ananias that Saul was a changed man. His life would be different from then on. Even though Saul had done some terrible things to the Christians, God had forgiven him! But Ananias had a choice to make. He could obey God and go pray for Saul or he could disobey God and stay home. Which one do you think Ananias chose? Put your hands on your head if you think he obeyed God and went to pray for Saul. Put your hands on your hips if you think Ananias did not obey God. (*Allow response.*)

Ananias obeyed God and went to the house where Saul was staying. He was willing to do what God asked him to do.



How about you? If you know Jesus as your Savior, **are you willing to follow God's directions?** His directions for you today are in the Bible. In the Bible Jesus said, (*read John 13:17*). Jesus was saying that you will have joy in your heart when you do what God asks. So when God shows you something He wants you to do, you should follow His directions right away! Can you name something in the Bible God wants His children to do? (*Allow response. Answers may include being kind to others, helping one another, obeying those in charge over you, etc.*) Some things God's Word says you should do might seem hard to you—like telling someone else about Jesus. But God promises His help to do what He wants you to do. When you read God's Word, look for things He wants you to do then ask Him to help you obey.

Flashcard 4-5

Ananias obeyed God and went to the house where Saul was staying.

When Ananias arrived at the house, he found Saul praying. Still blind, Saul could not see Ananias but he heard his footsteps approaching. Ananias walked over to Saul and placed his hands on him. He said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the way, has sent me to you." God showed His love for Saul by sending Ananias to him.



God loves you too. God loves you because He is love and because He made you. God made the whole world! On the count of three shout out your favorite thing God made. One, two, three! (*Allow response.*) God is the Creator and He is also holy. That means He's perfectly good. He has never sinned and He loves us even though we have sinned against Him. Our memory verse tells us about how great God's love is. Let's all say it together! (*Quote Romans 5:8 with children.*) God proved His love for you by sending His perfect Son, Jesus, to die on the cross to pay for your sin.

Because God loves you, He wants you to have a relationship with Him here on Earth and someday in Heaven. Don't ever forget how much God loves you!
God showed love for Saul in sending Ananias. Ananias said to Saul, "Receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit."

CLIMAX

Immediately Saul could see! He was no longer blind.

CONCLUSION

Saul must have been so grateful to know that even though he had done so many wrong things, God forgave His sins. Saul left the house and went to be baptized to show others he truly believed in Jesus as the Son of God. After his baptism, he ate for the first time in several days and became strong again.

Flashcard 4-6

Saul, now a believer, began to preach that Jesus is the Son of God! People were amazed to see and hear Saul, the one who persecuted Christians, now preaching about Jesus. God did great things through Saul. Saul, whose name was later changed to Paul, became the greatest missionary of the early Church and wrote much of the New Testament. *(Show in your Bible where Romans starts and Philemon ends.)* In fact, he's the one God used to write our memory verse today!

Word Up Card

Say with me, "**God can save anyone!**" *(Say with children.)* Saul loved telling people Jesus is the Son of God.

INVITATION



Do you believe Jesus is the Son of God? He is! The Bible tells us we all go against God. That includes you. But in His love, God sent His perfect Son, Jesus, to die for your sin so you can be forgiven. *(Read Romans 10:13.)* To call on Jesus means to believe Jesus is the Son of God who died and rose again for you. When you call on Jesus, believing in Him, you will be saved from the punishment for sin you deserve. You will not be punished but will have a relationship with God that will last forever! Will you believe Jesus is the Son of God who came to save you from sin's punishment? God can save you today. Please bow your head and close your eyes. If you are making the decision to call on Jesus and believe in Him as your Savior today, please show me by raising your hand. *(Pause and acknowledge responses.)* You may all open your eyes now. Those of you who raised your hand may meet me *(designate time and location)* and I can show you from the Bible more about what it means to call on Jesus.

REVIEW GAME

Wacky Workout

Materials: "Wacky Workout" cards (See GNC Resource Pack.)

Instructions:

Write silly exercises and a number on brightly colored cards and put them face down on a table. When a child correctly answers a question, he may choose a card and lead his team in that exercise the number of times indicated on the card to

earn that number of points for his team.

- Clap your hands behind your back 4 times.
- Do 3 jumping jacks with one eye closed.
- Hop on one foot 4 times and say your name.
- Stand on 1 foot and quickly sing the ABCs.
- Touch your ears and stomp your feet 5 times.
- Hop 2 times and say your favorite color.
- Clap your hands above your head 3 times.
- Spin around 1 time without making noise.

1. According to Romans 5:8 how does God show His love to us? *(Jesus died for us while we were still sinners.)*
2. Who was Saul? *(A young man and a Pharisee—an important religious leader of the Jews.)*
3. Why did the Pharisees hate the Christians? *(Because they didn't believe Jesus was the Messiah or that He rose again.)*
4. What was Saul doing when he was hurting God's people? *(He was going against God Himself.)*
5. What happened to Saul when he was going to Damascus? *(A bright light appeared and Jesus asked Saul why he was persecuting Him.)*
6. Why did Jesus die on the cross? *(To pay the punishment for your sin.)*
7. What happened to Saul after the light disappeared? *(He was blind.)*
8. What happened when Ananias went to Saul? *(Ananias prayed for Saul; something like scales fell from Saul's eyes; Saul could see.)*
9. How can you know God's directions for you? *(They are in the Bible.)*
10. What is something in God's Word that He wants you to do? *(Answers will vary.)*
11. What can you do if you are afraid to follow God's direction? *(Pray and ask God to give you courage to follow Him; trust that God will help you have courage.)*
12. What changes did people see in Saul's life after He believed in Jesus? *(He was willing to suffer and die for Jesus; he wrote part of the Bible.)*

MISSIONARY STORY

John's Work in South Korea Begins – Part 5



John and Lois had given their lives to God and were following His plan. They had spent three years preparing

to go to South Korea. They were so excited when in 1959, the Cooks and their little son, Kerry, finally boarded a ship and began their two week journey to Pusan, South Korea.

On Monday nights, John and Lois would teach an English language Bible class for university students. Remember how John chose his name when he was adopted as a child? Now John was given a new name. His Korean name is Koo Yohan (*Coo Yo-haa-n*). Yohan means John and Koo is the last name Cook in Korean. But Koreans say the last name first. Living in South Korea was very different than living in America. John wrote a letter to his family back home and said, "Opportunities for service are almost limitless!" They

began teaching classes right away even though they couldn't speak Korean yet. They were able to tell the people about Jesus by using an interpreter. First they would speak in English then the interpreter would say what they had just said in Korean so the people could understand. The Cooks also went to school during this time. They spent three hours each weekday in class learning to speak Korean and three hours each day doing their homework! Does it ever take you three hours to do your homework? (*Allow response.*) That's a long time to do homework!

One time John and Lois went to a small orphanage in Seoul, South Korea. There they told 20 children the true story of why Christmas is special. John had been an orphan himself and knew that everyone is special to God, even children with no families to care for them. There, in a large room lit by only a few candles and a lantern, the children eagerly listened to the story of Jesus' birth and how he came to die for their sin. As John and Lois were preparing to leave, they were excited to see the older children reading the tracts they had given them. The children wanted to hear more about Jesus.

John and Lois continued to visit orphanages and teach children about Jesus. Soon John was able to tell the true story of Jesus in the Korean language without an interpreter! John asked questions after the lesson and was so happy to find that the children had truly understood. They were even able to teach the children a song in Korean!

Next they were able to have their very first *Good News Club®* at a public playground. Then they began going to the small country villages. Hundreds of children were hearing about Jesus! John and Lois trained other teachers to know how to lead Good News Clubs in their homes too. One of the girls would walk two and a half miles to her club to learn about God. She told her sister about Jesus and her sister believed in Him! Good News Clubs quickly spread all over South Korea. As children learned about Jesus, adults also started to believe in Jesus as their Savior from sin too and the churches grew.

All of these were great things but the Cooks faced some scary situations too! Come back next week to hear what those were.



SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY

Salvation Finger Puzzle

Materials needed: The salvation story finger puzzle (see master at the end of Lesson 6)

1. Insert your thumb and index finger from each hand into the flaps in the back.
2. Open and close the finger puzzle in different directions as you spell one of the words from the outer layer. When you finish, some pictures will be visible and some will be hidden.
3. Pick a picture from the visible pictures. Open and close the finger puzzle the number of times indicated on the picture you chose. Once again, when you are finished, some pictures will be visible and some will be hidden.
4. Choose one more picture from the visible pictures. Open that flap by unfolding it and choose a number from one to four.
5. Read the verse or question from the chosen number.

*Continue until each question/verse has been read, letting different children choose the numbers each time.

Optional Small Group Activity if you don’t have the Finger Puzzle – God Can Save Anyone

God did an amazing thing when he saved Saul! Perhaps there is someone you can think of who doesn’t know Jesus. Maybe it’s someone you see on TV or someone you know in your life. You can’t imagine that person ever changing and ever believing in Jesus. Saul’s story tells us that **God can save anyone!** Say with me, “**God can save anyone!**” (*Say with children.*) The power of the Gospel changes lives and makes people totally different from what they were before. Those changed lives are good evidence that the Bible is true and that Jesus is real.

This week in your Quiet Time you can pray for that person you thought of who doesn’t know Jesus. Will you pray for that person? Will you trust God that He really can save anyone? Let’s pray right now. (*Pray, thanking God for Saul’s conversion and praying for those who need to know Jesus.*)

DISMISSAL

Hand out a Quiet Time Sheet (Week 4 in the Resource Pack) to each child. Encourage them to fill it out and bring it back next week.

Saul Trusts Jesus as His Savior

This page has been designed for you to photocopy and place in your Bible as a ready reference.

Lesson Outline

I. INTRODUCTION

"Saul" skit.

II. PROGRESSION OF EVENTS

A. Flashcard 4-1 (Acts 8:3-4)

1. Saul thought the people who were trusting in Jesus Christ as their Savior were wrong and he thought punishing them would please God.

2. Sin can be tricky. [Jeremiah 17:9]

3. Many of Jesus' followers heard what Saul was doing and escaped to other cities.

B. Flashcard 4-2 (Acts 9:1-3a)

1. One day Saul decided to go after the Christians who lived in Damascus.

2. Saul got letters from the high priest in Jerusalem which he needed to arrest the Christians in Damascus.

C. Flashcard 4-3 (Acts 9:3b-7)

1. A dazzling light appeared suddenly in the sky near Saul.

2. When Saul asked, "Who are you?" he heard, "I am Jesus, the one you are persecuting."

3. God wants you to believe Jesus died and came alive again to save you from sin. [Ephesians 1:7]

4. Jesus appeared in this amazing way so Saul would believe Jesus died and came alive for him too. Saul believed!

D. Flashcard 4-4 (Acts 9:8-16)

1. After the light disappeared, Saul was blind.

2. For three days Saul prayed and waited, not eating or drinking anything.

3. God spoke to Ananias, and told him to go to Saul and heal his blindness.

4. Ananias was afraid but the Lord said, "Go, for I have chosen Saul to tell others about Me."

5. Some things God's Word says you should do might seem hard to you—like telling someone else about Jesus—but God promises His help to do what He wants you to do. [John 13:17]

E. Flashcard 4-5 (Acts 9:17)

1. Ananias obeyed God and went to Saul.

2. God loves you even though you have sinned against Him. [Romans 5:8]

III. CLIMAX (Acts 9:18)

Immediately Saul could see! He was no longer blind.

IV. CONCLUSION (Acts 9:19-22)

A. Saul must have been so grateful to know God forgave his sins.

B. Flashcard 4-6

Saul began to preach about Jesus!



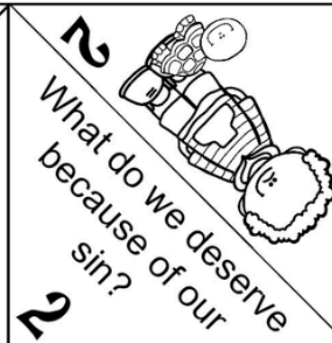

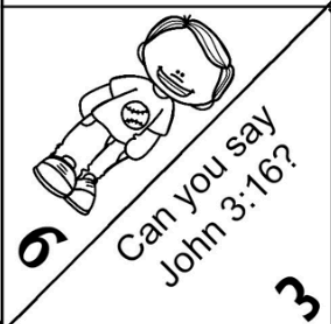










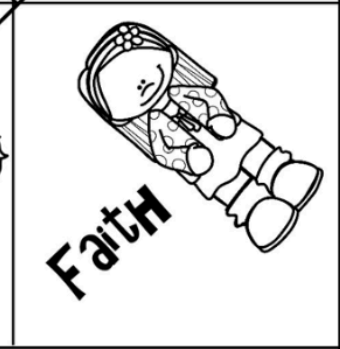
C. Will you believe Jesus is the Son of God, who came to save you from sin? [Romans 10:13]

Scripture verses in parentheses are background text.

Bracketed verses should be quoted or read from God's Word.

9

Salvation Finger Puzzle Master

 <p>Grace</p>	 <p>How many people have sinned?</p>	 <p>What do we deserve because of our sin?</p>	 <p>Who takes away the sin of the world?</p>
 <p>Can you say John 3:16?</p>	 <p>How can we be saved?</p>	 <p>How did God show His love for us?</p>	 <p>After we get saved, what should we do?</p>
 <p>Can we get to heaven by doing good things?</p>	 <p>For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not a result of works, so that no one may boast.</p>	 <p>But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and to the glory of eternity. Amen. 2 Peter 3:18</p>	 <p>The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" John 1:29</p>
 <p>For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16</p>	 <p>...if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. Romans 10:9</p>	 <p>...but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8</p>	 <p>Faith</p>

Salvation Finger Puzzle Assembly Instructions

1. Cut out the square along the outer lines. Do not cut any interior lines.



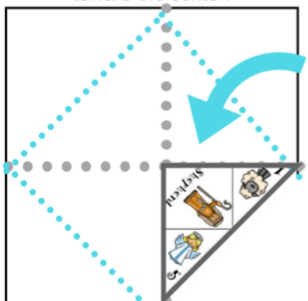
2. With picture side up, fold square in half. Unfold.



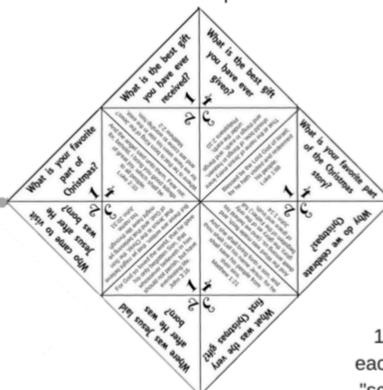
3. Fold in half the other direction. Unfold.



4. Flip paper over, picture side down. Fold the corners up and toward the center.



5. Flip the page over again so that the word side is up.



6. Fold the corners up to the center of the square.



7. You will now have a square with pictures up. Fold square in half.



8. Fold rectangle in half.



9. You should have a tiny square. Unfold until you have 8 pictures looking up at you again.



10. Place your fingers under each of the flaps in the back and "scrunch" the four corners up in the center until they meet.



11. After the corners are lifted to the center, you should see this image, but 3-D. You are done!



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