



### GOALS

- For students to learn what God can do to meet the deepest needs of their unbelieving friends.
- For students to consider the role they can play in connecting their spiritually need friends with everything God offers through Jesus Christ.

### MATERIALS: Group

- Student journal pages
- Variety of colored pencils
- Optional: black cup of coffee

### MATERIALS: Each Student

- A Bible
- Scripture sheet, Psalm 107
- A pen

## SESSION INTRO

### Prayer

Psalm 18:19 tells us that God rescued us because He delighted in us! Thank God for delighting in you and for rescuing the ones in your group who've called out to Him. Pray that through this session your students will gain insight that will better help them reach out to their friends.

### Open

After grabbing your coffee start the session with a discussion on the concept of "before and after." Here are a couple ideas:

- **Use a real time example from your coffee setting. Draw your students' attention to a black cup of coffee. Pour cream into it and watch it turn color. Encourage some melodramatic "oohs" and "ahhs."**
- **Ask students to share their favorite metamorphosis from grade school science, i.e., tadpole to frog; caterpillar to butterfly.**
- **Ask students to share about a recent "before and after" project they've been a part of, i.e., cleaning a messy room, painting a room, improving a grade, etc.**

Transition into your study time by sharing an example of something that changed when you came into a relationship with Jesus. (Before I knew Jesus... After I knew Jesus...). After finishing your story ask students to share one of their own "before and after" stories.

After you have shared your stories set up today's session with this:

**Today we will take a look at four different groups of people. We will spend our time studying their "before and after" salvation story. By looking closely at these stories we will be able to better recognize that turning point in the life of any Christian which can best be summed up with the phrase, "Then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble." Not only will we look into these stories today, but we will try to make them into our own.**

## DIGGING IN

Invite students to turn to their journal pages and Scripture sheets. Read Psalm 107:1-3 and discuss the following questions.

**Who is the “he” in this verse?**

**Who is the “foe” he redeemed us from?**

**What are the redeemed supposed to do?**

Elicit from that last question the response, *tell their story*. Explain that Psalm 107 is exactly that: four different stories of redemption.

### Story 1 (Psalm 107:4-9)

As students read Story 1 (Psalm 107:4-9) from their Scripture sheets, have them do the following:

1. **Underline descriptions of the people before their turning point.**
2. **In a different color underline descriptions of the people after their turning point**
3. **Circle the turning point.**

Then process what they found with these questions (invite students to journal their thoughts on their journal pages as you discuss):

- **What were these people like before their turning point?**
- **What was the big turning point in their lives? (Have them tell you the specific verse.)**
- **Why would you call this a turning point?**
- **What did God do for them when they cried out to Him?**

Use the next set of questions to help students see the story of 107:4-9 today. Invite students to journal their thoughts on their journal pages.

- **What would spiritual hunger and thirst look like today?**
- **Why is the image of wandering in a “desert wasteland” so fitting?**
- **Based on this passage, what does God want to do for people in this situation?**
- **Do you think you are in a position where you could partner with God to help reach people around you in this situation?**

### Story 2 (Psalm 107:10-16)

Now follow the same format with Story 2, having students underline the “before” and “after” descriptions and circle the turning point.

Then process what they found with these questions (invite students to journal their thoughts on their journal pages as you discuss):

- **What were these people like before their turning point?**
- **What was the big turning point in their lives? (Have them tell you the specific verse.)**
- **Why would you call this a turning point?**
- **What did God do for them when they cried out to Him?**

Use the next set of questions to help students see the story of Psalm 107:10-16 today.

- **Can you think of any friends who could be described as “in darkness or deepest gloom?”**
- **Have you ever experienced something like this?**
- **How might you be able to share your experience with the people you know who are currently living in this reality?**
- **How did someone reach you while you were in this spot?**

### **Story 3 (Psalm 107:17-22)**

Again, follow the same format with Story 3, having students underline the “before” and “after” descriptions and circle the turning point.

Then process what they found with these questions (invite students to journal their thoughts on their journal pages as you discuss):

- **What were these people like before their turning point?**
- **What was the big turning point in their lives? (Have them tell you the specific verse.)**
- **Why would you call this a turning point?**
- **What did God do for them when they cried out to Him?**

Use the next set of questions to help students see the story of 107:17-22 today.

- **How does spiritual rebellion show up in teens’ lives today?**
- **What type of “affliction” can result from spiritual rebellion?**

### **Story 4 – (Psalm 107:23-32)**

Now follow the same format with Story 4, having students underline the “before” and “after” descriptions and circle the turning point.

Then process what they found with these questions:

- **What were these people like before their turning point?**
- **What was the big turning point in their lives? (Have them tell you the specific verse.)**
- **Why would you call this a turning point?**
- **What did God do for them when they cried out to Him?**

Use the next set of questions to help students see the story of Psalm 107:23-32 today.

- **Can you think of any friends who are going through a lot of ups and downs in their lives?**
- **What about friends whose lives are pressing through hard circumstances and looking for peace?**
- **What are some of the ways we work to find outside peace in our lives?**
- **Have you ever settled into a place of false peace? (False peace: something that calms for a little, but is not the peace that surpasses all understanding God promises.)**
- **How did you recognize it wasn’t real peace?**

## **TAKING IT INWARD**

Be sure to point out to your students that in this Old Testament psalm, we learn that when a person cries out to God for salvation, He’s able to meet them exactly at the point of their deepest spiritual need. In the New Testament, we see the same thing about Jesus Christ.

On their journal pages are a set of Scripture passages. Ask your students to look up these passages and write down what Jesus can do for people based on what He says in these verses.

**John 6:35**

**John 8:31-32, 34-36**

**Matthew 11:28; John 8:9-11**

**John 14:27; 16:33**

Discuss how each of these passages parallel what the group saw in Psalm 107.

Help your students internalize this psalm with one simple question inspired by verse 2, *Let the redeemed of the Lord tell their story*. Ask:

**So, what's your story?**

*To prompt discussion, ask if anyone relates to one of the four stories in Psalm 107.*

## PUTTING INTO PRACTICE

As you move toward the close of your session, ask a volunteer to read Psalm 107:43 from the Scripture sheet.

Use the questions and thoughts below to do what verse 43 suggests: *heed these things and ponder the loving deeds of the Lord*.

- **Brainstorm with your group on how to connect these truths about Jesus with friends who really need them.**
- **Challenge students to make a list of friends, neighbors or family members who are in any of these spiritual predicaments.**
- **Encourage each other with ideas on how to reach out to friends in these predicaments, to help them complete their story.**