

LESSON ONE



HIKE: HELPLESS TO HOPEFUL

Memory Verse:

Romans 15:13

*"Now may the God of hope fill you with all kinds of peace in believing,
that you may abound in hope by the power of our Holy Spirit."*

Bible Story:

Jesus Meets a Man by a Pool
(John 9:1-9)

Songs:

The Great Love of the Lord
I Have Found a Friend in Jesus
I've Got Peaches on a River
There's Within My Heart
I Will Enter His Gates
Walking in Sunlight

Preparatory Considerations:

1. This class is divided into five "blocks" of instruction. To ensure that all the material is covered, you will want to consider carefully each block of instruction in preparation for class.
2. Read all the literature referenced in the lesson.
3. Make sure that all materials are prepared for the students' use. The following materials will be required for this class:

• Student Papers
• Lesson One—Lesson One Memory Verse Poster;
Lesson One Focus Boomerang; Helpless to Hopeful Definitions;
Complete the Picture reproducibles (3) and Solution (1)

- Bible
- Bonzer Backpack (Block Three)
- scissors (Block Four)
- Pointe Pens (Block Four)



INTO THE OUTBACK!

- Welcome students, and introduce the theme, **Turnabout Pointe**.
- Establish that helplessness is a common feeling.
- Introduce Memory Verse.

A. Begin by welcoming the students to Turnabout Pointe. Be sure to introduce yourself and each of your co-teachers. If time permits, allow students to introduce themselves by telling the class something special about themselves.

B. Explain the theme of the VBS. **This VBS is set in Australia, a country on the opposite side of the world. Not only is Australia on the opposite side of the world, it's different from the States in lots of ways.** Allow students to share what they know about Australia.

1. The water in Australia spins the opposite way when it goes down the drain.
2. The seasons are opposite from our seasons.
 - When it is summer here, it is winter in Australia.
3. The constellations are different.
 - Southern Cross, the Jewel Box cluster; the Emu in the Sky, the Large and Small Magellanic Clouds
 - We see constellations in different seasons: Ex. We see Orion in the winter, but Australia sees it in the summer.
 - Our stars move from left to right; in Australia, they move right to left.
4. The competitive sports are different.
 - cricket instead of baseball, rugby instead of football, soccer is called football, etc.
6. Measuring systems are different.
 - Australians use the metric system: kilometers/miles, Celsius/Fahrenheit, liters/gallons, etc.
6. They have a lot of animals we don't have in the States:
 - koala, kangaroo, wombat, dingo, Tasmanian devil, bilby, billed platypus, echidna, kookaburra, emu
7. They speak English, but the language is different.
 - G'day=Hello, Mate=Friend, Yeh=actual or true, Tucker=food, Good on ya=goodbye, Australia=Straya, Aussie=Australian, hiker=bushwalker

C. Review the VBS theme of **turnabout**. **Just as many things in Australia are opposite to things in the States, we often live our lives in a way that is opposite from the way Jesus wants us to live. But Jesus can turn about our lives.**

Introduce the VBS theme verse. "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, a new creation has come: old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new." **Hear that again: "all things have become new!" That is an important and exciting reality. Whatever our issues, attitudes, and circumstances, past and present may hold, Jesus can meet us where we are and change us for the better. He can transform us. Whatever the problem, Jesus is the answer. During this VBS series, we will look at five ways Jesus can Turnabout our lives.**

D. Have students turn to pages 1-2 of their Turnabout Pointe (Student Book) where they will find a travel blog. Assign a strong reader to read the blog aloud, or read the blog yourself. Spend a few moments discussing the blog.

- **When was the last time you felt isolated or helpless?**
- **Was there anyone who stopped to give you a helping hand, a kind word, or gave you hope?**
- **What gives you hope?**
- **What part might Jesus be playing in helping a person's life Turnabout from Helpless to Hopeful?**

E. Relate to the writer of this blog what you are feeling to how your students might feel in their daily life.

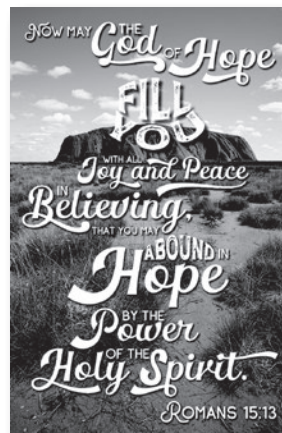
- **What were some of the words the author of the blog used to describe how they were feeling?** unfortunate, lonely, sad, trouble, isolated, insignificant, alone
- **Have you ever felt that way?** Allow students to share. You might share an example of your own to share.

We have all felt invisible, as if no one sees or cares about us. We all have times when we feel insignificant, "less than" our peers. We all have times when things seem too hard; why should we even bother trying?

When we feel invisible, we should remember the One who always sees us. When we are feeling insignificant, we should remember the Friend that loves us so much. He died for us. When things seem too hard, we should remember the loving Father who wants to fill us with joy and peace. When we are feeling invisible, insignificant, and helpless, we should turn to the One who can Turnabout our lives, from Helpless to Hopeful.

F. Before class, put the Memory Verse Poster for Lesson One on the wall. Direct your students' attention to the poster, and introduce the memory verse for Lesson One. **"Now may the**

God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." (Romans 15:13). The first thing this verse tells us in that our God is a God of hope. Believing in Him will fill us with joy and peace. When we feel helpless, we should remember that He has filled us with the power of the Holy Spirit. When we are filled with that power, we won't have just a little hope; we will abound (be rich and well-supplied) with hope.





JESUS MEETS A MAN BY A POOL

- Discover what happens when Jesus Meets a Man by a Pool.
- Explore how Jesus can help us **Turnabout** from Helpless to Hopeful

A. **During this VBS, we will study five life-changing encounters with Jesus, people who needed Jesus' help to Turnabout. Each had different needs, but, despite the origin of their needs, Jesus was the answer. He was able to change each one for the better and make them a new creation.** Have students use their Bibles or devices to look up the lesson text for today. Text is taken from John 5:1-9.

B. Review the main points of the Bible story while providing valuable background information:

Found in Jerusalem, the pool of Bethesda was located just north of the temple mount. It was a large pool surrounded by porches on all four sides with one porch dissecting the center of the pool, giving it five porches. In Hebrew, Bethesda means "house of mercy," probably so named because the pool was believed to have healing powers, and a multitude of sick and ailing people gathered around its porches each day. One among the many was a man who had an infirmity for 38 years. We can assume that, for the duration of that time, he sat there beside the pool each and every day, waiting for something to happen. For 13,870 days, the man sat in the same spot with the same result. No one knows little of the man's mental or emotional state, but there is little doubt he probably felt insignificant, invisible, and helpless. He was without hope.

Then came the day Jesus met him. Though he had been virtually invisible for 38 years, Jesus saw him amidst the host of others. Jesus asked him, "Do you want to be made well?" The man replied, not with a simple "yes" or "no" but by offering a plea. "I have no one to help me when I get up." Over time, the absence of help also caused him to lose hope. Yet, in the blink of an eye, his hope was restored with a simple command from Jesus. "Rise, take up your bed, and walk." What is particularly interesting is that, though He provided the healing through His divine power, Jesus commanded that the man help himself. If we were writing the story today, we might have described how Jesus reached down, grasped the man by the arm, and helped him to his feet. But that's not the way it happened. Instead, Jesus commanded the man to get up, pick up the very bed that had held him for 38 years, and walk away. And he did.

C. Review the Bible story by asking the following questions:

- **Why did so many gather at the Pool of Bethesda each day?** They believed the pool had miraculous healing powers.
- **What are some of the false sources of healing or comfort that people turn to today?**
- **What was the first thing Jesus said to the man?** Do you want to be made well?
- **Why do you believe Jesus asked this question?** We do not know what Jesus was thinking, but it is reasonable to think about a man who had been sitting in the same place for 38 years. He may have no desire to be made well. Maybe the man liked his life just as it was. It is difficult to help someone who does not want to be helped.
- **How did the man respond to Jesus' question?** The man responded to Jesus by telling Him he had never had anyone help him, and after all these years, he had lost hope.
- **Do you believe there is any significance to the fact that Jesus wanted the man to help himself to his feet and pick up his own bed before walking? Why or why not?**
- **What do you think the following day was like for this man after Jesus healed him? What do you think he might have done?** The next day was undoubtedly different for this man. He was no longer stranded by himself all day, every day, with no choices. He could work. He could make new friends. He could take long walks or play with children. He could do almost anything he wanted. For the first time in 38 years, he had hope simply because Jesus stopped and helped him.



LIFE TURNED ABOUT

- Establish the contrast between *Helpless* and *Hopeful*.
- Explore how Jesus can help us **Turnabout** from Helpless to Hopeful

A. Before class, remove the *Helpless to Hopeful Definitions* visual and *Lesson One Focus Boomerangs* visual from the Visual Aid package. Cut apart the definitions, and place them in a *Bonzer Backpack*. Cut apart the boomerangs, and place them on the table. As VBS progresses, all 10 boomerangs will be displayed on the wall. If you wish, you can display them on a bulletin board with a heading such as *Life Turned About*.

A boomerang is a throwing stick used by the aboriginal (or native) people who live in the Outback of Australia. The boomerang's unique design causes it to turn about a central axis. Some are designed to be thrown straight at whatever one wishes to hit. The shape of the returning boomerang causes it to return to the thrower. The flight of a skillfully thrown boomerang will curve so that it flies back to where it started.

There are times in our lives when we are like a boomerang. We are headed with great speed in one direction, but we are headed in the wrong direction, spinning out of control. The good news that when we return to Jesus, when He is the focus of our lives, He can help us Turnabout, and send us in the right direction.

Show the *Helpless and Hopeless Boomerangs* to students.

- **How would you define *helpless*? How would you define *hopeful*?** Have students pull boomerangs from the backpack, decide if it defines *Helpless* or *Hopeful*, and place it with the appropriate boomerang.
- **How do you think the man by the pool felt?** Have students pick one of the *Helpless* Definition cards and explain why the man felt that way. (He felt deserted, having no one to help him for 38 years. He probably also felt cast aside, and him.)
- **How do you think the man felt when Jesus turned his life Turnabout?** Have students pick one of the *Hopeful* Definition cards and explain how the man felt that way. (Just the fact that Jesus saw him and cared about him encouraged him. Then with a simple word, Jesus turned his whole life around. The man must have been joyful when Jesus healed him. He was now optimistic that he had a future.)
- **Pick one of the *Helpless* definition cards that describes how you sometimes feel.** Allow students to explain what has made them feel that way.
- **Pick one of the *Hopeful* Definition cards that describes how Jesus can turn about your life.** Allow students to pick a card and describe how they can Turnabout from Helpless to Hopeful.

B. Place the boomerangs on the wall or bulletin board. **We all feel helpless from time to time. But Jesus gives us hope when we are feeling alone and helpless.** Have students turn page 2 in their Travel Logs. At the bottom of the page, they will find three partial statements that they will complete as you instruct them. Once completed, these statements reveal three keys to maintaining hope. As a class, look up and read aloud each verse, then discuss the verses.

• **Keep Your Perspective.**
1 Peter 1:6-8; 2 Corinthians 4:17-18
We have never been promised a life without difficulty. In fact, we can be sure that as long as we live in this world, things will not always go our way. However, our trials and tribulations can help us grow stronger if we keep the right perspective. They are only temporary. They shape us and help us mature and become complete. They can also help us appreciate what lies ahead.

• **Keep On Keeping On (Persevere).**

Hebrews 12:1; Philippians 3:13-14
The question Jesus asked the man by the pool is one we all must answer: "Do you want to be made well?" It can be easier to surrender to our trials than to fight to conquer them. But a life-changing encounter with Jesus requires us to have a willing and faith-filled heart. Adversity only lasts for a time, but the past is in the past. Learn from it, and push forward to the future.

• **Believe in God's Power.**

2 Thessalonians 2:16-17; Psalms 34:15
Those struggling with loss of hope often feel invisible or insignificant, even losing faith that God sees them or cares about them. The pool of Bethesda was not the answer for the man who wanted to be healed, though he tried for 38 years. The answer was, the answer always is Jesus. He sees us, He hears us, and He has the power to transform our lives by filling us with the power of His Holy Spirit.



ABLE TO HELP ONESELF	SURE IN ONE'S ABILITY TO ACCOMPLISH A TASK OR REACH A GOAL
DEPRIVED OF STRENGTH	
UNABLE TO MANAGE ALONE	PROMISING ADVANTAGE OR SUCCESS
LACKING PROTECTION	EXPECTING TO GET WHAT ONE WANTS
VULNERABLE AGAINST ATTACK	FEELING OR SHOWING HOPE
POWERLESS	INSPIRING OR DIVINE HOPE
INCAPACITATED	CREATING HOPE
VULNERABLE	EXPRESSING HOPE
SUSCEPTIBLE	KEEPING THE FAITH
UNPROTECTED	LOOKING FORWARD TO OVERCOME
DEFENSELESS	PEACE IN BELIEVING
DESERTED	PROMISING COMFORTABLE
OVERCOME	CONFIDENT
ABANDONED	EMBOLDENED
REJECTED	REASSURED
DISCARDED	ENCOURAGING
POWERLESS	HEARTENING
DEPENDENT	OPTIMISTIC
STRANDED	
CAST ASIDE	
INFIRM	
OUTCAST	
FRAIL	
DISABLED	EAGER
UNSAFE	FEELING
FEEBLE	CONTENT
SAD	LOVELY
LOW	WEAK
	UPBEAT
	ASSURED

AUSSIE ACTIVITIES

- Reinforce the lesson.
- Create a hands-on learning experience that will solidify the lesson in the students' minds.
- Have fun!

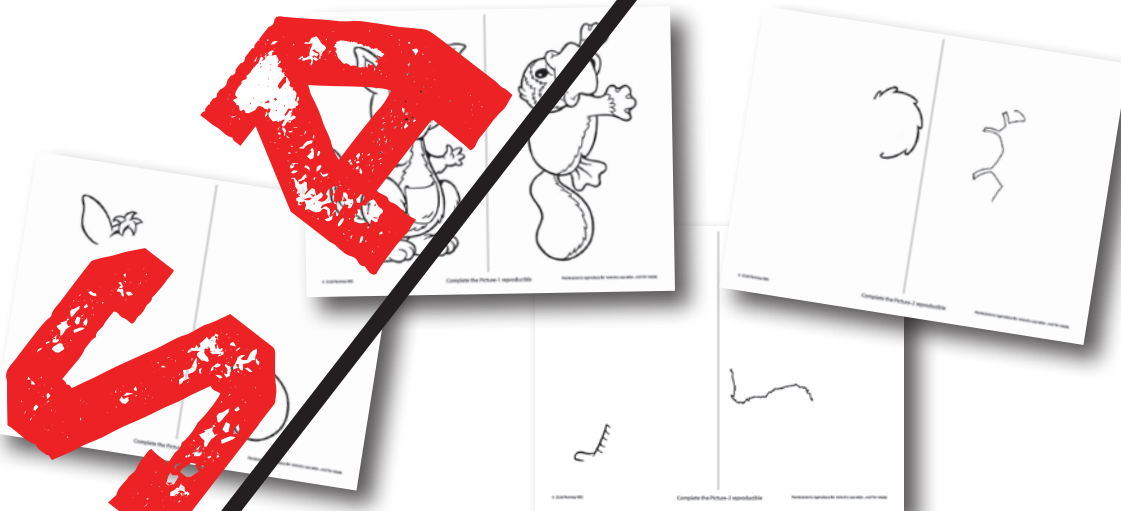


COMPLETE
THE PICTURE

Materials needed: Visual Aid marked Lesson One—Complete the Picture (3); Solution Complete the Picture
scissors
Pointe Pencils

Before class, make several copies of the three *Complete the Picture* reproductions and cut them apart. Make sure that you have more pieces of paper than you have students. Tape the papers on the wall of the classroom at the students' level. Give each student a pencil, and have them find a piece of paper on which to work. The object of this activity is to incorporate the scribble into a picture they will draw, making something good or useful out of something messy or insignificant. After the students have completed their pictures, give them each a chance to talk about the pictures they have drawn. SAY: **We don't always know why bad things happen. But we know that Jesus is always aware of our struggles. Just as He was with the man who couldn't walk, Jesus sees us and cares about us. We have to remember that we can only see a small part of the picture. Jesus sees the entire picture because He is not limited to time and space.**

The scribbles are taken from Turnabout Pointe artwork. If you want to see the completed pictures, you will find them on the **Turnabout Pointe Multimedia CD.**



OPEN TO CHANGE

Before class, compile a list of objects. You will be asking your students to form these objects using the other students. Suggestions are: car, tree, clock, bridge, horse, telephone, etc. Clear a large, open area and line one side with chairs where your audience will sit. Ask for a volunteer. Whisper an object to the student. The student must then use another student, or several other students, to form the object. He cannot tell anyone, including the students he is using, what object he is trying to create. When he proclaims his masterpiece is complete, the students left in the audience should try to guess what the object is. Continue playing until everyone who wants to has had a chance to create something.

ASK: How did it feel to be changed into something else? Was it difficult to allow someone to change you? Would it have been easier if you had known what object into which you were being changed? How is this like life? Is it ever difficult to allow Jesus to change us? Is it frightening when we do not know the plans God has for us? This VBS is about transformation or change. During each lesson we will learn how we need to allow Jesus to change our lives.



SOMETHING GOOD OUT OF SOMETHING BAD

Before class, compile a list of "bad" things. Suggestions: bad cold, bad days, sickness, chores, homework, punishment, hiccups, bullies, teasing, etc. This activity is best played in groups, but if you have a small class, you can play individually. Divide students into small groups of three to four. Read the memory verse and review that God is a God of hope. **SAY: Romans 8:28 says, "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose." Bad things occasionally happen to us, but God has a way of using the bad and the good to help shape a positive future.**

Assign a "bad" thing to each group; the groups should keep their "bad" thing a secret from the other groups. Give the groups a few minutes to think of 3 or 4 good things, serious or silly, which can come from their "bad" thing. Examples, if a group has been assigned "broccoli," they may come up with 1.) It makes you strong, 2.) You can make small trees to play with, and 3.) It makes you appreciate other food more. If assigned "rainy days," they may come up with 1.) It makes flowers grow, 2.) It allows you to play lots of video games, and 3.) Storms make a rainbow. After a few minutes, allow each group to share their good things without mentioning their "bad" thing to see if the other groups can guess what their bad thing was. **SAY: We shouldn't be discouraged when we go through difficulties. As we learned from the story of the man by the pool, Jesus is always near, He sees us, and He will help us when the time is right.**

TRAVEL LOG

Allow the students to complete the activities from Lesson One in their Student Books.

