

Hear the Good News

For teens ages 12–14 · about 45–60 minutes · Buried & Raised · game **Hear the Good News** · built on **Acts 2:38, Mark 1:15, and Romans 10:9**

Many students in your room have heard the word *gospel* their whole lives without ever hearing it in plain language. They know it is supposed to be important. They may even know Jesus died on a cross. But when a friend at lunch asks, “So what do Christians actually believe?” they freeze — or they give a borrowed answer about church, parents, or being a decent person. This session clears the fog. Before baptism, every candidate needs to know what the good news actually is, what repentance really means, and why faith must be personal trust in Christ alone — not attendance, not behavior, not family tradition.

Before you teach anything, pray.

Some students think they already know this lesson and tune out. Some are quietly afraid they are not saved. Some carry shame they have never named. Ask the Holy Spirit to make the gospel sound like good news again — fresh, clear, and full of hope — not a vocabulary test and not a guilt trip.

The heart of the lesson

The gospel is not a mood, a culture, or a list of rules. The word *gospel* means **good news** — news about something that already happened. The core message is what Jesus did: He died for our sins, was buried, rose again on the third day, and reigns as Lord today (1 Corinthians 15:3–4; Romans 10:9). That is the announcement. Our part is to respond — and Scripture names two responses that belong together: **repentance** and **faith**.

Turn toward God. Trust Christ alone.

Repentance is not merely feeling sorry. It is a change of mind with a change of direction — turning from sin and self-rule toward God (Mark 1:15; Acts 3:19). Worldly sorrow says, “I got caught.” Godly sorrow turns around and walks a new road (2 Corinthians 7:10). **Faith** is not knowing facts about Jesus. Faith is personal trust — banking your life on Christ’s death and resurrection, confessing Him as Lord, believing God raised Him from the dead (Romans 10:9–10). Salvation is by **grace alone**

through faith alone in Christ alone (Ephesians 2:8–9). Church, baptism, and obedience matter deeply — but they do not replace the gospel. They flow from it.

On the Day of Pentecost, Peter preached the risen Christ and the crowd asked what to do. He did not say, “Try harder.” He said, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38). Water baptism and Spirit baptism belong to the apostolic pattern for believers who have turned and trusted — but the fountain is Christ’s finished work, not human performance.

The gospel is an announcement about Jesus — repentance and faith are how we answer yes.

MARK 1:15

“The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; **repent and believe in the gospel.**”

ROMANS 10:9

“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.”

How the session flows

- 1 News, not noise.** Hook with headlines vs. the one announcement that changes everything. ~7 min
- 2 Died, buried, rose.** Teach gospel, repentance, and faith in plain language. ~12 min
- 3 Play the game.** “Hear the Good News” two-team showdown on screen. ~12–15 min
- 4 Quiet honesty.** Reference card — private heart response. ~5 min
- 5 Worksheet.** Structured Scripture practice in class or take-home. ~15 min
- 6 Answer the news.** Invitation to repent, trust Christ, and pray. ~8 min

Screen for the game, printed reference cards and worksheets, pens, optional whiteboard for “gospel / not gospel” sorting, and leaders ready to pray one-on-one with students who want to respond.

Leading it, part by part

News, not noise

Teens swim in headlines — sports trades, drama, trends, fear. Ask: what makes something *news*? News reports an event that already happened. Hold up your phone: tons of noise, but only some of it is actual news. The gospel is the greatest news ever announced: Jesus died for sin, was buried, rose, and is Lord. Read Mark 1:15. Jesus did not open with rules. He opened with *repent and believe the gospel*. Before baptism, students need to hear that announcement clearly — not as church slang, but as life-changing news.

Died, buried, rose

Write three words on the board: **DIED • BURIED • ROSE**. That is the spine of the gospel (1 Corinthians 15:3–4). Jesus did not faint on the cross. He bore real sin, real death, real burial — and God raised Him bodily. Sin’s power was broken; death was defeated. Now define the responses. **Repentance** means turning — like a car making a U-turn. You stop heading away from God and start heading toward Him. Feeling bad can be a start, but repentance keeps walking. **Faith** means trust — like leaning your whole weight on a chair. You are not trusting your grades, your reputation, your church record, or your family name. You trust Christ alone.

Contrast counterfeit “gospels” teens hear: “Be good enough,” “My parents are Christians so I’m fine,” “Church attendance is the ticket.” None of those is the apostolic message. Read Romans 10:9–10 and Acts 2:38. Tie to the Buried & Raised series: the same Jesus who was buried and raised calls students to turn, trust, be baptized, and receive the Spirit — not as a substitute for grace, but as the biblical path of obedience for believers.

Play the game

Run “Hear the Good News” on screen. Round 1 sorts real gospel from counterfeits. Round 2 names the voices of Scripture who preached repentance and faith. Round 3 puts teens in real scenarios — borrowed religion, hidden sin, nervous questions about baptism. Round 4 drills the one-liners fast. Twelve to fifteen minutes. Afterward, bridge: winning points is fun, but the real win is knowing what news you are saying yes to.

Quiet honesty

Hand out the reference card. Nobody collects it. Five minutes. Students circle whether their response to Christ is clear, in-between, or ready to turn and trust today. Honor the silence. Some will meet Jesus here for the first time; others will clarify what they already began.

Worksheet

The worksheet is structured learning — fill-in, true/false, lookup, one real-life answer. It reinforces what the game taught without duplicating the private card. Use in pairs if energy is high; send home if time is short.

Answer the news

Good news demands a response. Invite students quietly: If you have never truly turned and trusted Christ, today is the day. If you have, ask God to deepen repentance and faith where you have been drifting. No pressure, no emotional manipulation — just a clear door. Pray simply. Offer leaders at the sides. Read 1 John 5:13 — God wants you to *know* you have eternal life, not guess from performance.

Take it further

- What is the difference between *news about Jesus* and *advice about behavior*? (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)
- What does Mark 1:15 teach about the order of repentance and believing the gospel?
- How is godly repentance different from worldly sorrow? (2 Corinthians 7:10)
- What does Romans 10:9–10 say must happen in the mouth *and* the heart?
- Why does Acts 2:38 connect repentance, baptism, and receiving the Holy Spirit?
- What is a counterfeit gospel a teen might hear at school or online — and what is the biblical answer? (Galatians 1:6–9)
- How does Ephesians 2:8–9 protect faith from becoming a works project?
- What would change this week if you lived like the resurrection is true?

A final word

Do not assume church kids already know the gospel because they have heard the word a thousand times. Many know the vocabulary without knowing the news. Give them Jesus — died, buried, rose — and the biblical responses: turn from sin, trust Christ alone. Let the game make it memorable, the card make it personal, the worksheet make it stick. Then hold the door open and trust the Spirit to do what only He can do: bring dead hearts to life.