



OPERATION TRANSFORMATION

DAY THREE

A **Vacation Bible School** Curriculum for the Church of the Nazarene, Inc.

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Week at a Glance

“Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind...”
Romans 12:2a

	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4
PASSCODE	Jesus' love transforms my identity	Jesus' power transforms my life	Jesus' presence transforms my choices	Jesus' call transforms my mission
FOCUS	Salvation	Sanctification (Initial)	Sustaining	Sending
ICON	 Thumbprint	 Footprint	 Flashlight	 Cross
AT A GLANCE FOR TEACHERS	God gives us new life through Jesus. Saul the murderer becomes “Brother Paul” the Christian.	Jesus leads me where I never imagined. As I trust and follow Him, Jesus transforms me.	Jesus is always with me. He equips me with wisdom, provides for my needs, and shows me the next step when I persevere.	God calls me to share my transformation with others.
BIBLE STORY	Saul's transformation Acts 9:1-19	Saul meets the disciples in Jerusalem Acts 9:20-30	God works through Paul in prison Acts 16:16-34	Paul remembers God's call Acts 22:1-16
MEMORY VERSE	Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. John 1:12	My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. John 10:27	He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way. Psalm 25:9	Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ... John 17:3a

	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4
MUSIC	<p>Theme song</p> <p>Today's memory verse song</p> <p>Optional worship song theme: <i>Jesus our Savior and God's love</i></p>	<p>Theme song</p> <p>Today's memory verse song</p> <p>Optional worship song theme: <i>Jesus our Lord; surrender; or trust</i></p>	<p>Theme song</p> <p>Today's memory verse song</p> <p>Optional worship song theme: <i>Jesus our friend, guide, and strength</i></p>	<p>Theme song</p> <p>Today's memory verse song</p> <p>Optional worship song theme: <i>Jesus our King; our obedience; God's call</i></p>
MISSION BRIEF	Flower Power	Caterpillar Soup	Decode God's Perspective	A Tale of Two Balloons!
CRAFT LAB	Identity Badge	Butterfly Footprints	Invisible Ink	Salvation Bracelet
RECHARGE STATION	Road to Damascus	Sheep Snacks	Paul In Prison Snack Mix	Popcorn Transformation
AGENT TRAINING FIELD	Hold On, Saul! (Statues Game)	Follow Me	I Know My Shoe!	Helper and Friend (3-legged Race)
INFILTRATION SERVICE PROJECT	Giving something that points to new life through Jesus	Doing something that will transform someone's day	Being a help and a friend to someone because Jesus is our Help and Friend	Doing something that will share Jesus with others

DAY THREE

Leadership Meeting

- Greeting and appreciation
- Our goal is to *help kids experience life-transforming encounters with Jesus Christ.*
- Review training meeting highlights (bathroom policy, safety policy, discipline, what to do in case of illness or emergency, releasing children at day's end, etc.). Since the details were provided at a prior training, offer these on a single printed page as a reminder.
- Remind leaders of the special offering project.

Day 3 Overview:

Today's Passcode:

**Jesus' presence
transforms my choices**

Today's Theology Focus:

Sustaining
Use every opportunity to
weave this into your time
with the kids.

Today's Bible Story:

Acts 16:16-34
(read aloud)

Review Today's Memory Verse:

Psalm 25:9
"He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way."

Review Top Secret Hand Signal:

Tap-tap, clap-clap, snap-snap, SHHHHHH!

Pat palms on top of legs two times, clap hands two times, snap fingers two times, and place finger to lips while shushing.
NOTE: some people have difficulty snapping their fingers; encourage them to close all four fingers onto their palms.

- Review today's songs. Motions to Psalm 25:9 are included on the media section of nazarene.org/vbs.
- Review today's schedule.
- Questions, comments, or concerns?
- Close with prayer at least 15 minutes before start time.

OUR PRAYER FOR YOU:

Father God, we worship You for Who You are.

There is no one like You, Who loves, seeks, and saves the lost.

All of our preparation has brought us to this moment.

Now, Father, bring the children You know need to be here today.

Cut out all distractions so the Good News will go forth without hindrance.

Give us ears to hear Your Spirit and the right words to communicate Your love to the children.

Help us remember what we have prepared to present to the children today.

Give us the energy and enthusiasm to make Your Word

as exciting, engaging, and powerful as it truly is.

We pray the children will fall in love with You and with Your Word.

Draw them by Your grace into a right relationship with you.

Grant us strength to carry out Your work here today.

Protect these kids and these workers.

Take care of our families at home while we seek to expand your Kingdom here.

May Your Kingdom come and Your will be done here today.

We will be careful to give You all the glory.

In Jesus' name and for the sake of His Kingdom,

Amen.

Opening & Welcome

Be prepared to transition quickly from music to dialogue to music to skit to keep attention focused.

Sing Theme Song and Day 1 and 2 Songs with Hand Motions

Starting with music engages everyone's attention and participation.

Welcome

The following is a suggested script:

Director: Welcome to Day Three of *Operation Transformation!* I am Special Agent _____ and it's so great to see all of you today! I have been looking forward to seeing you and going on our mission today. We are going to have a great day! Did you remember our Bible verse for the week? (*Say the verse you just sang.*)

We have already learned two other verses. Who knows John 1:12? (*Pause for answers*)

Does anyone remember our passcode for Day 1? It has something to do with becoming children of God...(*Pause for answers*)

That is right! "Jesus' love transforms my identity!"

Yesterday we learned about hearing God's voice and that He transforms us when we follow Him. Who can remember our verse for yesterday, John 10:27? (*Pause for answers*)

Does anyone remember the passcode from yesterday? (*Pause for answers*)

That's right! "Jesus' power transforms my life!" You have really been paying attention!

Today is a super exciting Bible story about the adventure of Saul as he continues to follow Jesus! I can't wait for you to hear about it because when you do, you will really understand the passcode for today. Despite our circumstances, Jesus' presence can transform our choices! In fact, that is today's passcode—say it with me, **"Jesus' presence transforms my choices!"** Let's hear the boys!...Let's hear the girls!...Now all together! **"Jesus' presence transforms my choices!"**

We also have a new verse today and it is good news! We don't have to figure out the right choices on our own. **Psalm 25:9** says, **"He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way."** That was true for Saul and I'm so glad it is true for us today.

Offering

Director: Who can share what our offering is for this week? *(Share about your mission project for those who may be new. You can find information about the Kids Reaching Kids Offering at nazarene.org/sdmi.)* That's right. So far you have given \$_____ towards our project. We are going to sing our new verse for the day and learn the motions while you bring your offering. Don't worry if you don't have anything to give today, follow your leader anyway. Now that you know, you can bring it tomorrow! We'll all meet back here before you go home and that's when we'll see if the GIRLS or BOYS won!

(Play today's memory verse song and receive the offering. Use this time to make any other special announcements. When everyone has returned to their seats, lead them in the top secret hand signal to get their attention.)

Great job everyone! You just heard today's memory verse song. We'll be singing it all day—but of course we need to learn it first! So let's sing it one more time before we meet Agent Tre and Buddy to find out about today's mission.

Sing Theme Song with Hand Motions

Sing Day 3 Song with Hand Motions

Opening Skit

Props & Characters:

- **Special agent lockbox**, marked "Top Secret"
- **1-2 Mission Brief Day 3 sheets** found in the resource section of nazarene.org/vbs. (These are placed in the lockbox with an NIV Bible and a flashlight.)
- **NIV Bible** (Place in the lockbox.)
- **Flashlight** (Place in the lockbox.)
- **1-2 chairs**
- **Special Agent Tre** (Code Name: Trinity); dressed like a spy, with a hat and sunglasses
- **Agent-In-Training Buddy** (Code Name: Barnabas); dressed like a spy, with a hat *but not sunglasses* (see Day Four Skits)
- **Agent Strange**; dressed as much like Tre as possible

Note: Use any additional props available to increase interest. Encourage the characters to move often and to use the whole platform/stage.

Dialogue:

Agent Strange: ("Sneaking around") I really thought I had him yesterday. That Trinity makes me so MAD! He's doing MY job. Yesterday I thought I could get him distracted by giving him that fake assignment...everything was just right. The envelope looked exactly like the ones my dad used to get. I thought I had Tre fooled. Why did he have to mess everything up by calling the Boss? I underestimated how hard it will be to get him out of my way. I'll just have to try harder today!

If I can trap him while he's out on a mission and hide him away, they'll have no choice but to make me a REAL agent because then they'll need me! I just need to figure out a plan...Yes! I know just what to do! (*Rubbing his hands together, Strange leaves stage with a triumphant "evil laugh"*)

(*Buddy and Agent Tre enter stage opposite Strange*)

Buddy: Hey Tre! Did the Boss ever tell you what to do with that watch He had you purchase yesterday?

Agent Tre: (*Distracted, reading something*)

Buddy: Tre? Agent Trinity?

Agent Tre: Oh, sorry Buddy...Uh, no. The Boss didn't tell me what to do with the watch. Sometimes we don't get to see the big picture. I just do what He asks me to do and await further instructions.

Buddy: You seem distracted today. What's going on?

Agent Tre: I'm reading something incredible in the Agent Handbook (*Goes back to reading*).

Buddy: O...K...would you...care to share?

Agent Tre: Oh! Sure, Buddy. It's the official account of Paul's wrongful imprisonment.

Buddy: Wrongful imprisonment? What's that?

Agent Tre: It's when someone is falsely accused and thrown in jail when they didn't do anything wrong. It's all right here in Acts 16:16-40. It happened after Paul had received his new identity and God's power had transformed him. He was even following God. This is one of the stories that shows how God Himself was with Paul. He was Paul's help and friend when Paul was in trouble.

Buddy: God was Paul's help and friend. I like that...but what does that have to do with prison?

Agent Tre: Paul was following God, doing good, and helping people. He went to a city called Philippi with his friend Silas. The city leaders didn't worship God. They wanted Paul and Silas to stop doing miracles and getting people all excited about Jesus. So they had them beaten and jailed in the deepest, darkest part of the prison.

Buddy: Just for helping people and telling them about Jesus? That's not fair!

Agent Tre: You're right; it's not! But the enemy doesn't fight fair. When people hear about the good news of Jesus and accept His love, their lives are transformed. Those who are slaves to sin are set free. But slave owners never want their slaves set free! So Paul and Silas found themselves beaten up and jailed. But they knew they had been doing God's will. They began thinking about God's great love and started thanking Him for sending Jesus. That's when they were filled with joy despite their suffering and started singing praise songs to God!

Buddy: WHAT? They had just been beaten and jailed for obeying God! Why would they praise God when He allowed them to get beat up just for doing what He told them to do?

Agent Tre: Bad things happen to ALL people, Buddy. But when bad things happen to US, we have the advantage of knowing God is right there with us. He never leaves us. His power is at work in us helping us to do what He has asked us to do.

Buddy: I never thought of it like that before. I guess good and bad things happen to everyone. But that's still nothing to celebrate and sing about.

Agent Tre: They weren't singing because bad things happened to them. They were singing because God was right there with them. And it wasn't long before God showed His power to everyone in that jail. There was a massive earthquake, everyone's chains fell off, and all the cell doors flew open!

Buddy: Woah! I bet they got out of there as fast as they could.

Agent Tre: That's exactly what the head jailer thought. And even though it wasn't his fault, he thought his life was over because he knew the city leaders would blame him for the prisoners' escape! But Paul yelled, "Hey! It's OK! We're still here!" That's when the jailer realized there was something very different about Paul and Silas! He realized he needed help from *their* God, so he asked them, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" and they replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved..."

Buddy: That's it? "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved!" It's really that simple?

Agent Tre: Absolutely!

Buddy: Hmmm...(Seems distracted but shakes himself out of it) What happened next?

Agent Tre: The jailer took Paul and Silas into his home, cleaned and bandaged their wounds, and fed them a meal. Paul and Silas told him about Jesus, and that night the jailer and his entire family were saved!

Buddy: Wow! And none of that would have happened if they hadn't been thrown in jail!

Agent Tre: None of that would have happened if they hadn't been in jail *and* singing praises to God! That's a great lesson to remember, Buddy. Sometimes God sends us into difficult places because that's where the lost people are. God wants them to be saved and He works through us to make that happen—*especially* in tough situations. That's why it's SO important to complete the mission without griping or complaining, especially when we're treated unfairly because that really surprises people. It makes them wonder what's going on with us and that curiosity gives us a chance to tell them about Jesus!

Buddy: I get it! Hey, speaking of curiosity...I wonder what's in the special agent lockbox today? Do you think maybe I can open it today? After all, I have been on secret missions with you and I've learned to dress like you, so I'm a whole lot more like you than I used to be. So my thumbprint ought to work today! (*Buddy tries it. It doesn't work.*) Why isn't it working? I'm doing everything you're doing!

Agent Tre: Buddy, you're talking about things on the outside: how you dress, how you act, what you do. Remember Agent Strange? He looks and acts the part too, but *he is definitely not a special agent!* God isn't fooled by appearances or acting. God looks on the inside; He sees what's in our hearts! There's a huge difference between *knowing about* Jesus and *knowing* Jesus as your friend and savior. Until you receive Him into your heart as your Lord and Savior, you're not a special agent and your thumbprint won't work. But I'm confident you will be one day, if you just don't give up, Buddy. (*Pats Buddy on the shoulder in a kind and caring gesture.*)

(*Scans thumbprint, opens lockbox.*) Hey, look at this! (*Gives the paper to Buddy and holds up a flashlight.*)

Buddy: I can't read that. What is it? Please bring that flashlight over. Looks like a bunch of weird lines and boxes.

Agent Tre: It's a secret coded message and the flashlight is not helping. Since neither one of us can read it, it must be a message for these new recruits. (*Points to the children*) Their mission brief leader will have to help them figure out what it says and why they might need a flashlight.

Buddy: Tre, is that your shoe ringing?

Agent Tre: It sure is, Buddy! Do you realize what just happened? You can hear my shoe phone! That means you're learning to listen! (*Speaking into his shoe*) Yes sir! Today's passcode is **Jesus' presence transforms my choices**. Yes sir, this is Agent Trinity. (*Pause*) Thank You, sir. I appreciate the reminder. (*"Turns off" phone and returns it to his foot*)

Buddy: What's the mission?

Agent Tre: The Boss wanted to remind me that, "He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them His way."

Buddy: O...K...is that some sort of secret code too? Because that is a very strange mission!

Agent Tre: It's not a mission, Buddy, and it's not a secret code. The Boss is sending me a reminder that I'll need to remember for our next mission. He knows I've got a lot going on. Man...I think I'm gonna' need your help remembering this, Buddy.

Buddy: Sure! Maybe if we say it together...(*Walk off stage together, repeating the reminder.*) He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them His way...He guides the humble...

Director: I wonder if they're going to be all right. I thought I saw Agent Strange snooping around earlier. Did any of you see him? I thought so! I hope Buddy and Tre are going to be OK. I'll be sure to send the flashlight and the secret coded message to your mission brief station so you can figure out how to decode it to help Buddy and Tre!

Closing:

If time allows, sing 1-2 songs focused on God's sustaining presence, Jesus our friend, guide, and strength.

End with Day 3 Song, "*Psalm 25:9, He guides the humble,*" with hand motions.

Kids are dismissed by groups and given any instructions they need to get to their Transformation Station.

Play theme song as children exit.

Transformation Station



MISSION BRIEF: DECODE GOD'S PERSPECTIVE

Preparation:

- If possible, the leader should wear a **white lab coat**.
- Prepare a **large manila envelope** with "MISSION BRIEF #3" written in large letters on the outside. Place a copy of the **script** inside.
- Place a copy of the **Mission Brief Day 3 sheet** inside (found in the resource section of nazarene.org/vbs). Be sure you have practiced folding it correctly to reveal the messages.
- Have a **current NIV Bible** with your supplies.
- Have the **flashlight** from the opening.

Directions:

Play the song for today's verse as children arrive and leave. Look at the pictures provided and practice folding the paper prior to the lesson so that you are sure you know how to show the messages.

Review:

Day 1: Jesus' love transforms my identity.

How is our white flower today?

(Draw out the conclusion that the longer you spend "soaking" in the Word of God and being with God's people, the more you begin looking like a child of God.)

Day 2: Jesus' power transforms my life.

Who remembers what we learned in our mission brief yesterday?

(Butterflies transform completely and are totally re-made, just like we are when Jesus comes to live inside us!)

Mission Brief Summary:

(Feel free to make this your own!)

1. Retell the Paul in prison story in **Acts 16:16-34**. (Jesus' presence transformed Paul's choices.)
2. Explain that Paul had a relationship with Jesus that sustained him through hard times. Paul kept doing what was good and right, even when his life got hard (worshipping and praising God even when he was in prison). A relationship with Jesus transformed Paul into a light that pointed the way to Jesus in that dark prison, just like a flashlight shows us the path where we should walk when it is dark.
3. Explain that Jesus set an example for us to follow—He obeyed His Father in hard times and even in death. God can be trusted to always be with us no matter what. With God as our help and guide, we can know how to choose to follow Jesus. God's presence transforms our choices!
4. Show the secret messages. Part of learning to walk with Jesus is asking the Holy Spirit for help to see things the way He sees them—from His perspective. (Fold the paper and show them the two perspectives.)

Mission Brief Leader Suggested Script:

(Feel free to adapt to your context.)

In our Bible story today, Paul and his friend were beaten for preaching about Jesus. Paul and Silas had learned about Jesus' life. Jesus loved people even when they mistreated Him.

Can anyone tell me how Jesus treated sick people? Do you know how He treated the lepers no one would touch? *(Pause for answers)*

He touched them and healed them.

How did He treat the blind men others made fun of? *(Pause for answers)*

He talked kindly to them and opened their eyes so they could see.

How did He treat the lady caught in the act of sinning? *(Pause for answers)*

He was kind to her. He forgave her and told her she could go and sin no more.

Even when Jesus was dying on the cross, He asked His Father to forgive the people who hurt Him because they didn't understand what they were doing.

Jesus loved people. He healed the sick, touched the untouchable, and fed the hungry. Paul and Silas knew all of this. In prison, after those guards had beaten them and put them in chains and shackles, the Bible says they prayed and worshipped God. There they were—bruised, hurt, and bleeding—and yet they sang and praised God! Paul had learned something...He learned that once we receive Jesus into our lives, we are NEVER alone! We ALWAYS have a Friend, a Comforter in hard times, and a Counselor when we need advice. God was with them in that prison, and they felt His peace even though they were in trouble! They knew God was with them, and they were grateful for His loving presence! They could not stop praising God even in the middle of this difficult situation.

As Paul and Silas were singing and praising God, an earthquake came and shook the prison until all the doors flung open. It even broke off their shackles and their chains fell off. They were free to go! But Paul and Silas knew the jailer would get in big trouble if they left. He would be punished and possibly killed if they escaped. Instead of running away, they did the unthinkable. They stayed right in their prison cell and called out to him so he would not harm himself in his hopelessness. It is amazing what we can do when we stay focused on God and realize we are NOT alone. Jesus is always with us! *When we have Jesus, we have a power that is beyond our own strength. It is a power that helps us do what is right, a power that helps us make wise choices, and a power that helps us worship even in hard times.*

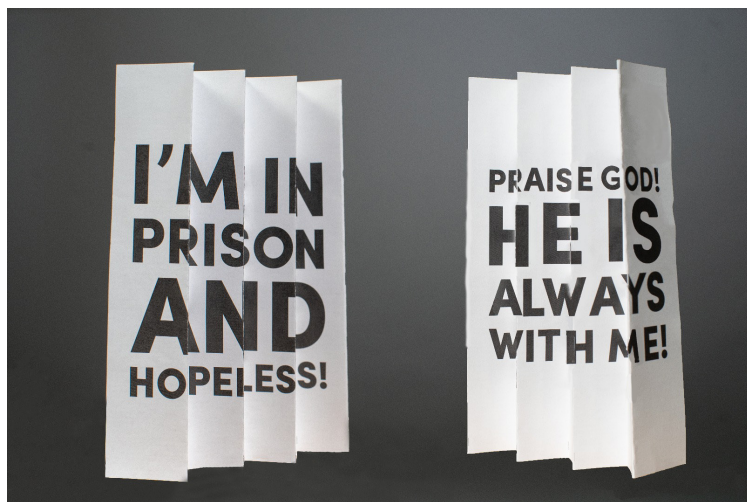
Our Bible verse says, **“He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way,” (Psalm 25:9).**

God’s ways are not our ways! But God helps us know what His ways are. Just like the light from this flashlight helps us know where to walk to stay on a path in the dark. We need God to teach us His ways and give us power to walk in His ways. It did not seem to make sense that God would have Paul and Silas stay put in jail, did it? But Jesus knew there was a man there, the jailer, who needed to meet Jesus that day, too!

It is all a matter of how we see things. It is a matter of perspective. *(Start folding Mission Brief Day 3 sheet. Fold along the lines to find the messages on the page. Turn it the other way and see that there are two messages on this one page!)*

Paul could have seen himself in jail from an earthly view. *(Show the Stage 1 side: “I’m in prison and hopeless!”)*

But because Paul walked so closely with God, he came to see even this really hard situation from another perspective—from God’s perspective! *(Show the Stage 2 side: “Praise God! He is always with me!”)*



Folded Stage 1: I’m in prison
and hopeless!

Folded Stage 2: Praise God!
He is always with me!

Jesus' power enables us to see things from HIS perspective!

Raise your hand if you have ever met someone who is not a very kind person. I think if Paul and Silas did not have Jesus in their life, they would *only* see a mean, cruel jailer. They would not have seen him as someone who needed Jesus, too! When we keep our eyes on Jesus and walk with Him, His presence helps us see the world from His perspective. Just like a flashlight transforms the dark and helps us see things that we could not see before. With Jesus' presence, we have the power to love people and treat people the way Jesus wants us to. **Jesus' presence transforms our choices**, just like it did for Paul. Jesus loved that jailer. Because Paul and Silas chose to worship God when things got hard, the jailer's life and the lives of his whole family were transformed! So when we're wondering what we should do, simply ask God to show us His perspective. Think about a flashlight and ask ourselves, "How would Jesus see these people and handle this situation?"

Transformation Station



EVIDENCE VAULT:
PSALM 25:9

Play the theme song or memory verse song as children enter the room. Open your time with the top secret hand signal.

Supplies:

- Recording of the day's **memory verse song**
- **Memory verse chart**
- Optional **prizes or mission money**
- **Supplies for memory verse game** from the resource section of nazarene.org/vbs

Mission Brief Leader Suggested Script:

Who remembers today's secret passcode? *(Pause for answers)*

Jesus' presence transforms my choices!

Our verse today helps us better understand how the passcode works.

Psalm 25:9

"He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way."

Remember yesterday when we talked about listening to Jesus' voice? (Review "My sheep listen to my voice...", John 10:27.)

Today's Bible verse shows us how we can know what is right. God Himself guides us in what is right and teaches us His way.

What does this verse mean?

Someone who is humble does not think of themselves as the most important. They are not proud. They are respectful and choose to submit to God. We do not hear "submit" very often in our world. Submit means to allow someone else to be in charge. Most people want to be the boss; not many people see the importance of being a good follower, someone who obeys well.

Of course, we do not follow just anyone; that would be foolish! This verse helps us know why it is important to allow God to be in charge of our life. God loves us and we can trust Him. When we humble ourselves and trust Him by obeying and following Him, He teaches us and we learn what is right! This verse is so important for us to memorize so we never forget to choose to respect and obey God. Then we will learn what is right and God will teach us His way!

**BONUS
VERSE:**

1 Timothy 6:18

"Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds,
and to be generous and willing to share."

Closing

Outline the plan your church has made to reward children that memorize Scripture this week. A downloadable memory verse chart is provided for you to write the children's names and keep track of who has memorized which verses. Allow them time each day to repeat them to you.

Go over the memory verse several times.

If they are ready, have children come to you individually to say their verse. Mark it on the memory verse chart. If you are giving prizes or secret mission money for saying today's portion of the verse, hand them out now.

If time allows, play a memory verse game from the memory verse games resource.

Transformation Station



CRAFT LAB: INVISIBLE INK

Play the theme song and the memory verse song as children arrive. Ask the children to repeat the memory verse or the passcode for the day.

Supplies:

- Paper
- Pens
- Cotton swabs
- Lemon juice
- Blow dryer, hot light bulb, or a hot oven and a cookie sheet

Directions:

Pass out paper and a cotton swab to each child. Have children write a secret message or draw a simple smiley face on their paper with lemon juice and the cotton swab and set aside to dry.

Ask to see someone's secret message. Take a blow dryer (or a light bulb) to the note. Show the kids the secret message.

Mission Brief Leader Suggested Script:

When we begin a new friendship, we talk a lot to each other. Communication is how we get to know that person better. With God, we communicate to Him through prayer, and we hear from Him through His Word and through His Holy Spirit in us. As we spend more and more time with Him in prayer and in His Word, His presence in our life begins to transform how we think and how we see the world. We realize how much He loves the people He brings across our path. When we see people the way He does, we begin to find ways to share God's love with them. God's presence transforms our choices!

Just as we had to spend some time to heat up this note to reveal the message, we really have to spend time reading the Bible and thinking about what it says to understand God's message to us. We need Him to help us understand what Scripture is telling us about how God wants us to live.

Sometimes God's message is hard to see, like our craft. Sometimes the Bible may seem confusing. We should always talk to God and ask Him to help us understand His Word. Sometimes He sends people who have really studied the Scripture to teach us and help us to understand.

(Twist: Have older kids use their pen to write a note over the secret message to disguise it even more before revealing the hidden message.)

The world often tries to distract us from the message of the Good News of Jesus by telling us it is not real or true, or by keeping us distracted or too busy so we do not read the Bible. What can you do to help you remember to read the Bible? *(Pause for answers)*

(If possible, have Bibles available for children who do not have access to one. Consider providing copies of a Bible reading plan for the children.)

Transformation Station



RECHARGE STATION: PAUL IN PRISON SNACK MIX

Play the theme song and the memory verse song as children arrive. Ask the children to repeat the memory verse or passcode for the day.

Supplies:

- A cup or zip top plastic bag
- Oyster crackers or small crackers
- Mini-marshmallows
- M&Ms or chocolate chips
- Gummy bears or graham cracker bears
- Small pretzel sticks
- Nuts. *Exercise sensitivity to food allergies and eliminate nuts if needed.*

(Substitute fruits and vegetable items for a healthier option.)

Directions:

Today you will retell the story of Paul in prison. At each part of the story, have the children get the snack that goes with that part of the story to create their own snack mix. Let the kids tell as much of the story as they can remember OR you can read the story straight out of **Acts 16:16-34**.

Mission Brief Leader Suggested Script:

Paul and his friend Silas	<i>2 gummy or graham cracker bears</i>
came into a new town and were walking the stone roads , helping people	<i>A small handful of oyster crackers or small crackers</i>
when they met a slave woman and freed her.	<i>1 gummy or graham cracker bear</i>
The townspeople were mad that they freed the slave woman. They beat Paul and Silas and put them in prison .	<i>Several small pretzel sticks</i>
At midnight, Paul and Silas were praying and praising God	<i>Several M&Ms or chocolate chips and mini marshmallows to represent the sweet songs and prayers that came from Paul and Silas' hearts</i>
when an earthquake shook the ground and the prison doors flew open and chains fell off their feet.	<i>Nuts to show the ground broke up or crush a couple of crackers</i>
The jailer was so upset and he was going to harm himself, but Paul and Silas said, "Don't hurt yourself! We're all still here!" The jailer realized only God could give these two men such happy hearts and make them this kind. The jailer wanted to know Jesus, too.	<i>1 gummy or graham cracker bear</i>
The jailer took them to his own house, bandaged up their wounds, and asked Paul to teach his whole family about Jesus. Paul was happy to do this and because of this, all of the jailer's family came to know Jesus, too!	<i>Several gummy or graham cracker bears</i>

- What good came out of Paul and Silas being in prison?
- Have you ever seen God change a bad/hard situation into good?
- Share a time when God used a bad situation for good in your own life.
- Discuss how the story might have ended differently if Paul and Silas had acted differently, if they were mad at God or mean to the jailer.
- What if Paul, Silas, and the other prisoners had run away after the earthquake?
- How can we trust God when things look hard or difficult?

Closing:

If time allows, have the kids review the passcode, the verse with motions, and songs.

Transformation Station



AGENT TRAINING FIELD: I KNOW MY SHOE!

Equipment:

None (other than the shoes on the children's feet)

Objective:

To be the first team to retrieve all their shoes

How to Play the Game:

Begin by having all children remove their shoes and toss them into a pile at the opposite end of the room or yard. Have your helper mix up the shoes and push them together to form a tight pile.

Based on the number of children at your VBS, divide them into equal teams (two to four teams with no more than eight to a team). Line the kids up at the starting line (relay style).

When you blow your whistle, the first child from each team will race to the shoe pile and find one of their missing shoes. Once a shoe is found, they must put it on, race back, and tag the next person in line.

The relay continues until one team collects all their shoes and returns to the starting line with everybody seated.

Small Group Alternative:

Have a few helpers collect all the shoes and hide them around the room or yard. Make sure the kids do not watch them hide the shoes! Split into equal teams of two to four kids (per team) and have them search together for their shoes. The first team to find all their teams' shoes is the winner!

Memory Verse Application:

How did you know which shoe was yours? *(Pause for answers)*

I've had it for a year. I knew it was mine because the shoe lace was broken on one side.

We know our shoes because we spend a LOT of time with our shoes. They go with us everywhere we go. We know them because we have a history with them.

Remember our memory verse for today? **"He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way" (Psalm 25:9).**

The more we walk with God and spend time with Him, the more we recognize Him and see Him at work in the world.

Did anyone have a hard time finding his or her shoe? How long ago did you get that shoe? *(Pause for answers. Hopefully they are new and they could not quite remember what their shoe looked like.)*

Sometimes we do not see God working because we have not spent much time with Him, just like that new shoe that was hard to find. If you cannot see God's work in your life yet, just keep spending time with Him, with the Bible, His Word, and with His people. The more time you spend with Him, the more you will recognize Him and His voice.

If you have never asked Jesus to give you new life, today would be the perfect day to give your heart to Him and start that lifelong friendship!

Transformation Station



INFILTRATION SERVICE PROJECT

Allow the children to be a help and a friend to someone because Jesus is our Help and Friend.

Remember:

Remind the children that Jesus' loving presence transforms our choices. Jesus is always with us. He equips us with wisdom and provides for our needs. Because our needs are cared for, we can help others with their needs. Remember when Paul was in jail? Paul kept his mind on God and sang praises even though he was in the dark and cold. Because Paul had a heart for God, he could look past his own situation and help the jailer understand that God loved him and wanted him to be saved. Our scripture says, **"He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way" (Psalm 25:9)**. God helps us to see opportunities to give Him praise in every situation. He will give us wisdom and strength, especially in uncomfortable situations. He is our help and guide.

Ideas:

- Help sort food in the church's food pantry.
- Be a friend to the elderly who attend your church by making cards, making a beautiful sign, coloring pictures, or making a craft to give them.
- Prepare dry soup mixes in jars or zip top plastic bags to give to the hungry. The ingredients could be donated prior to VBS by church members.
- Support a local charity. This could be filling backpacks for children with school supplies donated by church members or organizing clothes for a clothing closet.

Closing Skit

Play theme song and memory verse song as children return.

Ask volunteers to share the passcode, memory verse, favorite activity, or something they learned. Or have trivia questions prepared to ask early arrivers.

Begin with the top secret hand signal.

Dialogue:

Director: What a great day we had learning that **Jesus' presence transforms my choices!** Let's welcome back our worship leader to review our two songs for today.

(Worship leader sings theme song and today's memory verse song with hand motions.)

(Agent Strange is hidden where kids can see him, but Tre and Buddy cannot. Agent Tre comes limping in, obviously in a lot of pain with a bandage on his leg or foot.)

Agent Tre: *(Limps in singing today's song)*

Buddy: *(Upset, interrupts Tre)* How can you be singing? Aren't you angry? You know who set that trap for you, don't you?

Agent Tre: Yes, I do.

Agent Strange: *(Looks shocked)*

Buddy: He meant to hurt you, and that makes me mad! Can I do anything for you? Do you need any help? *(Pulling up a chair to rest Tre's leg on)* Are you sure you're going to be all right?

Agent Tre: I'll be OK, Buddy. I know Strange is always trying to trip me up, but I also know why. His dad was a really good special agent and Strange wants to be one too. He just doesn't know how because he still doesn't understand.

Agent Strange: *(Looking shocked and surprised that Tre knows this)*

Agent Tre: Strange doesn't understand that being an agent is not about who your parents are or what you're like on the outside. It's about having a real relationship with Jesus. He's the Boss because He's our Savior. Strange wants to be an agent more than anything, but he's going about it the wrong way.

Agent Strange: *(Looks very sad)*

Buddy: Agent Tre, something is really bothering me.

Agent Tre: What's that, Buddy?

Buddy: When your leg got caught in that trap, I could tell you were hurt, and I heard you pray for the Boss to send help. I kept waiting for someone to show up, but I finally couldn't stand it any longer so I helped you myself.

Agent Tre: *(Laughing)* Oh, Buddy! Don't you see? He DID send help!

Buddy: *(Upset)* He did not! It was just us! The two of us! Nobody else! He didn't answer your prayer! He never sent anybody!

Agent Tre: Wait a minute, Buddy. When I couldn't free myself from that trap, who was there to help me? You were! Who helped me back to the car? You did! And who stopped the bleeding until we made it to the hospital? Mister B-U-Double-D-Y, that's who! When I was in serious trouble, God sent YOU, Buddy.

Buddy: *(Surprised and so pleased)* Wow! I guess I didn't think about it like that. Agent Tre, I have another confession to make. Do you remember on the first day of *Operation Transformation* how I prayed and asked God to transform my heart? I wanted to be an agent because I wanted to be like you, with your cool clothes, great gadgets, and exciting adventures. But the more I've hung around you, the more I've realized how awesome the Boss is! Now I want to be an agent because I want to know Him like you do! I want to be able to live for Him like you!

Agent Tre: I'm glad to hear that, Buddy! And I'm not at all surprised. Buddy, God has been at work transforming you ever since you prayed on that first day. You have been listening to His voice all week and learning more about Him every day. I can tell that you have been hungry to know Him better. Your desire reflects today's memory verse. **Psalm 25:9** says, **"He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them His way."** You are learning His way and doing the next right thing. It's no longer all about you, it's all about Him. That is AWESOME, Buddy!

Buddy: But how can I be sure I'm getting it right, Tre? I'm so scared I'm going to mess up and choose the wrong things.

Agent Tre: Do you have a copy of the Agent Handbook yet?

Buddy: Well no. Is that something I have to have special training to read?

Agent Tre: No, Buddy, anyone can read it. The more you read it, the better you will know the Boss and how He wants us to live. But Buddy, listen to me. This is important. God's not looking for perfect performance. He's looking for honest, sincere hearts and minds that are fully devoted to Him. You're doing just fine, partner. As a matter of fact, if you will come with me I have a copy of the Handbook just for you! *(Puts his arm around his shoulder and they both walk off together)*

Agent Strange: *(Waits for them to walk off the stage, looks sad, and walks off the stage, too)*

Director: God has given us another great day at *Operation Transformation!* Each day we have more to celebrate! While you were in your Transformation Stations, we counted the offering. Do you want to know who gave the most today, the girls or the boys?

The girls gave \$_____ and the boys gave \$_____! Way to go!

It is time to stand for our closing prayer: Thank You, God, for your transforming love for each one of us. Thank You for the chance to learn more about you and the chance to help other children around the world. We pray that you will help other children know Your love and Your Son, Jesus! Amen.

Everyone take off your nametags and give them to your group leader. You can pick them up when you come back tomorrow. Okay? And everybody remember to bring a friend, so they can hear about *Operation Transformation* too!

Closing:

Give any other announcements or direction for dismissal. Play theme song as children leave.