



Baseline

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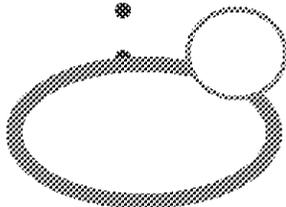
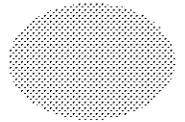
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THE LORD'S SUPPER

LESSON AIM

To understand why Jesus instructed His followers to observe Holy Communion.

KEY VERSE

"... This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me." Luke 22:19b

ITEMS NEEDED

*One or two pizza slices for each person
Photocopies of the Affirmation Cards (master provided)
Bibles, paper, pens or pencils*

DECLARATION OF FAITH

We believe in the commemoration and observing of the Lord's supper by the sacred use of the broken bread, a metaphor of the Bread of Life, Jesus Christ, whose body was broken for us; and by the juice of the vine, a symbol to remind the participant of the shed blood of Jesus who is the true Vine of which His children are the branches. This ordinance is as a glorious rainbow that spans the gulf of the years between Calvary and the coming of the Lord, when in the Father's kingdom, He will partake anew with His children; and that the serving and receiving of this blessed sacrament should be ever preceded by the most solemn heart-searching, self-examination, forgiveness and love toward all men, that none partake unworthily and drink condemnation to his own

soul.



INVESTIGATION

Photocopy the Affirmation Cards and separate them. As the kids arrive give each person an Affirmation Card and tell them to read it and look up the scripture verse written on the card. You will come back to these cards later in the lesson. When it is time to begin the group time, let the kids eat their pizza and talk with each other about their Affirmation Card and the related scripture verse. It may seem strange, but do not give a card to the kids who arrive late. You will see why as you keep reading.



GROUP INTERACTION

“Do You Remember?”

Let the kids take a few minutes to share their thoughts and feelings about their Affirmation Cards as they eat their pizza. Then, on another sheet of paper, have each person write down the name of a close family member or friend they do not see often or who has passed away. Now have them write down some of the times they remember that person. Ask the following questions:

- Are there special days that you remember them most?
- Do certain activities remind you of them?
- Do you have a special item or keepsake that they gave you?

INSTRUCTION TIME

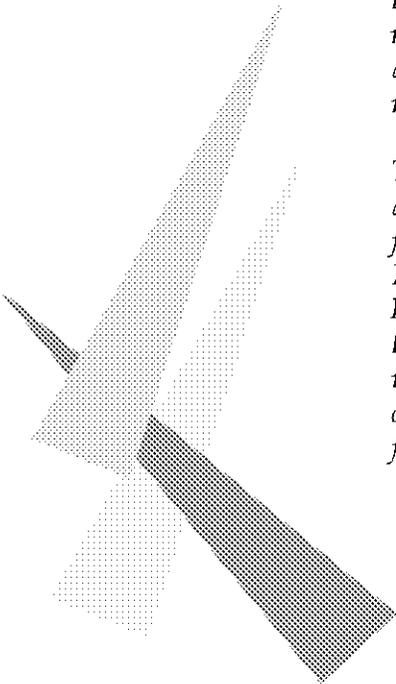
The Importance of Remembering

Which two days of the year are so special to you that you would be very disappointed if others forgot you? (Your birthday and Christmas.) How would you feel if someone forgot these special days? Would your feelings be hurt if the clerk at the grocery store forgot, or the guy running the gas station? Probably not. But if those who know you and love you were to ignore you on these special days, you might be upset.

The Importance of Remembering Jesus

Everyone wants to be remembered, especially for the good things they do. This is why Jesus made our remembering Him so simple. He did not ask us to visit a distant mountain-top shrine or to accomplish a difficult task. Jesus told His disciples to remember Him as they ate and drank. There is nothing more common than eating and drinking. In fact, there is nothing easier to do. If we would care to think of it this way, every meal could be a time of remembering Him.

The night before Jesus was crucified, He shared the Passover Meal with His disciples. The Passover Feast began as a celebration of God's deliverance from the "death angel" the Hebrew people were captives living in Egypt. Part of the Passover celebration involved eating food that was common. It may have been as common as eating pizza is for us. Jesus was about to take this very common food (bread and wine) and turn it into a special remembrance for the rest of time. He was about to take the simple practice of eating and drinking and turn it into a way for us to tell Jesus thank you for giving His life in exchange for our sin.





The Importance of Jesus' Sacrifice

Jesus sacrificed His own life so we could be saved from sin and eternal separation from God. Without this sacrifice, we would have no hope of eternal life. We remember the sacrifice of Jesus with Holy Communion. On the night before His crucifixion He ate dinner with His disciples. During the meal He began to tell them about His sacrifice on the cross. They did not fully understand what He was talking about. They did not agree with Him that His death was about to happen. They thought they could protect Him and keep His death from taking place. Jesus tried to teach them that He had to die in order for people to once again have fellowship with God.

While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to His disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is My body." Then He took the cup, gave thanks, and offered it to them, saying "Drink from it, all of you. This is My blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins." (Matthew 26:26-28)

The Importance of Communion

Jesus said, "...do this in remembrance of Me." When we remember His sacrifice, we also remember the result of that sacrifice -- fellowship. Communion celebrates our **fellowship** with God and with one another. There is fellowship through eating and drinking with one another that is not experienced by simply talking. Thus, as we eat and drink in His presence we find a closeness which is not possible in any other way.

Partaking of communion is considered an ordinance, that is, a sacred observance or practice. There are only two such ordinances (ceremonies, rules, or procedures) taught in the New Testament by Christ and the apostles: Water Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

WORD DEFINITIONS

These key words and age appropriate definitions can be used throughout the lesson. The group might play a game like Password or Taboo giving clues while part of the group guesses the actual word.

Elements	<i>different names we use when referring to the bread and the juice of which we partake during communion.</i>
Ordinance	<i>a sacred observance or practice; Jesus established two ordinances for Christians to observe: Water Baptism and Communion.</i>
Communion	<i>a sharing of thoughts or feelings, a religious or spiritual fellowship.</i>
Bread of Life	<i>Jesus, the One Who sustains us.</i>
Affirm	<i>to declare the truth; to ratify or confirm.</i>
Appreciate	<i>to value highly; to be fully aware of; to be thankful for.</i>



TAKING HOME THE TRUTH



Now ask the kids to look at the Affirmation Cards they were given as they arrived. Ask the kids if they had any feelings about being affirmed and appreciated. What were those feelings? Was anyone left out? Did someone arrive late and not receive an affirmation card? How did they feel when they realized that the other kids were appreciated in this way and they had been missed?

Help the kids see the importance of remembering Jesus and the work He accomplished for our eternal salvation. Ask the following questions to conclude the lesson:

- How often do you think of Jesus and what He has done for you?
- Is there something we can do to remind us of His special love?

ALTERNATE ACTIVITIES



Communion: Right Way, Wrong Way

Let's take a look at 1 Corinthians 11:17-34. This passage addresses the danger of taking Holy Communion "in an unworthy manner" (v.27). Jesus used common elements to make Communion easy for people. The problem began when people became too comfortable. It became a meaningless observance to many of the Corinthians - just a time to eat and drink.

Others took communion and did not understand what and why they were doing it. The purpose of communion is to remember Jesus' death and to express thanksgiving and praise for what He did. Communion has no meaning for people who do not know Jesus as personal Savior and unbelievers should not participate in Holy Communion.

Holy Communion is an important time for all believers. It is a joyful celebration of our deliverance from sin, as well as a solemn reminder of how much our salvation cost the Lord.

If you choose to serve Communion with your group, be sure to have them first examine their own hearts. Encourage them to confess their sin to God and receive His forgiveness. Be sure they realize that they may feel very little difference before and after they pray. The important thing is that God hears and answers their prayer according to 1 John 1:9. Pray together before receiving each element, thanking Jesus for:

His Body which was broken for our healing;

His Blood which was poured out for the forgiveness of our sins.

Tip:

Have some of the kids prepare Communion ahead of time for the rest of the group. Be sure to ask permission of church leadership before giving Communion to the kids. In some cases, you may also want to secure the permission of the parents.

Photocopy these Affirmation Cards and cut them on the broken line before passing them out to the kids.



You
are
God's
own
child

John 1:12-13

You were
created
for good
works

Ephesians 2:10

Lord's Supper Lesson

by GOD

Psalm 91:10

You are
protected

YOU

a

r

e

W O N D E R F U L L

Psalm 139:14

MADE

Water Baptism



LESSON AIM

To understand why Jesus commanded water baptism for all believers.

KEY VERSE

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. . ." Matthew 28:19

ITEMS NEEDED

Bible or New Testament
for each person
Gardener's watering can
Small wading pool

Dish pan
Dish soap
Water
Drinking glass

Water pitcher
Live plant
Marbles
Towels for cleanup

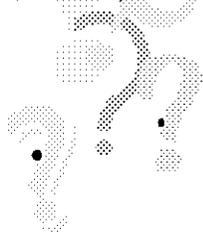
DECLARATION OF FAITH

We believe that water baptism in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, according to the command of our Lord, is a blessed outward sign of an inward work; a beautiful and solemn emblem reminding us that even as our Lord died upon the cross of Calvary, so we reckon ourselves now dead indeed unto sin, and the old nature nailed to the tree with Him; and that even as He was taken down from the tree and buried, so we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should walk in newness of **life.**



GROUP INTERACTION

Who are you?



For this activity you will want to choose some items from the list below or create a list of your own. These items will be things we wear or carry that might indicate a public announcement of who we are, that we belong to a specific group or gives us a special identification. (Also: hairstyles, specific brand name clothing or shoes, and so forth.)

- club/team uniforms
- school I.D.s
- school sweatshirts
- library cards
- school team jerseys
- "going steady" rings
- braided friendship bands
- photo with friends
- Social Security card
- I.D. tags or bracelet
- Medical alert card

Divide the group into two teams. Call out the selected items and see which team can produce the most items on the spot. Reward the winning team.



INVESTIGATION

"Sword" Drill

Provide enough Bibles or New Testaments for everyone. Still using your two teams, now have a sword drill. To have a sword drill, call out one of the following Bible verses (not in order) and have them locate it. The first person to find the verse stands up to read it aloud. If you wish, you can explain a little about the verse after it is read. All the verses will pertain to water baptism. It would be great if the winning team was different from the team which won in the previous activity.

Matthew 3:13-17

Matthew 28:19

Acts 2:38

Acts 8:36-38

Acts 10:48

Romans 6:3-5

Jesus was baptized

Jesus commanded His disciples to baptize

Peter instructs the people as Christ commanded

Philip baptizes in water

Cornelius' family got so excited about being saved and filled with the Spirit that Peter reminded them about their public witness

Represents death to sins and new life in Christ

INSTRUCTION TIME

A Public Announcement

When people look at us, how can they tell we belong to Christ? *The kids may initially suggest outward indications: carrying Bibles, going to church, doing good things, wearing Christian T-shirts or displaying bumper stickers.*

Becoming a Christian doesn't necessarily make us look any different. People might not see that there has been a change within us. Going to church does not necessarily mean an individual has submitted his or her life to Jesus. We have a way of publicly identifying with Christ after we have put our faith in Him - it is called water baptism.

Water baptism is a public testimony of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Through water baptism we identify with Jesus Christ in His death, burial and resurrection. We show the world around us that our old way of living, thinking, and doing things is no longer a part of us. Instead, we live a new life - a life which is pleasing to Christ.

Tip:

Baptism is an outward sign of the inner change that takes place in our lives when we put our trust in the saving power of Jesus.

We are publicly identifying with Christ.

The Lord Jesus instructed His disciples to keep two ordinances (outward actions) which were planned to bless and assist them in their Christian life and ministry. One was water baptism and the other, the Lord's Supper. Unlike Holy Communion, baptism is administered only once to the believer; yet every time a new Christian is publicly baptized, the ceremony is a reminder to the rest of us of our life with Christ, by which we gained admittance into the kingdom of God.

To Immerse or Cleanse

The word "baptize" means "to immerse or cleanse." The Bible clearly teaches that water baptism is by immersion rather than by sprinkling or pouring. John the Baptist baptized by the river Jordan, rather than by a well or small pool of water which would have been sufficient for sprinkling those who presented themselves to him. Jesus remains our great example. "Then



Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him" (Matthew 3:13). He was baptized by John and we read, "As soon as Jesus was baptized, He came up out of the water" (Matthew 3:16). The significance of baptism representing burial and resurrection has no meaning unless the method used is **immersion**.

The Importance of Water Baptism

Being baptized in water does **not** make a person a Christian. Baptism is a public announcement of a person's commitment to Christ. Jesus Himself never immersed a person (John 4:1, 2). His ministry was to reveal God to others and to bring man to God through His death on the Cross. Then why is water baptism important?

- Jesus was baptized (Matthew 3:13-17).
- Jesus commanded His ministers to baptize (Matthew 28:19).
- Individual believers are commanded to be baptized. "Repent and be baptized, every one of you. . ." (Acts 2:38a; 10:48).
- Water baptism signifies a union with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection.

"...Do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:3, 4).

Water baptism signifies our sins are gone, buried with Christ. The important thing is to realize that we rise to "newness of life." We are refreshed. We can live a new life as a result of faith in Christ and obedience to His command. Water baptism is not merely a form but an act of obedience which brings a very real blessing.

BRINGING HOME THE TRUTH

Set the following items on a card table before the class begins:

- | | |
|--|--------------|
| a pan full of soapy water and dirty dishes | (cleansing) |
| a pitcher of drinking water and glass | (refreshing) |
| a gardener's watering can and plant | (growth) |

Ask for three volunteers: one to wash the dishes, one to pour a glass of water and drink it, and one to water the plant. In each instance, discuss the various qualities of water: cleansing, refreshing, causing growth, etc. Compare these attributes to the spiritual realities found in water baptism.



Bring in a plastic wading pool or large wash bucket. Fill with water (at a pleasant temperature). Dump a number of large marbles into the pool. Have the kids take off socks and shoes and try to retrieve as many as possible using only their toes. (Don't forget to bring a camera and plenty of towels!)

Note: This is not just a fun activity, some kids will have a fear of being immersed in water or be embarrassed by a public display. A game like this can relieve some anxiety and also make them more comfortable doing something unusual in public.

Special Note: For this teaching, invite the parents to attend. Depending on your church's policy, the parents could participate in their child's baptism.

Giving Back To God

LESSON AIM

To teach the importance of paying tithes and giving offerings.
 To understand what it means to give cheerfully.
 To discover there is great blessing in giving.

KEY VERSE

“So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity: for God loves a cheerful giver.” (2 Corinthians 9:7)

ITEMS NEEDED

Paper and pencils
 Pictures from magazines, etc. (optional)

Play money (optional)
 Bibles

DECLARATION OF FAITH:

We believe that the method ordained of God to sustain His ministry and the spread of the Gospel after His command is “Tithing,” not only as God’s method to take care of the material and financial needs of His church, but to raise the spiritual morale of His people to the extent that God must bless them.

Being “joint heirs” with Him, we know that giving unto His kingdom is an enjoyable thing, it being more blessed to give than to receive, for we are commanded in 2 Corinthians 9:7, “Every man according as he purposes in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.”



GROUP INTERACTION

This activity offers two options, choose the method that suits your group.

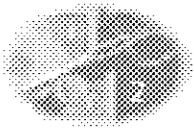
Scenario: You have just inherited \$2,000.00. You can do whatever you want with the money.

Option 1

Using magazines, catalogs, or newspapers find items that kids would use the money for if they had the means. Items like bicycles, CD players, snowboards, skateboards, clothes, earrings, telephones, televisions, animals (pets), or Nintendo® computer games. Also include churches, banks, and homeless people. Pencil in approximate retail prices for the items to purchase or put a question mark by the items of giving and let the kids decide what they would give. Place the pictures around the room. Then hand out the play money. Allow the students to walk around the room and place the money by the items they wish to purchase or contribute.



Money, Money, Money



Money, Money, Money (Continued)



INSTRUCTION TIME



Option 2

Mention the scenario to the group then divide them into small groups and give them pencils and paper. Let them discuss ways they would use the money and write it down.

After completing these activities ask the following questions:

- What item(s) generated the most money?
- What is the most important item to which we should give money?
- How important is tithing?

The word "tithe" actually means one-tenth of something, including money. The word "steward" means manager. Tithe money is what we owe God. If you think about it, everything we have is a result of what God has given us. We are responsible to manage it well. Being good stewards is really managing our God-given assets. We are giving back to the "Giver of every good gift."

Tithing supports the work of the Lord. Malachi 3:10

God's Word speaks often regarding the support of the priests and the church. The first example of tithing in the Bible is found in Genesis 14:20 when Abraham gave 10% of all he had to a priest named Melchizedek. It is interesting to note that Abraham's obedience to tithe was motivated from his heart not from a legal requirement. Tithing would not be part of God's legal requirements for His people until the Law of Moses was given 430 years later. It is also important to note that since Jesus fulfilled the Law of Moses (Matthew 5:17), we no longer tithe out of legal obligation. Instead, like Abraham, we obey the principle of the tithe out of personal responsibility from a loving heart.

In Leviticus, tithing became the primary support for the Levite priests who gave up their personal land inheritance to serve the Lord. The tithe was used to maintain the temple and to feed, house and clothe the priests and their families. The book of Malachi specifically states that the tithe provides food for God's house, spiritual as well as material. In Philippians 4:10-18, Paul thanks the people for providing for his physical needs as he did the work of the Lord.

What are some material means by which the Lord's work is done now?
(Allow the kids to answer this question - here are possible answers...)

Supporting pastors and missionaries who teach people about the Lord.

Printing Bibles and literature to share about the love of God.

Radio and television programming that reaches people for Jesus.

Buses to transport people to and from church.

Today, there are many ways to spread the Gospel to other areas via computer, radio, television and literature. There are also many ways to share God's love in your own community by helping provide food and clothing for those who need it, or offering a place where people can come and learn about God's love. Another way to do this is to provide for your pastor to enable him to minister to the people of the church.



Tithing is worshipping the Lord. (2 Corinthians 9:7)

The Lord loves a cheerful giver, a giver who shares his or her material benefits because he or she loves the Lord and wants to be a part of His ministry. Tithing is based in God's Word. Tithing is an act of obedience, an act of faith and it is an act of worship. When you tithe, it is to God, not to men. Your responsibility is to do what your heavenly Father wants, only you will answer for that. Anything you give to God is between you and Him and should be done in an attitude of love. Remember, God always rewards obedience!

Tithing releases blessing from the Lord. (Malachi 3:10;

Luke 6:38, Philippians 4:17-19)

A blessing is promised to those who tithe. The whole church as well as the individuals will be blessed as a result of this obedience. In Malachi it says "If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be **room enough** to receive it." Room enough means sufficient, enough; a large enough quantity; plenty. Luke 6:38 states "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down... **running over.**" We give to God, and we receive from our loving Father God. God's miracle for you may be an opportunity, an invitation, a new acquaintance, a financial blessing, or a spiritual blessing. As you obey, be ready for His reward.

INVESTIGATION

Listed below are nine verses relating to tithing. Divide the group into teams. Depending on the size and number of your teams, assign a group of scriptures for each team to look up and in ten words or less have them reiterate what they read. For larger classes, assign two teams the same group of scriptures and see how different or similar the explanations are. (We have helped by suggesting phrases written under the scripture.)

Group 1

Luke 6:38
What you give will be multiplied back to you

Hebrews 7:5

Tithes support ministers and ministries

Leviticus 27:30

All tithes belong to the Lord

Group 2

2 Corinthians 9:7
The children of Israel tithed on everything

Malachi 3:10

God pours blessing on those who tithe

Matthew 6:19-21

We should give to heavenly treasures rather than earthly treasures

Group 3

Philippians 4:15-19
Giving supplies for other's needs

Proverbs 3:9-10

Tithing honors God, brings blessing

Leviticus 27:32

One-tenth belongs to the Lord

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY

Before your group meets, hide money around the room.

- Half-dollars or dollar bills would be good if it did not "break you."
- There does not have to be enough for everyone.

Allow a few minutes for a "treasure hunt." Then, complete your meeting time with a group discussion using these thoughts:

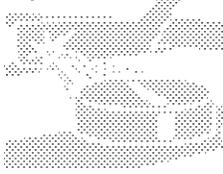
How important is money in our society?

Is it easy for us to give back a tenth of all we receive from God?

Explain in your own words why it is important to tithe.



TAKING HOME THE TRUTH



Receioe an offering this week and then do it regularly, especially if the kids do not have an opportunity to give during a regular church service. Keep them informed of the various outreach and missions projects, building projects and special needs their tithes and offerings support.



STEWARDSHIP

time and talents

Colossians 3:23, 24

LESSON AIM

To understand that we can use our time and talents to glorify God.
To be a good steward (manager) of our time and talents.

KEY VERSE

"And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ." (Colossians 3:23, 24)

*Bibles
Items for group interaction
Pencils and paper*

*Photocopies of
"Use Your Talent" master*

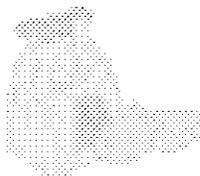
DECLARATION OF FAITH

How great is the need in our times, these last and crucial times, for faithful and diligent service for Christ. The kingdom must be enlarged now or never. The march of the gospel has too long been hindered by selfish interests, disharmony, and slothfulness. The King is coming and there is much work yet to be done... If we as individuals desire to be rewarded of the Lord at His coming, we must not bury our God-given talents for Christian service, but exercise them that the Lord's investment in us may pay dividends to His **glory.**



GROUP INTERACTION

Can God Use
a Potato?



Bring various items from home. (Some ideas: Cottonball, postage stamp, potato, vase, cleaning supplies, book, reading glasses, belt) Divide the class into smaller groups. Pass out the items you have brought in – about 2 or 3 items to a group. Allow time for the kids to think of ways the items can be used to benefit the church and people in the community. Then bring the groups together and discuss their ideas. Middle schoolers can be pretty creative so let them come up with the ideas and if needed, guide the conversation to specific service projects.



INVESTIGATION

Make photocopies of the "Use Your Talent" master. As individuals or groups, have them complete the handout about how the three servants used their talents. Bring the kids together and discuss some of their answers. Refer to some of the answers as you continue this lesson.

INSTRUCTION TIME

Tip:

We serve Jesus.

Our service to others, church family, the homeless, etc, flows from our service to Him. If we focus our service on anyone or anything other than Jesus, our service is misdirected.

A steward is a manager

The dictionary tells us that a steward is a "house manager, one who manages another's financial affairs or property, or the person responsible for the household affairs of a large institution, as an estate." The steward is not the owner, just the manager. From the passage in Matthew, we can think of God as "the owner" and we are the "stewards." Everything we have has been entrusted to us by God, our Father and Creator. We are called to be good stewards of all that God has given to us. 1 Corinthians 4:2 says, "Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful." Part of being a good steward is explaining your actions. The day will come when we will have to report to God about how well we managed all that He gave us. "So then each of us shall give account of himself to God." (Romans 14:12)

A steward manages time

One thing that God has given us to manage wisely is our time. We are to give a tenth of everyTHING we have to God. He has given us 24 hours in each day, and we should use time as a tool to serve God. Our first priority should be building our relationship with God. Matthew 6:33 tells us, "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." Community service projects, volunteering at your church, or just helping others are ways to be a good steward of your time. In Ephesians 5:15, the Bible gives us this advice, "See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise." To be circumspect is to be aware of the consequences so that we may manage carefully.

A steward manages talents

God expects us to use our talents for His glory; they are precious gifts from Him and we will have to account for how we use them. "Guard what was committed to your trust" (1 Timothy 6:20). One of the most basic principles of stewardship is found in Luke 16:10-11, "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches?" If we are faithful with the small things we prove that we can be trusted as good stewards with the bigger things, and that we will be rewarded.

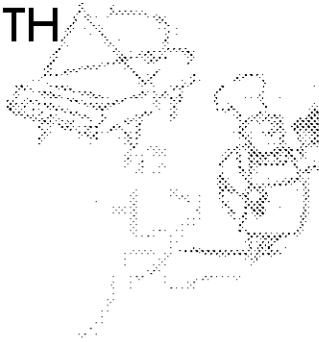


The third seroant in the parable was afraid to use his talent, and ended up with nothing. In I Peter 4:10, the Bible tells us, "As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God."

A steward is rewarded

The Bible is full of promises about the rewards of being a good and faithful steward. The wise stewards were rewarded in the parable of the talents. When the master returned and found the seroants who had been good stewards of his talents, he told them, "Well done, good and faithful seroant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord." (Matthew 25:23,29) We know that everything we have belongs to God, and we must be faithful to Him. "And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you seroe the Lord Christ." (Colossians 3:23,24)

TAKING HOME THE TRUTH

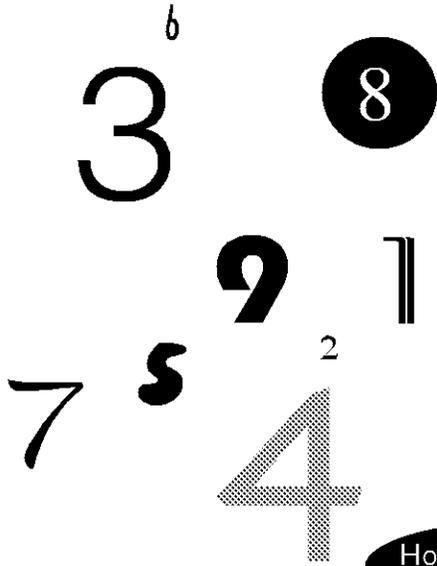


Divide the students into groups and have them take an inventory of their talents and abilities. Each person has their own unique characteristics and talents. Encourage them to think of as many things as they can that they can do. At first they will probably list things such as basketball or ballet. You may want to remind the students that our talents include much more than athletic or academic abilities. Don't forget things like encouragement, helpfulness, being a good listener, etc. When the inoentory is complete, have them "give an account" to you as the leader. Then see if you can match some of their talents to needs in the church. Often there are elderly people that would love to have visitors, or a family that needs their leaves raked. Check with your pastor about what your class can do.

USE YOUR TALENT

What is a talent? In Bible times it referred to a certain weight, or to an amount of approximately 6000 denarii. In the parable of the workers in the vineyard in Matthew 20:2, Jesus talked about a day's wage as a denarius. That means a talent would be almost 17 years worth of work! Keep that in mind as you read the parable of the talents in Matthew 25:14-28.

After you read the scripture, think about the relationship between the Master and his servants. How much did the master trust them, how trustworthy were the servants? Give them a rating between 1-9 (9=strongest) in the appropriate columns and briefly discuss why.



How much trust did they show? How much fear? How much reflection involved?

Master				
Servant 1 10 Talents				
Servant 2 5 Talents				
Servant 3 1 Talent				

STEWARDSHIP:
TIME AND TALENT

WHAT I CAN DO

Three talents I have: _____

How can I use the talents I have been given? _____

How can I trust God more? _____

Why doesn't God want me to be afraid of using my talents? _____



LESSON AIM

To realize the Biblical commission of world missions.
To be faithful to take on-going action to reach the world with the Gospel.

KEY VERSE

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." (Matthew 28:19)

ITEMS NEEDED

*Bibles/ pencils/ paper
Bible verses and cards prepared ahead of time (see Investigation, page 2)
Newspapers for optional activity*

DECLARATION OF FAITH

We believe that the redeemed children of the Lord Jehovah should rise and shine forth as a city set upon a hill, speeding forth the Gospel to the ends of the earth, declaring with burning zeal and earnestness the whole counsel of God. We believe that soul-winning is the one big business of the church upon earth; and that every hindrance which would quench the flame or hamper the efficiency of world-wide evangelism should be cut off and cast away as unworthy of the church, detrimental to the most sacred cause of Christ and contrary to the great commission of our **Lord.**



GROUP INTERACTION

Scattergories®

Break up into two teams and play a version of Scattergories. Have each letter of the alphabet written on a sheet of paper. For each letter of the alphabet they draw, the team members must think of a job that could be used for missions work. Some occupations cancel each other out so it is better to be creative. Any occupations that don't have a match count as a point. The team with the most points wins. The kids have to define how the occupation fits in missions. EXAMPLE: A= Afghan Maker or Arithmetic teacher. The purpose is to show missions is more than preaching and teaching.



INVESTIGATION

Bible Relay

List the following scriptures on small pieces of paper. Each scripture will have one or two words in it that will emphasize missions. Write that word on larger sheets of paper or card stock. Divide the class into two or four teams with two teams lined up and facing each other. If there are too many in your group to do this activity, choose kids who would not be intimidated by searching for scriptures.

Each member of one team will be given the scripture verse on paper, the other team will have cards with the specific word relating to the verse on one side and the appropriate scripture verse in smaller letters on the other side (similar to flash cards). Make sure that the larger pieces of paper are not in the same order as the scripture papers. The kids on the one team may not look up the scriptures until they are instructed. When each individual from one team finds the verse and reads it aloud he or she must run to the other team and find the paper that they think matches. They may not change papers once they pick one.

After doing about half the scriptures, switch teams. The team with the most right answers wins. The object of the relay is to familiarize the kids with scriptures about missions and have fun at the same time.

Matthew 25:34-36
you gave

Matthew 24:11
deceived

Matthew 28:19,20
make disciples

Matthew 24:14
preach the Gospel

Mark 16:15
every creature

John 15:12
love

Matthew 10:32
confess

Mark 4:8
good crop

Luke 4:43
purpose

Matthew 5:16
light

Matthew 9:37,38
plentiful harvest

Matthew 18:14
will of God

Matthew 18:19
pray

John 3:16
God's love

John 8:32
know

John 11:25
no death

John 12:46
no darkness

John 14:6
way, truth, life

Acts 5:14
increasing numbers

Acts 16:31
salvation for family

I John 3:14,15
Savior of world

INSTRUCTION TIME

It is easy to talk about missions. Our task is to get middle schoolers to care about missions and discover how they can help missionaries bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ to someone in another country.

This might be a good time to sit and ask the kids in your group the following questions:

Is it really important for people in other countries to know about the love of Jesus? Why?



Do you as an individual have any responsibility to share that love with a person in another country?

What are some ways you can share? What can you do from here that would make a difference?

Here is a story submitted by Carolina, a missionary that works with street kids in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Michelle, Juvenal, Daniel and Tatiana are some of my friends in Sao Paulo. Instead of a life revolving around home, family, church and school, these kids, ages 11-15, live on the street. It is a cruel life. Many times street kids are beaten by soldiers or store owners because they steal food. They beg or steal just to get by. They sift glue to deaden the hunger pangs. Worse, they smoke crack. At night, they huddle together under shabby blankets, with nothing but cardboard for a bed.

Each one of these kids has a story of how they have been abandoned. Many left home because of abuse.

Our Foursquare YWAM (Youth With A Mission) team visits them four days a week, with backpacks full of books. They like Bible stories. We read to the ones who can't read. Our goal is to take God's love to them and see them changed by that love.

For the ones who decide to accept help, we look for an opening in a Christian white house. Cesar is one who opted for change, who believed in Jesus. He has left the street and lives in a Christian home now. The other day a friend of his, still living on the street, told me Cesar was coming by to bring him some clothes. Cesar is no longer part of the problem but part of the solution.

After reading this true story, ask the kids to put themselves in the place of these street kids, ask them to describe some of the fears they might have. Does there seem to be much hope in this kind of life? What would they want someone to do to help them? Ask them to name ways they could help with this street ministry in Brazil.

TAKING HOME THE TRUTH

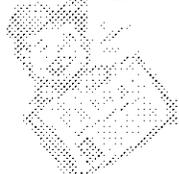
Break up into groups and give each person a photocopy of the handout called "Sector One" Have the kids read aloud Matthew 28:18-20 and then complete the handout.

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY

What's goin' on?

Bring in newspapers and news magazines have the kids look up articles about other nations. Allow them to read the first few paragraphs. If you wish, keep them in groups and have them discuss the article and how they could pray for the missions outreach in that country.

Another option is to hook up to different internet possibilities. Foursquare Missions has an e-mail addresses for our missionaries. You could also try YWAM, 10-40 Window, World Vision, etc. The kids could correspond regularly with our missionaries and their kids and keep them updated on our news.



sector

one

Matthew 28:19-20

Go

Our responsi-
Our respon-

bility as be-
sibility as

lievers in Jesus
believers in

Christ includes
Jesus Christ

taking the
includes tak-

good news of
ing the good

salvation to
news of sal-

the people
vation to the

of the world.
people of the

Read this
world. Read

scripture and
this scripture

write a sen-
and write a

tence beside
sentence be-

each word tell-
side each word

ing what you
telling what

will do to fulfill
you will do to

your responsi-
fulfill your re-

bility of reach-
sponsibility

ing people.
of reaching

people.

Who

Teach

Depend

on the

Lord

How Can I Help a Missionary?

Acts 14:27

LESSON AIM

To identify several ways to help a missionary.
To commit to a specific missionary outreach plan.

KEY VERSE

"On arrival, they got the church together and reported on their trip, telling in detail how God had used them to throw the door of faith wide open so people of all nations could come streaming in." (Acts 14:27, The Message)

ITEMS NEEDED

A bell or buzzer.
Candy or prizes for Group Interaction.
Bible.
Paper and pen or pencil.
Food items for Alternate Activity if you choose.

GROUP INTERACTION

whatdayaknow??

Break up into two teams and have each team choose 3 representatives from their team to answer various questions about culture or traditions from other countries. (Or if you have a larger group, rotate the representatives after every 3-4 questions or create more teams.)

Have each set of representatives sit in the front of the room in a line on each side of the "game show host" with one buzzer per team. After asking a question (see list of questions on page 5), the representatives can talk among themselves and hit the buzzer when they think they know the correct answer. No help should come from the audience. If they answer correctly, their team gets a point. If they answer incorrectly, the other team has a chance to answer. If no correct answer can be found, the audience has the chance to shout out the answer with no points given to either team. The side with the most points at the end of the game, receives prizes for the entire team.



FOR THE LEADER



Before You Help

Based on the previous lesson titled "How much do we care?," this lesson should focus on choosing a missions project that your kids can do to serve either your community or foreign missions. Taking on a missions project can be as simple as raising money and sending a check, or as complex as coordinating an outreach team to visit another country. Whatever your choice of a missions project, give much prayerful consideration before embarking on this task.

Be sure to have the full support of your church leadership before getting the kids excited about a project which may be outside of the capability of your church body. If you already have an established missions department in your church, you will find it helpful to work together with the leadership of that department. They will make your job much easier and you may help them reach a ministry goal.

Ways to Help

Split the kids into small groups that you think are a good size for this assignment. Allow them to brainstorm a few different missions project options that they can present to the rest of the group. Encourage them to get excited about how they can reach others in a way that would be unique to your group.

Tip:

Because this lesson is a service project, there is not an instruction time. Be sure, however, to review the information learned in the previous lesson and to direct the discussion as needed.

Direct the discussion toward what supplies they will need, how they can obtain them, ways they can raise money, how they will involve the rest of the church, etc. The point is to establish an awareness of the needs around them and to help them realize that they can be a part of meeting those needs. After all the ideas have been presented, have the group vote on several projects that they would like to work toward in the future.

The following information should help to prepare for the evening and to give starting ideas and help.

Who to Help

Individual churches are usually familiar with specific foreign missionaries through denominational missions programs. Many non-denominational churches support independent missionaries whose names are available through missions organizations familiar to the pastor and church leadership. For Foursquare churches, the District Supervisor's office can help direct you to information on missionaries who would appreciate your help. You can also talk directly to the staff at Foursquare Missions International by calling (213) 484-2400.



TAKING HOME THE TRUTH



How to Help at Home

Sometimes we need to go no further than our own city to find missions projects. Every city has people who are in physical need of help. Every city has people who are in spiritual need of salvation. At some time through the year, you might choose to involve your group in a home mission project such as a visit to a nursing home or providing clothes or toys to a family in need at Christmas.

Here is a suggested list of Home Mission Projects you might consider:

Have a hot dog cookout in a public park; feed anyone who happens by.

*Distribute used clothing to the homeless of your community.
Prepare a short seasonal presentation for the elderly in a local nursing home.*

Have a "No Cost Car Clinic" for the single mothers and the elderly of your church and check the air pressure in tires, wash the exterior and clean the interior of their cars.

Be creative about home mission projects. Whenever you reach out to your community remember to show the love of Jesus and be sensitive to encourage the kids to pray with people expressing needs. But most important for an outreach to have an impact, instruct the kids to be polite and considerate of the people they are trying to reach. This single factor can open many doors for continued ministry.

How To Help in Foreign Lands

The hardest part of your foreign missions project may be getting everyone in the group to agree on the same project. It is still a good idea to involve the kids in the decision making process. Here are a few ideas:

Raising money to purchase Bibles for a foreign country.

Buying tracts or evangelistic literature to send to missionaries.

Helping to build a church or school building in another country.

Provide monthly support for an orphan in a foreign country.

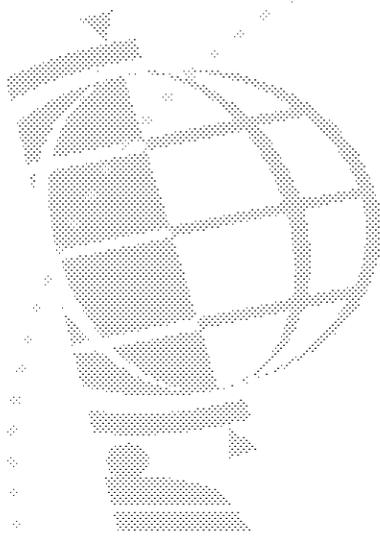
Be kind to a missionary family by remembering their birthdays, wedding anniversary, Christmas etc.

Become pen pals with missionaries and/or their children.

Going to a foreign country on an outreach team to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Make a video greeting card telling a missionary how your group plans to pray for them for a period of time.

Make a scrap book of Sunday comics from your local newspaper and mail the book to kids of a missionary family.





ALTERNATE ACTIVITY

Prepare
a Missionary Meal

People of the Middle East, Asia and India often eat a meal including white rice, cooked black or kidney beans and japoti. To make japoti you will need 1 cup whole wheat flour, 1 cup white flour, 1 teaspoon salt. To these ingredients, add just enough water to mix well and let stand for at least an hour.

During this activity, have the kids each take enough dough to make an egg size ball and roll the dough into a flat circle. Rub a little oil over each circle and fry on an ungreased pan.

Have the rice and beans prepared ahead of time and enjoy a missionary meal together as you talk about helping missionaries reach the people of the world for Jesus Christ.



whatdayaknow

1. If you take a cone of sugar to a family that invites you to their home, where are you?
a. China b. Morocco c. Brazil d. Finland
2. What nationality is the waiter who brings salad after your meal rather than before?
a. French b. Russian c. Japanese d. Egyptian
3. If you walk around in Africa and your head is covered, you are . . .
a. Sick b. Pregnant c. Married d. Mourning
4. Waving a yellow flag is an international symbol for . . .
a. Attack b. Peace c. Surrender d. Infectious disease
5. Which is the northern most country of South America?
a. Ecuador b. Columbia c. Brazil d. Bolivia
6. If your great grandmother kisses you on the right and then the left and then the right again, where is she from?
a. Netherlands b. Costa Rica c. Turkey d. Australia
7. People from England put vinegar on their . . .
a. Burritos b. French Fries c. Pizza d. Hot Dogs
8. Where do you live if your house is round and the floor is made of cow dung?
a. Vietnam b. Panama c. South Africa d. Pakistan
9. What would a person from Ghana do with a "Fu Fu"?
a. eat it (shhh, it's bread) b. sit on it c. wear it d. wash with it
10. If you wanted to eat dinner in Spain, what time would most likely begin eating?
a. 12:00 noon b. 5:00 p.m. c. 8:00 p.m. d. 11:00 p.m.
11. Which one of these is not a country in Europe?
a. Balu b. Slovenia c. San Marino d. Isle of Man
12. There are approximately how many known languages in the world?
a. 750 b. 1500 c. 3000 d. 6500
13. People in Sri Lanka always use their right hand to shake hands because . . .
a. They use their left hand in the restroom b. They are all right handed
c. They only use their left hand for eating d. The right hand is stronger
14. If you are offered a full glass of water in Ghana, you are . . .
a. a newlywed b. a guest c. a father d. engaged
15. If you are offered a glass of water at a wedding in Sri Lanka, you are . . .
a. invited to dinner b. next to marry c. about to pray d. upsetting people



WHAT TO DO WHEN THEY DON'T BELIEVE

LESSON AIM

To care about people who don't know Jesus.
To live a life which testifies that Jesus is our Lord.
To be ready to explain how someone else can accept Jesus as Savior.

KEY VERSE

"How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent?"
(Romans 10:14 and 15a)

ITEMS NEEDED

Bibles / pencils / paper
Prepared Overhead Transparency (see page 2)
Photocopies of Romans 10:14 Handout (master provided)

DECLARATION OF FAITH

*From Kingdom Dynamics,
the Spirit Filled Life Bible,
page 1704*



Paul asks, "How shall they hear without a preacher?" This does not mean we must enter public ministry to "preach" the gospel. The Greek word used here for "preacher" means "one who heralds, proclaims, or publishes." Clearly, every believer is assigned a personal "pulpit" – in the home, the community, at the office, or in school – from which to show and tell others the **good news.**

GROUP INTERACTION

Ask the kids to discover a way to communicate the following urgent warnings to the group without using any words or verbal communication.

The building is on fire, leave now!

I just saw a thief walking out of your house with your VCR!

The chair you are sitting on is about to break!

You have a piece of lettuce hanging from your teeth!

Don't look now but that real ugly guy/girl is staring at you!

GROUP INTERACTION

CONTINUED

Discussion:

It's very difficult to explain important news without using our verbal skills. Even when we do use words to convey something of vital importance the person we are speaking to must be willing to listen.

Imagine trying to tell someone of the warnings from our group interaction activity, yet they will not listen. Example: "You have a piece of lettuce hanging from your teeth!" The person could just continue talking, smiling, flashing those pearly whites and that little piece of green veggie without trying to remove it from their teeth! Now just think about how bad it is when we try to explain to someone how to avoid the eternal punishment for their sin, yet they will not listen.

Something has to be done!

INVESTIGATION

Direct the kids to Romans 10:14 and 15a. Have them read the scripture to themselves. Then, tell them to write a newspaper headline to express the importance of telling others about Jesus. See the example below. Remember to stress with the kids that witnessing is not an option for Christians. There should be an urgency in our witnessing.

Something has to be done!

**A Story
Some
Will**

**Man
Saves
Millions**

Help! I Need Somebody!

**Never
Believe**

Blaze!

As you transition into the Instruction Time emphasize these thoughts:

To help people accept Jesus Christ we must ...

- 1) be prepared to care about people who don't know Jesus.*
- 2) live a life that testifies that Jesus is our Lord.*
- 3) be ready to explain how someone else can accept Jesus as Savior.*

INSTRUCTION

Care About People Who Don't Know Jesus

Ask someone to read these verses aloud.

"Deliver those who are drawn toward death, and hold back those stumbling to the slaughter." Proverbs 24:11

"By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us, And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." 1 John 3:16

When you care about a person you don't want to see them hurt. When you really love a person you will give your life so they can go on living. How much do you care about people who don't know Jesus? Would you be willing to change the way you live and the things you do to be a better witness for Jesus Christ?

Live a Life that Testifies that Jesus is our Lord

"He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover." Mark 16:16-18

It is very easy to get hung-up in the passage from Mark 16 on the issues that seem controversial (ie, demons, tongues, serpents, healing). Rather than allowing the controversial to become the main topic of conversation, keep the focus on the fact that the believer is to live his/her whole life as a servant of Jesus Christ. Are we willing to allow God's Holy Spirit to fully control everything we think, do, say and become?

Explain How Someone Else Can Accept Jesus as Savior

"But what does it say? The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart (that is the word of faith which we preach): that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Romans 10:8-10

"For the Scripture says, 'Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame.' ... Whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved." Romans 10:11, 13

Ask volunteers to share the way salvation was presented to them before they prayed to receive Jesus as Lord and Savior. Did they hear scripture verses? Were the concepts of sin and forgiveness talked about? What verses meant the most to them and helped convince them to ask Jesus to be their Savior?

Tip:

This might be a good time for the leader to give a personal testimony about how he/she shared Jesus with an unsaved friend. Be open about the success and the struggles associated with being a witness.

TAKING HOME THE TRUTH

Photocopy the Romans 10:14 handout (master provided). Have the kids summarize the answers to questions covered during the Instruction Time and attempt to write the answers on the handout. Emphasize specific and practical answers. Encourage honesty and sincerity.

If time allows it might be helpful to pair up the kids and have them role-play sharing Jesus with an unsaved friend.

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY

Put Yourself on the Line Evangelism:

Encourage the kids to take a chance in the next couple of days and share their faith with a non-Christian friend -- or even a stranger. This can be done through talking with them about Jesus and what He means to you. It can also be accomplished by living a life that is different from the rest of the kids around you.

It could be very helpful for the kids to highlight in their Bible specific verses of salvation such as Romans Road below. If you can, purchase some inexpensive New Testaments and have the kids highlight these verses before giving them to an interested person during the week. They might want to write the verses on the inside cover of the New Testament and a sentence about why that verse is important.

Extending This Activity:

Think about these questions and discuss possible answers:

- 1) *Will it be easy to share your faith in Jesus with one of your friends?*
- 2) *Do you know anyone who accepted Jesus after listening to a street preacher yelling about sin and the burning fires of hell?*
- 3) *Would it be alright to witness to one of your school teachers?*
- 4) *What do I do if my parents don't want me to embarrass the family by talking about Jesus at family holidays and gatherings?*

The Romans Road Approach to Salvation:

<i>Romans 3:10</i>	<i>There is none righteous.</i>
<i>Romans 3:23</i>	<i>All have sinned.</i>
<i>Romans 6:23a</i>	<i>The wages of sin is death.</i>
<i>Romans 6:23b</i>	<i>The gift of God is eternal life.</i>
<i>Romans 10:9</i>	<i>Confess Jesus as Lord; believe He is risen.</i>
<i>Romans 10:13</i>	<i>Call on the Name of the Lord and be saved.</i>

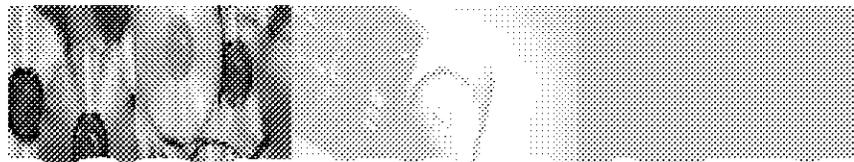
There are other approaches to salvation which you may want to introduce to your kids as part of this lesson. Be creative but be sure any plan of salvation is based on the Bible and specific scriptures.

What would someone else see in your life that might make them want to serve Jesus?

ROMANS 10:14

How would you explain salvation to another person?

WHAT IS DIFFERENT ABOUT YOUR BEHAVIOR AS A CHRISTIAN THAN THE BEHAVIOR OF OTHER PEOPLE WHO DON'T BELIEVE



ULTIMATE

PRAYER:

Matthew 7:7,8

CONTACT

LESSON AIM

To see kids pray because they desire ...
... to make better personal decisions in their life.
... to know God's answer to daily concerns and problems they face.

KEY VERSE

*"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, it will be opened."
(Matthew 7:7,8)*

ITEMS NEEDED

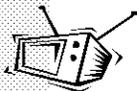
*Props for Infomercial (optional)
Bibles, paper, pens or pencils*

DECLARATION OF FAITH

Nearly everyone extols prayer as an ideal, but very few practice prayer as an avenue to fellowship with God. Prayer as a means to wish fulfillment, and prayer as the exercise of communion with God are two different matters. Here and now we are contending for the urgency of prayer as a habit, as a daily exercise of the soul, as a way of life, as the renewed attitude of the mind. It must not be sporadic, but regular; not occasional, but continual; not ego-centric, but Christ-centric; not grasping, but intercessory; not self-complacent, but humble and contrite. Lord, teach us to **pray!**

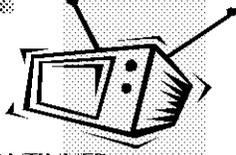


GROUP INTERACTION



Probably everyone in your group knows about infomercials. This one has a new twist. Your kids will conduct an infomercial trying to sell the rest of the group on the idea of personal, daily prayer.

For your infomercial you will need a host or two co-hosts and special guests who will each do the selling. These kids should be your most out-going, gregarious hams. The rest of the group will be the studio audience.



CONTINUED

Now set up your stage area and studio audience seating. During this time give your hosts and special guests some time to look over the following scriptures and prepare to sell their ideas on prayer.

Intercession (Eating Carpet)

1 Thessalonians 5:17

Psalm 103: 1-5

Psalm 19:14

Luke 6:12

Devotional Prayer (Lifestyle Prayer)

Matthew 6:5,6

Psalm 109:4

James 5:16

Luke 5:15,16

Allow as much time for this activity as is practical for your situation. Be sure to budget enough time to get to the instruction part of the lesson.

INSTRUCTION TIME

What We Should Ask Proverbs 1:2,3

King Solomon was a very successful man. He ruled over one of the largest empires in human history. He was respected by his peers and had great material possessions. His greatest asset, however, was not his money, his possessions, or his power. Solomon's most valuable asset was godly wisdom. Don't laugh. Of all the things Solomon could think to ask God for, wisdom was what he requested. Solomon was known for his wise decisions in dealing with his people. The really amazing thing is that after God answered Solomon's prayer for wisdom, He also blessed him with great wealth, power and fame.

When God says we should ask, His idea is that we carefully consider all the possibilities and ask for the most important and useful gift. What should we ask God for? Share some ideas now in a group discussion.

Tip:

As you plan your group times each week be sure to prioritize prayer in the meeting. The kids will pick up a definite sense of how important prayer is to you as the leader by how seriously you take prayer in your group.

What We Should Seek Proverbs 1:4

Read Proverbs 1:4 together. Prudence sounds like a girl's name, doesn't it? Prudence really is an old fashioned word that simply means **being careful about what you do**. Solomon realized that getting wisdom alone was not enough. He had to seek God to use his new gift of wisdom in his daily decisions. Solomon teaches us to be careful about our decisions. We need to seek God about every decision we make and how we deal with our problems.

Another word used by King Solomon that has a similar meaning to prudence is **discretion**. There are many choices we have to make each day. We are to seek God for discretion (caution, discernment, intelligence; confidence) in all our daily decisions.

Jesus confirms the teaching of Solomon in Matthew 6:33, "...seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." The things Jesus refers to are all the concerns of our life that

we think we are missing like brand new clothes, more money, feeling like we are accepted, feeling peace in fearful times.

Jesus says if you will seek Him first and what He wants you to do, He will guide you and help you make decisions which will lead to the best of things in your life. The flip side, of course, is that when we seek our own wisdom and leave God out, we will be frustrated and never enjoy the full blessing of God in our lives. If we act on our own we might also make things worse.

Where Should We Knock? Proverbs 4:18,19

Photocopy the following story. Ask someone with a dramatic flair to read for the group. Then, continue with the instruction.

I was walking home from my friend's house the other night. It was dark. I was alone. My dad was home and the front light was on. Things were going along fine until I realized someone was following me. I was too afraid to look behind me but I know I heard footsteps and the person was getting closer. I reached for the key to my front door and began to walk faster when suddenly I realized my key was gone. I either dropped it or forgot to pick it up before I left home. Now, I was about to panic. The footsteps were getting faster and closer. I hoped my dad was not asleep on the couch. Whoever was following me was not up to anything good.

I needed help. I was running by now. As I reached the front door I began pounding on the front door. I think I may have even yelled for my dad to open the door. I don't really remember. I knocked some more. Come on dad, open the door! There he was! Dad opened the door. I ran in to safety. I never saw who was behind me. Dad thought I was a little strange when I dropped exhausted on the couch. I'm glad I knocked on the door. I am really glad my dad was there to open it when I knocked.

Form groups of two or three and share an experience of being in darkness and the danger, fear or excitement darkness brought. Note: Some of the kids will recognize an immediate correlation of darkness with current pop culture in clothing, hair styles, music and entertainment. Our kids need to recognize this preoccupation with darkness for what it really is -- an attempt to detour people from living in the light of Jesus' love and grace. Some kids will see this easily because they are not influenced heavily by it or because they have their own group with which to identify. Others will possibly resist any negative reference to darkness and claim it is healthy and without any damaging affect. The leader should pray sincerely for favor with the kids and wisdom from the Holy Spirit during this portion of the lesson.

How about us? Are we convinced that asking for God's help in our life will actually work? Would we knock on God's door for help in dark times? How urgently do we knock? How urgently do we pray? Prayer needs to be a part of every life decision we make.

INVESTIGATION

Now read Proverbs 4:19. Help the kids equate darkness with things opposed to God. It might be helpful to make a list of dark things that are popular (like the Psychic Hot Line, New Age Books, Horoscopes, etc.) which clearly lead people away from thinking about God. The author of this proverb realized that he needed to ask God before making decisions. He understood that God wants to answer our prayers. He also knew that walking in darkness was not desirable.

Solomon compared seeking God's direction to enjoying a warm sunny day. As a group read Proverbs 4:18. Talk about the similarities between making godly choices and the enjoyment of a perfect day.

Conclude this investigation by having the kids pray with each other using the guidelines below.

Ask God for wisdom more than you ask for things.

Seek God so you can obey the Bible in choices you need to make.

Knock on God's door as often as you need to with the confidence that you will receive an answer.

TAKING HOME THE TRUTH

Ask the kids how many of them said "Amen" at the end of their prayer. Chances are most or all of them did. Share with the kids the Hebrew definition of the word amen: TRUTH. Describe how it has come to be used as a way of confirming the truthfulness of a prayer: "Amen -- it shall be so. The prayer I just prayed comes from my heart. I speak the truth."

The promise of our key verse from Matthew 7:7,8 is that "everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, it will be opened." EVERYONE who asks, seeks and knocks when they need wisdom will find the answer in God's Word. "Amen -- it shall be so."

Saying "amen" at the end of a prayer is literally putting a stamp of approval on your prayer saying you believe God heard you and will help you. Amen is not just a period at the end of a sentence. It is a declaration, a confirmation, an exclamation that God is in charge and we are in agreement with His direction.

Suggest that when the kids say the word amen they say it with conviction. Sometimes it might be appropriate to shout the word amen. Be creative about ways to get across to the kids the importance of declaring the word amen at the end of their prayers.

Finally, encourage the kids to see prayer as a personal conversation with their loving heavenly Father and to make prayer a daily part of their life.

Church Relationships



Hebrews 10:24,25

LESSON AIM

To understand the church is a gathering of people not a building.
To understand our individual responsibility to the ministry of the church.
To learn how we can help others through the church.

KEY VERSE

"And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching." (Hebrews 10:24,25)

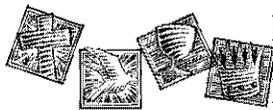
ITEMS NEEDED

Play-doh® or modeling clay
Bibles
Scriptures for Investigation
Blindfolds for alternate activity

Paper/ pencils
Photocopies of "You Decide"
Whipped cream or tube frosting

DECLARATION OF FAITH

We believe that having accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior and King, and thus been born into the family and invisible body or Church of the Lord, it is the sacred duty of the believer, to identify himself/herself with and labor for the building of God's kingdom with the visible church of Christ on earth; that visible church being a congregation of believers, who have associated themselves together in Christian fellowship and in the unity of the Spirit, observing the ordinances of Christ, worshipping Him in the beauty of holiness, speaking to each other in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, reading and proclaiming His Word, laboring for the salvation of souls, giving of their temporal means to carry on His work, edifying, encouraging and establishing one another in faith, and working together as many members, but one body of which Christ is the



head



GROUP INTERACTION

Clay Charades

Tip:

Be aware that some kids may sculpt objects that are questionable or reactionary. Stay cool! Ask calmly why they chose that object or set up rules for the game, it is your call.

This activity is adapted from the game *Sculpt-it*®. Group kids into teams of two, give a portion of clay to a team. Write the following words on scraps of paper and place in a jar or bowl. Each team draws a word and then decides among themselves what they could do with the clay to represent that word. Allow 1-2 minutes for the rest of the group to guess the word. Suggested words: CHURCH, GIVING, PRAISE, LOVE, SERVING, PRAYER. See discussion on next page.

After all the groups have finished, lead a discussion on two points:

- Why did they sculpt the particular object to represent their word? (See Tip)
- Are there differences in how God's Word defines these words and how our friends define these words?

INVESTIGATION

Write the following scriptures on pieces of paper and hand one copy to each group. Read the scenario and then have the groups discuss their solutions. Make Bibles available and have them list one scripture to back up their answer.

Scenario: Imagine a natural disaster has hit your town, it could be a tornado, hurricane, or an earthquake. You've been told to take cover until it is safe to go outside. However, when you do go outside, there are many buildings that have been destroyed. People are frightened and confused, yet miraculously no lives were lost and you are very thankful for your own survival. The quest: How would you go about finding a church and sharing your thankfulness with others?

Some scriptures to help you. Acts 2:42, 2:46-47, 6:4, 14:27, and Hebrews 10:24-25. Guide the conversation to help the kids answer this question: If the church is made up of people, why are buildings necessary?

INSTRUCTION TIME

What is the Church?

People make the church what it is and what it will be. The real church is not the building but the people. Everyone in the world who has accepted Jesus as Savior is a member of the church. Many times we hear the church called "the body of Christ." In the dictionary the word "body" can mean a group of people that belong to your local church.

The word "church" in the New Testament never refers to the building used for worship. In the Book of Acts meetings were usually held in private houses, simply because there were no central meeting places large enough for the gathering of all believers. Elders had been selected to oversee the meetings of these local congregations, but all decisions that were made were guided by the Holy Spirit, not man's own concerns. The people ruled the church, but the Holy Spirit ruled the people.



INSTRUCTION TIME

CONTINUED

What is the Purpose of the Church?

The purpose of the church is to continue the work that Jesus started here on earth. After Jesus went back to heaven, the disciples went everywhere preaching. They prayed for people and saw miracles take place. Followers of Jesus in Bible times and today can do very little without the help of God. As His followers, we have the power or the ability to do even greater things than Jesus did when He was on earth. "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do because I go to My Father" (John 14:12). We are empowered or authorized by God to do His work here on earth. We have the Holy Spirit who gives us power, strength, ability and wisdom.

The purpose of the church gathering together regularly is to worship God, be taught from His Word, to encourage each other to grow, and to fellowship. Acts 2:42 says about the early church, "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and in prayers."

When Should We Attend Church?

We usually gather as the church one day a week. We celebrate this "Lord's Day" because we need to set time aside from our busy days and give time to attend God's house, minister to people in need, and witness about Jesus to others. It is a time for service and worship. Just like God rested after He created the world, we are to devote the Lord's Day to spending time with God after our busy week.

We can worship God and attend church any day or evening and as often as we want. However, doesn't God deserve at least one day out of seven for His people to join together to worship Him? Also, is it important to God for His people to join together and work for the same cause – bringing people to a knowledge of Jesus Christ, and encouraging one another to grow stronger in the Lord and His Word?

As you prepare this lesson take time to become familiar with the "You Decide" handout provided. Write in your choice of a dollar amount before you photocopy this handout. Amounts will differ according to geographic area.

BRING HOME THE TRUTH

"You Decide"
Handout

*Pass out the photocopies of "You Decide" Have the students break into groups and come up with their decisions. Give them about a 5-10 minute limit. Upon completion, discuss their answers and reasons. It is important that you guide the conversation to this conclusion: **A good use for this money will be to help the church be a witness to others and bring people to a better understanding of God's love.***



ALTERNATE ACTIVITY

Messy
Cooperative
Feed



Set up a messy cooperative feed as follows:

Get four volunteers. Blindfold three of them. The seeing person is person A, the others are B,C,D. Give an aerosol can of whipped cream or tube of cake frosting to B. Using only his or her voice, A instructs B where to hold the can or tube and tells C when to squeeze it. The purpose is to feed D. To further complicate things, B & C can use only one hand each, and D can't use his or her hands at all. After a couple of tries, ask the following questions:

- *How did these people work together to feed person D?*
- *How did they depend on each other?*
- *What if Person C ignored the instruction Person A gave?*
- *Would they ever be able to accomplish their goal under these circumstances?*
- *How is the church like this Messy Cooperative Feed?*

CHURCH RELATIONS You Decide

You are members of the Church Council, the council that helps the Pastor decide what to do with the church finances. Review the following situation and then discuss possible solutions. Jot down the suggestions.

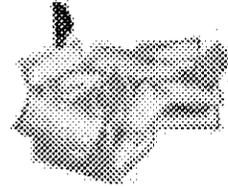
The church has just received a special gift of \$
You have people who are faithful in giving their tithes and offerings so the monthly utility bills, taxes, missions giving and other expenses are always paid on time. But there are some other needs the church has:

The only rule is to decide on a specific need, indecision may lead to poor stewardship.

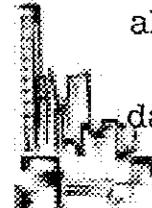
The church has the opportunity to purchase two large-sized vans that will be used to pick up people in the area and bring them to church. It will also be used to transport kids to camps and take people to outreach ministries.



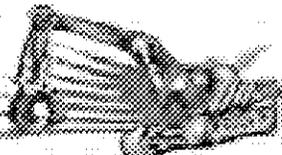
There are many homeless people in your community. The money could be used to establish a fund for a food pantry and putting people in a motel for one night.



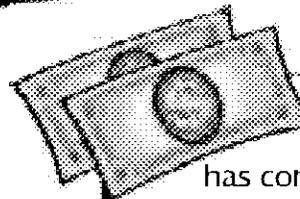
New playground equipment and building repair is needed for the children during church. The church would also like to open a preschool or daycare facility in the future.



There is not enough church parking. Several people have to park on the street in front of neighboring homes sometimes blocking the driveways. It is upsetting the people who live there. There is a vacant lot next door for sale.



Lately the church has come up short in their finances, so the Pastor's salary has not been paid. This causes a hardship to his or her family. The church would like to bring on another staff member to help the pastor but there is not enough money.



Would you do something else with the money?

As the people who will help the pastor make the final decision about how to spend this money, you must choose one of these options or create another need. Is it hard to make these kinds of decisions? What should be the first thing you do before your meeting?



LESSON AIM

To acknowledge God's great power.
To publicly celebrate God's goodness.

KEY VERSE

"...I will hope continually, and will praise You yet more and more."
(Psalm 71:14)

ITEMS NEEDED

Bible, pens, or pencils and paper.
Photocopies of the Hebrew Word Search (master provided).
Magazines and other supplies for alternate activity if you choose.

DECLARATION OF FAITH

Jesus said that the Father seeks the worship of those who will worship Him in spirit and in truth. An important mission of the Church is to promote and sustain an atmosphere conducive to worship, prayer and praise: But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the PRAISES of him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous **light.**



GROUP INTERACTION

Pair up the kids. After considering a friend or family member that makes him/her proud to know, have each student make a true statement about them to their partner, i.e. "My dad is so great that..." Have them banter back and forth, trying to outdo each other. Some of the statements will end up sounding outrageous.

Most of us have certain relatives or friends of whom we think highly. Sometimes we're so proud of them and/or their accomplishments, we



might exaggerate a bit. But whenever we brag about the Lord Jesus, we can never exaggerate. As a matter of fact, our high praises will often fall short of declaring God's true greatness. It is always appropriate to "boast in the Lord!"

INVESTIGATION



Here are some short Psalms of praise listed by theme. Assign one to each of the kids and have them read the Psalm aloud. If your group is large, break up into small groups for this investigation. The God of Creation (Ps. 8), God's goodness (Ps. 150), strength (Ps. 124 and 125), salvation (Ps. 43), deliverance (Ps. 43), perfection (Ps. 15), justice & vindication (Ps. 70), holiness (Ps. 1), mercy (Ps. 123), compassion (Ps. 3), greatness (Ps. 134), majesty (Ps. 131), faithfulness (Ps. 100), redemption (Ps. 2), grace, kindness (Ps. 117), the nearness of God (Ps. 4), holiness (Ps. 99), God of justice (Ps. 82), help (Ps. 54), joy (Ps. 126).

INSTRUCTION TIME

Think for a moment about the little prayer: "God is great, God is good. Let us thank Him for our food." If God were only great, He might be a terrorist or a dictator. If God were only good, He might mean well but lack the ability to be "an ever-present help in time of trouble" (Psalm 46:1). But He is both great and good; therefore we thank Him for everything we enjoy. This is what praise is: acknowledging God's delivering power and publicly celebrating God's goodness. To praise and glorify God is our highest duty and chief purpose.

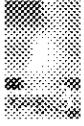
This lesson is a study of descriptive words which help us understand what praise is in our daily lives. These words are from the Hebrew language taken from the Old Testament. Copy and distribute the Hebrew Word Search (master provided) to help introduce these words and what they look like to the kids. Allow time for the kids to complete this word search before continuing with the lesson.

Let's begin with an understanding of perhaps the greatest book of praise to God which has ever been written: The Psalms. The Hebrew title of the Book of Psalms is Tehillim (pronounced, tu-hee-leem'), literally the "Book of Praises." The Psalms magnify and praise the Lord, exalt His attributes, His names, His Word and His goodness. Whether you find yourself in deep need or abounding joy, you can always find a psalm which expresses your inmost feeling.

DESCRIPTIVE WORDS FOR PRAISE . . .

"to boast about"

Halal (pronounced, haw-lal'), one of the Hebrew words for "praise," means "to boast about someone with words and singing." Halal is the root word from which "hallelujah" is formed. The phrase is a command: hallehi-Jah ("All must praise Jah, or Jehovah!"). Halal usually conveys the idea of speaking or singing about the glories, virtues, or honor of someone or something. In Old Testament times, one of the duties of the Levitical priests was to stand every morning and evening to thank and praise the Lord (1 Chronicles 23:30).



“to glory in;
to calm, soothe”

Shabach (pronounced, sheb-akh'), another interesting word for “praise,” includes the idea of calming a raging sea (Psalm 65:7; 89:9) or hushing up things within one’s heart (Proverbs 29:11). There appears to be a connection between “praising with words” and “soothing with words.” Positive input from others always seems to soothe anyone who has ever been upset.

“thanksgiving”

Todah (tad-aw'), is the Hebrew word for “thanksgiving.” This word is derived from the verb yadah (yed-aw'), “to give thanks, to praise.” The root of yadah is yad, “hand.” Thus, to thank or praise God is “to lift or extend one’s hands” in thanks to Him. Todah appears more than 30 times in the Old Testament, a dozen of these in the Psalms (50:23; 100:4). Todah is translated “sacrifice of praise” in Jeremiah 33:11.

“cheering in
triumph”

Praise means to rejoice, to be glad in the Lord. Rinnah (rin-naw') depicts a shout of rejoicing; shouting; loud cheering in triumph; singing. Rinnah describes the kind of joyful shouting at the time of a great victory (Proverbs 11:10). Zephaniah 3:17 literally says that God will dance over His beloved people with singing or a shout of joy. Rinnah may best be illustrated by the testimony of the redeemed, returning to Zion from captivity. Rinnah is the word for both singing and joy.

“dancing for joy”

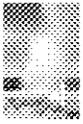
Another word for rejoicing is gil (ghil), which suggests “dancing for joy,” or “leaping for joy,” since the verb originally meant “to spin around with intense motion.” God dances for joy over Jerusalem and because of His people (Isaiah 65:19; Zephaniah 3:17). In turn, His redeemed citizens are joyful in their King; they praise Him with dances, with instruments, and with singing (Psalm 149:2, 3). Although everything is wrong in Habakkuk’s external world, he is leaping for joy over his fellowship with Yahweh (Habakkuk 3:18).

“a great victory
shout”

“And they sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the LORD: ‘For He is good, for His mercy endures forever toward Israel.’ Then all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid” (Ezra 3:11). Teru`ah (te-roo'-uh) means a shout of joy, a clamor, blast of trumpets; the sounding of an alarm (especially with a trumpet); a cry of jubilee; a victory shout. Teru`ah is an ear-piercing, great noise, a sound that cannot be ignored. Teru`ah describes the shouting of the Israelites when the ark was returning (2 Samuel 6:15). In Leviticus 25:9, teru`ah is translated “Jubilee,” literally “trumpet of the loud sound.” Teru`ah is a significant term in Psalms; please refer to Psalm 27:6; 33:3; 47:5; 39:15; 150:5.

“to clap”

Taqah (taw-kah') means “to clatter, clang, sound blow (trumpets), clap, strike. “Oh, clap your hands, all you peoples! Shout to God with the voice of triumph!” (Psalm 47:1). Taqah describes pitching a tent or fastening a nail, probably due to the striking of the hammer used for both tasks. In other references, taqah describes blowing a trumpet or sounding an alarm. Thus taqah indicates energy and enthusiasm. Here all nations

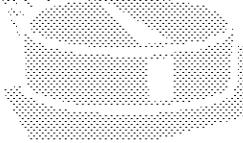


are commanded to clap their hands and shout triumphantly to God. God has built into us an almost instinctive urge to clap and shout whenever victory is experienced.

“to sing;
to sing praises”

Shir (sheer) means “to sing,” referring specifically to the kind of song that is sung with the human voice. “Hear, O kings! Give ear, O princes! I, even I, will sing to the LORD; I will sing praise to the LORD God of Israel” (Judges 5:3). *Zamar* (zem-awr’) is another common Old Testament word meaning “to make music, sing praises; to sing songs accompanied by musical instruments (especially stringed instruments).” “Let them praise His name with the dance; let them sing praises to Him with the timbrel and harp” (Psalm 149:3). From this word is derived *mizmor*, usually translated “psalm” or “song.” *Mizmor* may be vocal as well as instrumental. Musical instruments are usually a vital part of praise and worship.

TAKING HOME THE TRUTH



As you can see, praise is multi-faceted: boasting, thanking, cheering, shouting, dancing, clapping, playing instruments, and singing of God’s delivering power and great goodness. Heaven will be filled with unending praise and worship. In some ways, our experience on earth could be viewed as rehearsal for an eternity of praising God. We must enter into the spirit of heaven if the spirit of heaven is to enter us.

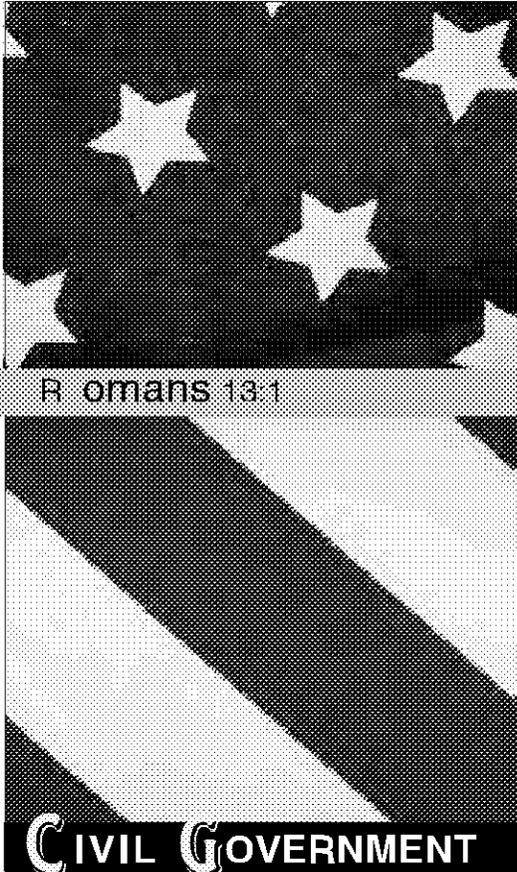
Choose one or more characteristics of God that really amaze you and write your own psalm of praise to the Lord (one to three paragraphs). Thank Him, rejoice in Him, boast about Him, commend Him, adore Him, celebrate His excellence, admire Him, exalt Him (lift Him up high) and worship (bow yourself down low before Him). Your psalm may read like a song (i.e. certain phrases may be repeated), but it doesn’t have to rhyme.

Most important, remember to make praise a way of life. God deserves to be praised. We should praise Him. Our entire life should be filled with God’s praise.

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY

Reasons to Praise God
Magazine

Have the kids cut out of magazines several scenic photographs depicting the power of God. Perhaps they might find photos of people expressing excitement or awe at one of these sights. Together as a group create a magazine called “Reasons to Praise God.” If the magazine turns out well and you have the permission of your church leadership, display the magazine in the lobby area of your church. Be sure to include on the cover the name of your group and an appropriate scripture .



In GOD We TRUST?

LESSON AIM

To know the Christian's responsibility to legitimate authority.
To learn how to live with authority.

KEY VERSE

*"Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God."
(Romans 13:1)*

ITEMS NEEDED

Pencils
Photocopies of the "Ten Commandments" handout
Photocopies of the "Romans 13" handout
Scenarios photocopied and handed out to groups

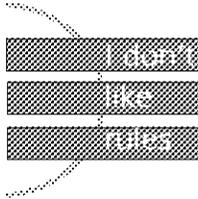
DECLARATION OF FAITH



We believe that civil government is of Divine appointment, for the interests and good order of human society, and that governors and rulers should be prayed for, obeyed and upheld, at all times except only in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is the ruler of the conscience of His people, the King of Kings and the Lord of **Lords.**



GROUP INTERACTION



Divide the class into two to four teams. Supply objects such as balloons, oranges, balls, potatoes, etc. Have each team choose an object and write their own rules for a relay game. This can be done indoors or outside. When the teams finish writing their rules, have them line up according to their groups. **HOWEVER**, at the last minute, take some of the kids from one team and switch them with another. The teams will run the relays with each person following the rules their original team created. The result will be confusion and frustration. After the exercise, discuss some of these questions:

- Why didn't the relays work?
- Would following the rules of the team you joined help the success of the relay?
- When are rules good?

INSTRUCTION

Obligation to Rulers

A person's first obligation is to what God says. However, as long as we live in this world, we have an obligation to obey government or authority (1 Peter 2:13, 14, 17). It makes no difference if the leaders are dishonest or unfair. Law and order is ordained by God and is necessary for people to live in a safe and peaceful environment. Any kind of government is better than anarchy (chaos or lawlessness). Even the worst officials strive to preserve some sort of order. Jesus did not call for revolution against Rome, even though it was a government that persecuted certain groups of people. Instead, He instructed His followers to live within the governmental system and concentrate on **BEING LOVING CHRISTIANS AND SHOWING OTHERS THE LOVE OF GOD.**

Our Attitude Toward Authority

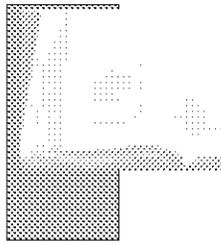
The Christian's attitude toward authority and the law should be one of prayerfulness. We as Americans have a right to disagree with any public official or law, but as Christians we have an obligation to pray for our leaders, police, teachers and parents. When we pray for these people, we **ARE** obeying God's law (Romans 13:1) (1 Timothy 2:1-2). Jesus commanded us to pray for those who persecute us (Matthew 5:44).

Our Attitude Toward Others

If you love others as you love yourself and treat them as you would like to be treated, you won't steal from them, lie to them, or try to hurt them. When you love others according to God's Word, you do no wrong to them. That kind of behavior fulfills all of God's laws (Romans 13:9,10). If you are trying to do good, obey the rules and live peacefully with others, you have nothing to fear from authority. Obey the law for two reasons: to keep from being punished and because you are supposed to (Romans 13:3,4).

Tip

Some kids don't like themselves and have no problem treating others badly. Be sensitive to this and accentuate God's unconditional love to each person.



INVESTIGATION

Romans 13:13, 14 (Living Bible) tells us: "Be decent and true in everything we do so that all can approve your behavior. Don't spend your time in wild parties and getting drunk or in adultery and lust, or fighting, or jealousy. But ask the Lord Jesus Christ to help you live as you should, and don't make plans to enjoy evil."

Should a Christian Disobey the Government?

Is it ever right for a Christian to disobey the government? The Bible gives examples of people who refused to obey leadership or government. We also read about civil government refusing people the liberty to worship and obey God freely. When a government refuses these individual freedoms, it has lost its authority from God. In Acts 5:27-29 the apostles were forbidden to preach the Gospel. They disobeyed the local law to obey God's command to share the Good News. We are also not to blindly follow a leader who hurts other people or disobeys God's laws. Even though we do the right things for the right reasons, disobeying common law on these grounds may have difficult results. As long as we are obedient to God, He will help us through these hard situations.

Hand out copies of "The Ten Commandments" (master provided) and allow kids time to write in the commandments. This can be done individually or as a group. After they have finished bring them together and ask someone to read Matthew 22:37-40 and Romans 13:9,10 and ask these questions:

- Did the Ten Commandments get changed or deleted?
Explain what these verses say to you.
- Do you think someone could get into Heaven just by keeping the Ten Commandments?
- Does total love for God empower you to love your neighbor and yourself?

WE DON'T SPECIFICALLY LIVE BY THE TEN COMMANDMENTS,
RATHER BY GOD'S MORAL LAW - LOVE.

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY

Law and Order

Divide the class into groups. Photocopy the scenarios from page 4 of this lesson. Cut each scenario apart from its answer and pass out one scenario to each group. Have a volunteer from each group read their scenario and let the group discuss why they thought the law was unfair. Then read the complete answer to the scenario and let them rethink their answers. Sometimes we think a law is unfair and really it serves to protect us.

With this lesson you will find a handout of Romans 13 from the Living Bible. This handout will be helpful should you choose to use this alternate activity.



The real problem:

The law allows the homeless to sleep in their cars in the church parking lot. However, the church building is not up to code to house so many homeless people—for both bathroom facilities and in case of emergency evacuation.

Scenario 1: A pastor allows homeless people to park their cars in the church parking lot and sleep there overnight. Eventually he allows people to come into the church to sleep. Lots of homeless people gather at the church every night. Local law enforcement asks the Pastor to turn away many of the people, but the pastor does not obey. The city takes the Pastor to court. Was the Pastor wrong?

The real problem:

The law states that NO ONE can block the entrance to a public building. What if they blocked the entrance to our churches? Would Jesus have found it necessary to block an entrance? Could a person's motivation be right, yet their methods be wrong?

Scenario 2: Some people from a church learn that a local health center is performing abortions on women. God's Word says it is wrong to take innocent life. The people block the entrance to the clinic and yell at the women and tell them that abortion is wrong. The people from the church are arrested. Were they legally right? Were they acting as Jesus would?

The real problem:

The Bible is filled with stories of wars and battles. Some battles were necessary for the safety of people. Others were in defense of arrogant leaders. In most cases, when God was speaking to the leaders of the armies, He helped them win the battles in miraculous ways. i.e. Joshua & Jericho, Gideon & the Midianites. We are to serve our country and our leader even into war.

Scenario 3: One of the Commandments is "Thou shalt not kill." Yet many times we as Americans are called to fight in wars that cause a great loss of life. What does a Christian who is serving in the Armed Forces do?

ROMANS 13

THE LIVING BIBLE TRANSLATION

Obey the government, for God is the one who has put it there. There is no government anywhere that God has not placed in power. ² So those who refuse to obey the laws of the land are refusing to obey God, and punishment will follow. ³ For the policeman does not frighten people who are doing right; but those doing evil will always fear him. So if you don't want to be afraid, keep the laws and you will get along well. ⁴ The policeman is sent by God to help you. But if you are doing something wrong, of course you should be afraid, for he will have you punished. He is sent by God for that very purpose. ⁵ Obey the laws, then, for two reasons: first, to keep from being punished, and second, just because you know you should.

⁶ Pay your taxes too, for these same two reasons. For government workers need to be paid so that they can keep on doing God's work, serving you. ⁷ Pay everyone whatever he ought to have: pay your taxes and import duties gladly, obey those over you, and give honor and respect to all those to whom it is due. ⁸ Pay all your debts except the debt of love for others—never finish paying that! For if you love them, you will be obeying all of God's laws, fulfilling all His requirements. ⁹ If you love your neighbors as much as you love yourself you will not want to harm or cheat him, or kill him or steal from him. And you won't sin with his wife or want what is his, or do anything else the Ten commandments say is wrong. All ten are wrapped up in this one, to love your neighbor as you love yourself. ¹⁰ Love does no wrong to anyone. That's why it fully satisfies all of God's requirements. It is the only law you need. ¹¹ Another reason for right living is this: you know how late it is; time is running out. Wake up, for the coming of the Lord is nearer now than when we first believed. ¹²⁻¹³ The night is far gone, the day of His return will soon be here. So quit the evil deeds of darkness and put on the armor of right living, as we who live in the daylight should! Be decent and true in everything you do so that all can approve your behavior. Don't spend your time in wild parties and getting drunk or in adultery and lust, or fighting, or jealousy. ¹⁴ But ask the Lord Jesus Christ to help you live as you should, and don't make plans to enjoy evil.

The Commandments

TEN

Fill in the appropriate commandment. Write it in your own words.

Commandments about our relationship with God

Verse 3

Verses 4-6

7

Verses 8-11

Commandments about our relationships with other people

Verse 12

Verse 13

Verse 14

Verse 15

Verse 16

Verse 17



LESSON AIM

To realize that worship is seeing God's awesome beauty and power and responding to Him in a life of thankfulness.

KEY VERSE

"Give unto the LORD the glory due unto His name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness." (Psalm 29:2)

ITEMS NEEDED

Video sports clips (pg.1)
Photocopies of "How Can I Worship God" handout (master provided)
Prepare a handout or overhead transparency for Instruction Time (pg.2)

DECLARATION OF FAITH

Worship belongs only unto God Almighty (Exodus 34:14) and worship is ascribed to Jesus (Matthew 14:33). "They that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God..." At Jesus' birth the wise men came to worship Him. God commanded concerning His Son, "...let all the angels of God worship Him" (Hebrews 1:6).



Amen!

GROUP INTERACTION

Secure a video tape from your local library or video rental store which depict outstanding sports highlights or clips of extreme sports. (Be sure to preview carefully and avoid any graphic violence or bloody scenes and other inappropriate depictions which can sometimes occur in this type of video.) Begin your group time with your video selection and allow (maybe even encourage) the kids to gasp and cheer over what they see. The bigger their reaction the easier it will be to make the point of this lesson.



Break into groups of two or three and talk about the extreme videos they watched. Direct the conversation by asking these questions:

- ⋈ Who in this video did you most admire and why?
- ⋈ Why do you think someone would attempt the things they did?
- ⋈ Would we go to the edge to show God we adore and worship Him?
- ⋈ Is there anything about God so great/ powerful/ mighty to compare with the things you watched in this video?
- ⋈ What would you be willing to do as an act worship for God?

INSTRUCTION TIME

Biblical worship is our expression of reverence, admiration, & devotion to God.

DESCRIPTIVE WORDS FOR WORSHIP . . .

This lesson is a study of three biblical words which help us understand what worship is in our daily lives. Biblical worship is the expression of reverence, admiration, and devotion to God. Old Testament worship is described using these terms: “*seroe, bow down, pledge allegiance, honor, fear, and revere.*” The New Testament continues this idea and teaches us to worship Jesus Christ as God’s Son.

Shachah means “to bow, to stoop; to bow down before someone as an act of submission or reverence; to worship; to fall or bow down when paying homage to God.” The primary meaning is “to make oneself low.” “Exalt the LORD our God, and worship at His footstool - He is holy” (Psalm 99:5). Exalt the Lord (lift Him up high) and worship (bow yourselves down low before Him) at the place of His feet.

We are to show submission and reverence for our Holy God.

Epaunos expresses not only praise for what God does for us, but also for Who He is, recognizing His glory (Ephesians 1:6).

We are to know and admire our awesome God.

The most common word for worship used in the New Testament is proskuneo: “to fall down prostrate in reverence, to humbly bow down, worship, adore.” Speaking to the Samaritan woman, Jesus defined true worship as the spiritual connection between God and a person: “True worshipers . . . worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and His worshipers must worship Him in spirit and in truth” (John 4:23-24).

We are to be totally devoted to our Heavenly Father.

Tip:
The key words and meanings from this lesson can be listed on an overhead transparency, chalkboard or a printed handout. Be sure to include a statement of application such as the bold statements following each description.



We do not worship angels, saints, shrines, or relics. All believers have a one dimensional worship, to the only Lord and Savior. "The twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne" (Revelation 4:10).

Jesus quoted Deuteronomy 6:5 as the first and greatest commandment: "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength." Worshipers should put their whole heart and soul into their worship and honor God for His provision for every aspect of life. Worship is more than joyful obedience based on a loving relationship - it is wholehearted, extravagant devotion.

INVESTIGATION

Ultimate Worship

Have the group read the story of Mary's act of worship in John 12:1-8. Spikenard was a valuable and fragrant ointment, imported from India in alabaster boxes. Because of its costliness, spikenard was used only for very special occasions. The amount of spikenard that Mary poured over Jesus represented ten months of wages equivalent to at least \$15,000 or more today. Most people would consider this act of devotion a senseless and total waste. But the lovely fragrance of Mary's worship lingers to this day. She understood who Christ was. She gave more than she had to give . . . going beyond what the average person gives.

Think about these questions and discuss with the entire group:

How far would you go to prove your loyalty to a friend?

How far would you go to prove your loyalty to a family member?

How far would you go to prove your loyalty to Jesus?

TAKING HOME THE TRUTH

How Can I Worship God? Handout

Allow time for the kids to put into practice some of the concepts they have heard and discussed in this lesson. Give each person a copy of the handout "How Can I Worship God?" Perhaps you would like to play some soft music which lends itself to reflective thought. You might choose to take it a step further and dim the lights creating a more calm environment. Encourage the kids to prayerfully consider their responses to the statements on the handout and respond to God through personal prayer.

Our kids need to be reminded that this kind of reflection, meditation and conversation with their Heavenly Father is a scriptural and desirable way to spend their time.

Spend a few minutes praying and thinking about these statements
and write your response to each one.

Then, take the time on a regular basis to talk to God about those answers.

Remember that biblical worship is the expression of
reverence, admiration and devotion to God.

How
What I most appreciate that God has done for me

Can I
Ways I can show my love, support and loyalty to God

What I admire most about Jesus

Worship
What I most like that God made

God?
What I would like to say to God

Revelation 1:8

WHO

WAS

Time?

LESSON AIM

To realize how important time is to man.
To recognize that God is the author and manager of time.

KEY VERSE

" 'I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End,' says the Lord, 'Who is and Who was and Who is to come, the Almighty.' "

(Revelation 1:8)

ITEMS NEEDED

Bible, pens, pencils
Prizes for Time Trivia
Photocopies of trivia cards
Dice or Spinning Wheel

3x5 cards
Items for group activity
Clock or watch for visual
Time Foods (optional)

DECLARATION OF FAITH

Taken from Foundations of Pentecostal Theology, by Duffield and Van Cleave, copyright, 1983 by L.I.F.E. Bible College, pg. 70.

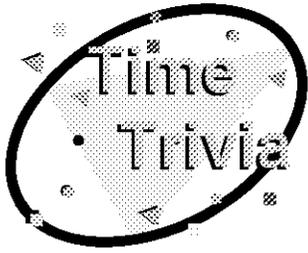


Now unto the King **ETERNAL**, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen" (1 Timothy 1:17). The Psalmist exclaimed, "...even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God" (Psalm 90:2b). His **Existence**, to express it from a human perspective, is from everlasting past to everlasting future. The same claims of eternity are from the mouth of Jesus in Revelation 1:8 and 22:13. The **Eternal God** is the giver of eternal life through His **Eternal Son**: "He that hath the Son hath life..." (1 John 5:12). God's majestic **NAME** given to Moses in Exodus 3:14, "I AM THAT I AM," reveals Him as above **time**.

GROUP INTERACTION

Time Warp

Have the kids sit in a circle. Pass out modern day items or pictures of items that may not have been available in Bible times (i.e. nail clippers, hairbrush, thermometer, nutcracker, balloon, bottle of bubbles, etc.). Have the kids hold the object or picture and share a few sentences about what people might have done with the object back in Bible times. Example, hairbrush could have been a toothbrush for Goliath. The crazier the story, the more fun the activity.



Photocopy the attached trivia questions. Cut them out and place them in one or two piles. Divide the group into teams. If possible have a spinning wheel or dice to determine how many points each team will get if they answer the questions correctly. Give a small prize to everyone for participating in the game. If you choose, make up some more trivia questions relating to time.

After the game, introduce the lesson with these questions:

How would you define time?

Can people control time?

Could we live an orderly life without wisely using time?

Who is in charge of time?

Who really controls time?

INSTRUCTION

How Man Uses Time

It is difficult to define TIME. It is something we use, waste, spend, and watch every day. But when we have to explain what it is, we find TIME is a little more difficult. For example, Webster's Dictionary defines TIME as "a nonspatial continuum in which events occur in apparently irreversible succession." It is much easier to describe TIME than it is to define.

Let's make an effort to describe TIME:

Time determines when we go to school and when we go home.

Time allows several people to meet for a party at the same TIME.

Time is measured by using a clock, a sundial, an hourglass,
a watch, a metronome, a pendulum.

Time is created by God for our benefit.

Time is controlled by God even though it is measured by people.

Man has tried for centuries to control time or discover ways to travel through time. One way man has attempted to control time for personal benefit is to create Daylight Saving Time.

All but three states in our country use Daylight Saving Time from April through October each year. Rather than adding or saving time, we are really controlling our clocks--not time itself. Think about it.

How God Uses Time

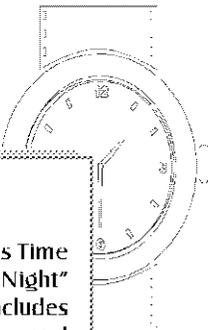
Daylight Saving Time is a situation where man has tried to control the effects of time, by changing the clock. We will now learn how God controlled the effects of time and literally slowed the rotation of the earth to change the destiny of Israel and her allies.

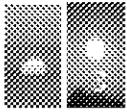
JOSHUA AND THE PEACE AGREEMENT (Joshua 10:1)

Joshua was a strong spiritual leader for the nation of Israel. Israel had just destroyed two evil kingdoms - Ai and Jericho. Another country, Gibeon was a large and wealthy kingdom and had a great army. It was sought after by other kings. The King of Gibeon joined with Israel rather than fight them which made some kings pretty upset that Gibeon changed loyalties and entered into a peace agreement with Israel.

Tip:

Who Owns Time is a "Fun Night" and includes more games and activities than a usual lesson. Add to this fun night by playing relay games using a stop watch or other timed game. The more time related activity in this lesson, the better.





God is
above
time

GIBBEON IS THREATENED (Joshua 10:3-5)

Adoni-Zedek, the King of Jerusalem got together with the King of Hebron, the King of Jarmuth, the King of Lachish, and the King of Eglon, and decided they had a chance to defeat Gibeon. So they staged a surprise attack. The King of Gibeon found out about this and he sent a messenger to ask Joshua for help.

Joshua turned for help to his Heavenly Father. In response, God said, "Don't be afraid of them I have given them to you to destroy." (Joshua 10:8, The Living Bible). Joshua traveled to Gibeon all night and surprised the other armies. God sent down a hailstorm that killed many of them.

As Joshua and his army were chasing after the survivors of the hailstorm, he asked God to still the sun and moon (vs 11). And the sun and moon didn't move until the Israeli army had finished the destruction of its enemies. The *earth's rotation actually slowed for almost twenty-four hours. The Lord lengthened a day because of a man's prayer!*



The Fort Worth Star-Telegram ran an article in the May 11, 1970 edition of the newspaper regarding scientific proof of a missing day. Harold Hill was the president of the Curtis Engine Company and a consultant in the space program. Mr. Hill stated that the space scientists at Green Belt, Maryland were trying to determine the position of the sun, moon and planets 100 years and 1000 years from now. In order to do this they had to plot the orbits through past centuries.

While running the computer measurements back, the computer halted. There was a discrepancy...a day was missing in space and elapsed time. (This information was provided by the Hugh Ross Christian Organization, [Reasons to Believe.](#))

TAKING HOME THE TRUTH

Pass out 3x5 cards to every kid. Tell them the following scenerio: Assume that God gave you 24 extra hours this week to do something really important for Him. Assume that He allowed you to choose what you did for Him in those 24 hours. What really important thing could you do for God within those extra 24 hours? Ask the kids to each write down on their index card what they would do.

If time permits, talk about their answers. Help the kids to prioritize what is most important as they serve the Lord.

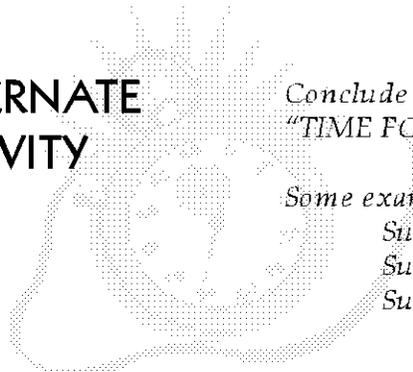
ALTERNATE ACTIVITY

Conclude this lesson with a time of refreshments emphasizing, of course, "TIME FOODS."

Some examples:

*Sunny Delight
Sun Chips
Sunkist oranges*

*Now and Laters
Sunflower seeds
Sunmaid raisins*



1. What time will it be during the first minute of the year 2000?

2. What are the two dates for the time changes for Daylight Saving Time?

3. What three states in the U.S. do not observe Daylight Saving Time?

4. What percentage of electricity is saved each day during Daylight Saving Time?

- 1%
- 5%
- 10%
- 25%

5. What would take longer - an hour of running or an hour of walking?

6. How many time zones are there in the world?

- 4
- 8
- 12
- 24

7. Who were one of the earliest users of accurate time?

- Scientists
- Astronomers
- Army
- Navy

8. What year was the first time Europe changed all of its clocks to the same time?

- 1890
- 1918
- 1954
- 1996

9. Which of the following is NOT a way that time is measured?

- Ephemeris time
- Atomic time
- Lunar time
- Dynamical time

10. What is the current standard used to determine world time?

- Co-ordinated Universal Time
- Atomic Time
- Greenwich Mean Time
- Prime Meridian Time

11. Does Daylight Saving time make the sun "set" one hour later or one hour earlier?

12. If a stopwatch was set to measure milli-seconds, how long would it take to reach a normal minute?

13. Daylight Saving Time prevents crime. True or False?

14. Daylight Saving reduces traffic. True or False?

15. What is the speed of light?

- 123,000 miles per second
- 435,000 miles per minute
- 186,000 miles per second
- 238,000 miles per second

Total Trivia
total truth

God is above time

16. What is the life span of the house fly?
4 days
2 weeks
1 month
24 hours

17. What month of the year is the earth closest to the sun?

18. What year follows 1 B.C.?

19. If a plane crashed on the border of Eastern Standard Time and Central Standard Time, which time would they use in estimating the time of death of the survivors?

20. How much time does the average person spend sleeping?
8 hours a day
6 hours a day
9 hours a day

21. How many years has God allowed for man to live?

22. How long is a light-year?
93,000,000 miles
55,000,000 miles
125,000,000 miles
9,000,000 miles

23. How much time would it take for all the Coca-Cola ever produced to flow over Niagra Falls?

24. How long does it take for the light from the sun to reach us?

25. How fast does a raindrop fall under normal conditions?
1 mile per hour
7 miles per hour
11 miles per hour
25 miles per hour

26. Which planet has the longest day from sunrise to sunrise?
Mercury
Venus
Earth
Pluto

27. Which planet orbits the sun at the fastest speed?
Mars
Venus
Mercury
Saturn

28. How many weeks in a leap-year?

29. Which planet is always seen during early morning or twilight?

30. Which city, on an average, has the fastest walking people?
Boston
New York
Los Angeles
Orlando

Total Trivia
total truth

God is above time

Total Trivia

total truth

Answers:

1. 12:01 AM
2. First Sunday of April and last Sunday of October
3. Hawaii, Arizona and the eastern time zone of Indiana
4. 1%
5. The same amount
6. 24
7. Navy
8. 1996
9. Lunar Time

(Ephemeris Time is based on lunar observations;
Atomic Time is based on clock data from numerous countries;
Dynamical Time is based on motion of celestial bodies.)

10. Co-ordinated Universal Time
11. Later
12. One minute
13. True
14. False
15. 186,000 miles per second
16. 2 weeks
17. January
18. AD 1
19. No death for survivors
20. 8 hours a day
21. 70 years (see Psalm 90:10)

The Spirit Filled Life Bible on Genesis 11:10-26 says: "Longevity was dropping sharply, from Noah's 950 years to Abraham's 175 years, in just 10 generations. This reduction was symbolically portrayed in Genesis 6:3 (120 years). Psalm 90:10 will later reduce the span of a person's life to a symbolic 70 years."

22. 93,000,000 miles
23. 23 hours
24. 8 minutes
25. 7 miles per hour
26. Venus (1 day on Venus is equal to 117 days on earth.)
27. Mercury (to avoid the sun's pull.)
28. 52 weeks
29. Mercury (because it is so aligned with the sun it cannot be seen at night.)
30. Boston

God is above time