

Baseline

A doctrinal curriculum for middleschool grades.

Contributing editors:

Rick Wulfestieg
Marylou Canata
Karen Heimbuch
Rod Light
Kara Schneidau
Patti Wulfestieg

Published by National Department of Christian Education, International Church of the Foursquare Gospel
Copyright 1997





Baseline

CONTENTS OF FAITH FOUNDATIONS - UNIT 1

Getting To Know God's Word

So What's It All About?
How to use the Bible

Who Is God?
The Attributes of God

The Personality of the Holy Spirit

Jesus Christ
Who Is Jesus Christ?

Jesus Christ: Make Contact

Dealing With Disobedience

God's Plan of Salvation

Heaven
A new place for new people

The Reality Of Hell

Choosing Gods Way
We decide what happens in our lives

Teach Us To Pray
The model of the Lord's Prayer

Free At Last
Independence Day

Fun Night With Movies



"Bring a person to
Jesus and let that
person take Jesus
to his/her world"

MISSION STATEMENT

Goals & Objective

This program is doctrinally based and is suitable for Sunday school, midweek gathering and as an extension of Good News Bears. It has been developed by the **Foursquare Christian Education Department** to help meet the needs of middle schoolers, giving a spiritual BASE upon which to grow.

OUR OBJECTIVE: A growing knowledge of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit and a genuine personal response is the heart of this program.

"Show me your ways, O Lord, teach me your paths; guide me in your TRUTH and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long." Psalm 25:4,5

The Hebrew word for TRUTH in Psalm 25:4,5 is 'emet (eh-met) and means certainty, stability, rightness, trustworthiness (Strong's Concordance #571). Truth is something upon which a person may confidently stake his life. Curiously, 'emet is spelled with the first, middle and last letters of the Hebrew alphabet; thus the rabbis concluded that truth upholds the first and the last of God's creation, and everything in between (adapted from the Spirit-Filled Life Bible, note on Psalm 25:5).

"Knowledge is power." The more TRUTH a person learns, the better equipped he or she is to face future growth and changes. We believe this is true with the next generation of Christians being brought up in the church. The more these kids learn about who they are in Jesus and the life principles He has taught, the better equipped they will be to face the trials of this present world and to develop a strong foundation for the future.

To reach our objective, Baseline lessons have been designed to include all or most of the following:

Lesson Aims to help the leader meet teaching objectives.

Declaration of Faith to appreciate our denominational heritage.

Teaching Tip to better understand the needs of our kids.

Key Verse for memorization or reinforcement.

Group Interaction activity to promote social interaction and teamwork.

Investigation activity to teach the kids how to use their Bibles.

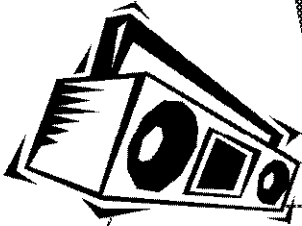
Taking Home the Truth to develop a continual heart response to God.

Instruction Time so the kids learn what the Bible has to say to them.

Word Definitions to explain biblical and church terminology.

Alternate Activities for extended times or two-week projects.

What are the needs of 5th and 6th graders?



Spiritual & Emotional

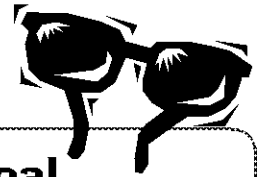
Children at this age are becoming spiritually sensitive. It is a prime age for indoctrination.

They are easily embarrassed by public displays of emotion or sentimentality.

They are capable of taking on responsibility, but could be overwhelmed by too much responsibility at home or at school.

They have a sense of humor that should be encouraged and channeled.

This age group needs lots of encouragement and spiritual guidance.



Physical

Children at this age are growing rapidly. They have a lot of energy and like to make noise. They enjoy doing more difficult and competitive activities.

Some are physically maturing more than others, which can cause self-consciousness or embarrassing remarks from other children. You can intermix boys and girls, however, they still prefer gender-based activities.



Social

Children need a sense of belonging. They strive to be part of a group, club or gang. They are beginning to develop organizational skills.

They are “hero-worshippers” and need positive role-models. However, they will challenge authority figures.

Discipline should be consistent, private and fair. Do not over-react to comments or gestures. Do not threaten or give ultimatums. Show God’s unconditional love.

This is a good age to begin service projects. This could include: helping with a church mailing, serving at a potluck, or visiting the elderly people in your church who can’t get around easily.



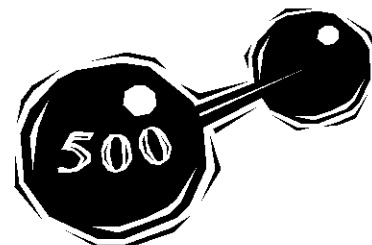
Mental

This age group has a strong sense of facts and figures. Most are very literal. However, some are drawn to fantasy or science fiction.

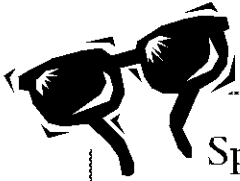
They like to collect things: sports cards, coins, stuffed animals, etc.

Children are developing logical reasoning, as well as personal beliefs and opinions.

They want to please, but are easily discouraged or will lose interest if pressured. Challenge and praise constantly.



What are the needs of Junior Highers?



Spiritual & Emotional

Junior highers are becoming spiritually sensitive. They need to be taught a faith that is practical for what they are experiencing. They are also moving away from their parent's faith and developing their own.

They can have doubts about Christianity as they are looking for the ideal (especially in other people's thoughts and actions).

Junior highers can have intense and fluctuating emotions.

They often feel misunderstood by adults and peers and want people to listen to them, not always talk to them.

This age group needs lots of encouragement and spiritual guidance.



Mental

This age group has a strong sense of facts and figures. Junior highers are capable of real thinking.

They will question authority and often make quick judgements.

They are very imaginative and are interested in adventure and discovery.

Junior highers have a strong sense of humor.

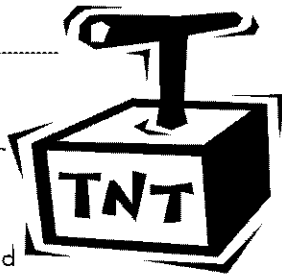


Physical

Kids at this age are growing rapidly. Kids at this age are growing rapidly than boys. Junior highers are also undergoing hormonal changes which may cause moodiness. They have a lot of energy, but also have periods of fatigue.

Some are physically awkward which can cause self-consciousness or embarrassing remarks from others.

You can intermix boys and girls in teaching and activities.



Social

Junior highers need a sense of belonging. They strive to be part of a group, club or gang.

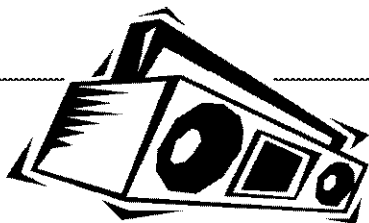
They want to be adults therefore desire to be independent of adults.

They are usually self-conscious and some of their social problems reflect their sexual development.

They have a strong sense of loyalty.

They are looking for a role-model. Show God's unconditional love.

Be fun-loving and let them know you enjoy their company.



scope

sequence

FAITH FOUNDATIONS

1. Getting to Know God's Word
2. The Holy Bible
So... What's It All About?
3. Who is God?
4. The Personality of the Holy Spirit
5. Jesus Christ
Who is Jesus Christ?
6. Jesus Christ
Let's Meet Jesus Christ!
7. Dealing With Disobedience
8. The Plan of Salvation
9. Heaven
A New Place for New People
10. The Reality of Hell
11. Choosing God's Way
12. Teach Us To Pray
The Lord's Prayer

BIBLE FOUNDATIONS

1. God
How does God deal with us?
2. The Work of the Holy Spirit
3. The Gifts of the Holy Spirit
4. Divine Healing
5. Angels
6. Demons and the Occult
7. Demons and Cults
8. The Coming King and the Resurrection
9. The Coming King and Judgement
10. Intercessory Prayer
11. We Are Sanctified
12. We Live in Sanctification

CHURCH FOUNDATIONS

1. Holy Communion
2. Water Baptism
3. Tithes and Offerings
4. Time and Talent
5. Missions
6. Missions Service Project
7. Personal Evangelism
8. Warfare Prayer
9. Church Relationships
10. Church: Service Project
11. Civil Government
12. Worship

LIFE FOUNDATIONS

1. How to Study the Bible
2. Armor of God (I)
3. Armor of God (II)
4. Discerning the New Age
5. Anger
6. Stress
7. Recovery
8. Judging Others
9. Forgiveness
10. Relationships (1 John)
11. Friendship
12. What's In a Name?
13. Fruit of the Spirit

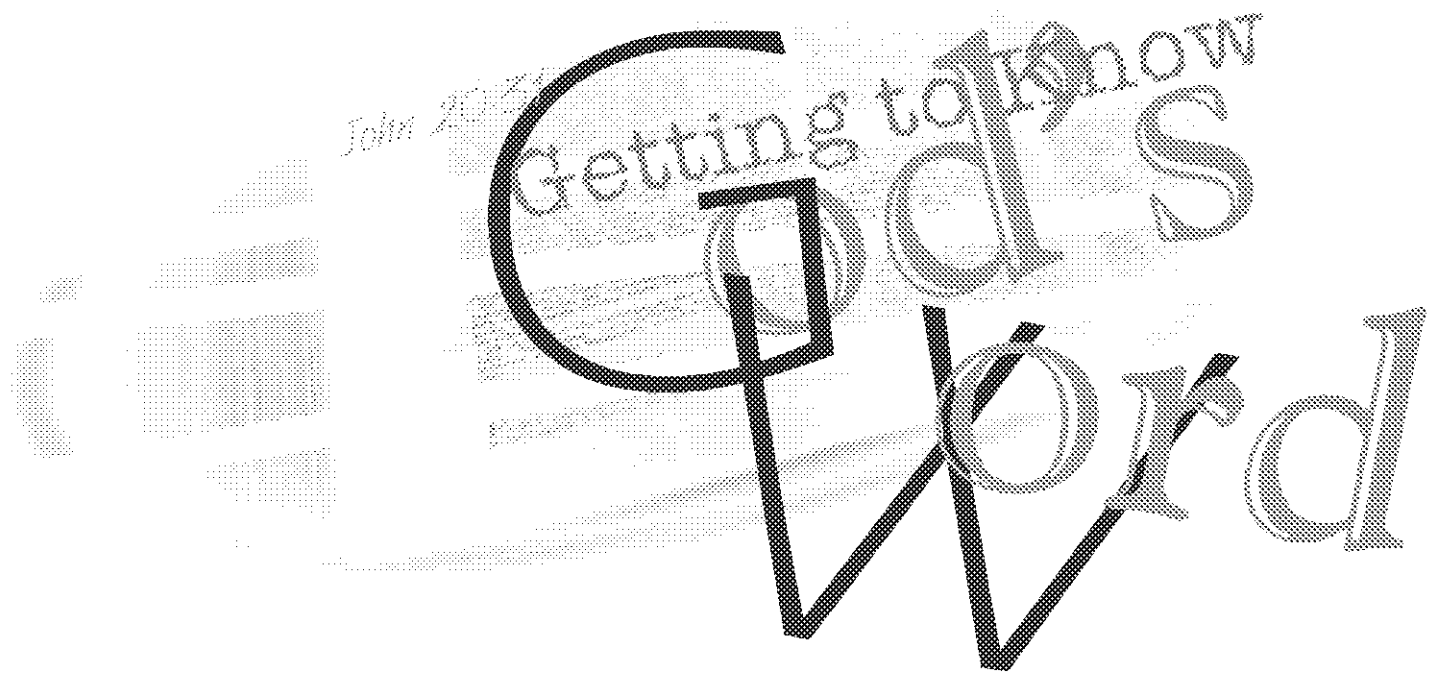
Fun & Games/Celebrations

Seasonal Lessons:

- Advent
- Lent
- Passover
- Independence Day

Fun Nights:

- Classic movie night
- Skateboarding night
- Music night
- Barbecue



LESSON AIM

*To know the Bible is God's Word.
To recognize the personal need for God's Word.
To learn how to use God's Word.*

KEY VERSE

*"But these are written that you may **believe** that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God; and that believing you may **have life** in his name." John 20:31 (NKJV)*

DECLARATION OF FAITH

The Bible is right morally and spiritually. Myer Pearlman reminds us, 'The Bible has worked. It has influenced civilizations, transformed lives, brought light, inspiration and comfort to millions. And its work continues.' Man asks: Who am I? From where did I come? Where am I going? What about immortality, Heaven, Hell, judgement, eternity? What does Man know, what can he know apart from the Bible? 1 Thessalonians 2:13 declares, We thank God continually because when you received the Word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the Word of God, which is at work in you who **believe.**



ITEMS NEEDED

*Bibles/ pencils/ paper
Prepared scavenger hunt list (see page 2)
Photocopies of "Getting to Know Your Bible" (master provided)*

GROUP INTERACTION

Scavenger Hunt

1) Write two or more lists of ten objects each. The objects should be found in the room that you are in, or on the kids in the group. Some of the items should be vague and some specific. Here are a few suggestions:

something blue	eye-glasses with brown frames
triangle-shaped object	something to fasten things together
a quarter	red ink pen

2) Break the group into two or more even teams.

3) Allow about 5-10 minutes for the "hunt." When they are done, lead the kids into the following discussion.

As you were looking for the items on your lists, did you notice that some things were specific and you knew exactly what to look for and other things were vague and you weren't sure what you would find?

When you read your Bible, you know exactly how to find some verses such as John 3:16. However, would you know where to look if you needed to find a verse about prayer?

Do you believe the Bible tells us the truth?

Do you believe the Bible is valuable to us today? Explain your opinion.

INVESTIGATION

BIBLE QUIZ HANDOUT

It might surprise you to know what your kids know and what they have been exposed to! Let's find out how much you actually know about the Bible. . . Break the kids into small groups or if the group of kids is small make two teams for this investigation. Distribute photocopies of Getting to Know Your Bible. Allow about 10 minutes for the kids to discover just how much they really know about the Bible. Keep this activity fun but make mental notes of the answers different kids give. You will want to incorporate some of their responses into the lesson as you transition to the instruction time.

INSTRUCTION TIME

..... ■ The Bible is God's Word (2 Timothy 3:16)

The Bible is still considered the greatest book ever written. Many great scholars consider the Bible to be a very important piece of literature. It contains great historical facts, poetry, songs and good advice. However, the most important thing about the Bible is that it is God's Word for us! Reading it helps us to know what we should do to please God, to live for Him, and how we know our Savior, Jesus Christ. Read and discuss John 20:31

The Bible is referred to as the "Holy" Bible because it came from God. He put the words and thoughts in the minds of men who wrote it. God inspired (guided, gave and showed) these men to write what they did. Without God's help and direction, their writing would not be able to help us today. Forty different men wrote the Bible over a period of 2,000 years.

..... ■ The Need for God's Word (Psalm 119:11)

The Bible is absolutely true. The Lord Jesus, in a prayer to His Heavenly Father, said "...Your word is truth." (John 17:17) Also, God cannot lie (Titus 1:2). God's Word shows us how we should live.

Tip:

Hold your Bible whenever you refer to what it says. Read from it and have the kids use their Bibles as well.

Think about when you will be old enough to drive a car. There are two tests you will take: the written test and the driving test. If you haven't read the driver's manual how will you pass the tests? How can you know the rules of the road? Would you want to drive on the same road as someone who didn't know the rules or with a driver unwilling to follow directions?

The story below is provided to help you create a scenario which will drive home the point of how important the Bible is in our everyday life. Try to read through the story several times in order to tell it to the kids without reading it. This story can be a great discussion starter about the value of the Bible in our lives.

The Unthinkable Glitch

Imagine a day when with the single stroke of a computer keyboard every Bible in the world disappears. Imagine a day when someone notices the "Book of all books" no longer exists. Suddenly the great archives of the world discover the worst vandalism in history when the Bible, the basis for all literature, society and human behavior, has been slashed to ribbons and beyond recognition.

All the great art galleries have massive empty frames on the walls, for the artistry of the world draws its inspiration from the lost book. The stories we love to read, watch and tell no longer exist because any reference to good and evil no longer makes sense. The law libraries of the world are full of confusion, because the principles of human conduct once found in the missing volume are also forever lost.

The loss of the Bible cuts even deeper. Values have become blurred. Human life has grown cheap. People are mere tools to be used and then discarded. Life is now drab and meaningless, and humankind has only himself to worship. Restraints fall off the human conscience, and all their brutal instincts have now been unleashed.

There are millions of Christians around the world who have expressed no dismay over this unthinkable glitch. Hosts of observers are surprised at this reaction since Christians are the very ones who were most devoted to the Book before its mysterious disappearance. These Christians have been quoted as saying they remain optimistic about the future. Apparently their lives have continued without interruption. When asked why they have not experienced the same turmoil as the rest of the world, the Christians simply reply, "We have hidden God's word in our hearts, His Word will remain there forever and we are ready for His return. Together we say, 'Come quickly, Lord Jesus!'"

BRINGING HOME THE TRUTH



The Bible shows us the way to live. It shows us how to live peaceful lives, no matter what our circumstances are. The Bible gives us the rules we should obey that will lead us in the right direction. It leads us to the truth of Jesus Christ, God's Son.

Use a chalkboard, overhead projector or whiteboard to make a list of ways the kids will show how important the Bible really is in their lives. Encourage them to think practically and specifically. Ideas might include...

- ✍ to read the Bible more often*
- ✍ to treat the Bible with care and respect*
- ✍ to value what God has said to me through His Word*
- ✍ to encourage others to appreciate the Bible*
- ✍ to be more faithful to study the Bible and what it says.*

Holy Spirit Help Me

just for the Fun of It!

Lead the kids in a prayer time when they might ask the Holy Spirit to help them act according to the suggestions they have just made.

Conclude by encouraging the kids to take the "Getting To Know Your Bible" quiz home with them and testing their parents on their basic Bible knowledge.

Know
Bible

Getting To Know Your Bible

Take this quiz to see how much you already know about your Bible. As other kids in your group share their answers, you can learn things you may not have heard before. Getting to know God's Word will help you succeed in school, make friends of people who will value your friendship, and make choices which will bring happiness to your life.

How many books are in the Bible?
(a) 105
(b) 57
(c) 66
(d) Two, the Old Testament and the New Testament

Who authored the Bible?

For whom was the Bible written?

What is the main teaching of the Bible?

Since the Bible was written so long ago, is it out of touch with your problems? Why or why not?

Is Hezekiah 2:14 found in the Old or New Testament?

What books in the Bible tell about the life of Jesus?

- (a) The Psalms
- (b) The Maccabees
- (c) The Prophets
- (d) The Gospels



So... What's It All About?

LESSON AIM

*To appreciate the miraculous way the Bible was written.
To learn how to use the Bible in everyday life.
To experience the value of biblical meditation.*

KEY VERSE

*"The grass withers, the flowers fades, But the Word of God stands forever."
Isaiah 40:8 NKJV*

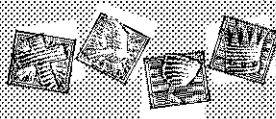
ITEMS NEEDED

*Supplies for The Bible's Right Game Show (see page 2)
Bible/ pencils/ paper
Bible Dictionary (at least one for every two or three kids)
3 x 5 index cards with scriptures references written on them (page 3)*

DECLARATION OF FAITH

Taken from
The Spirit Filled Life Bible,
notes on Psalm 19:7

Psalms 19:7 says, "the law of the Lord is perfect." This scripture is direct reference to the absolute, complete and entire trustworthiness of the Holy Scriptures, which constitute the Bible. The Word of God is perfect in its accuracy and sure in its dependability. Two terms are generally used to describe these features of God's Word: 1) Inerrant (perfect) means that, in the original copies of each manuscript written by each Bible book's respective author, there was nothing mistaken or tinged with error. 2) Infallible refers to the fact that the Bible is unailing as an absolutely trustworthy guide for our faith (belief in God) and practice (life and behavior). This is so because God is true (John 3:33; 17:3) because His Word reveals His truth (John 17:17), and because God cannot lie (Numbers 23:19; Titus 1:2; Hebrews 6:18).





ATTENTION GRABBER



What You Will Need:

For this game you will need **three sets** of the following:

1. Signs which say "Bible" and "Not Bible" (master provided)
2. Sticky-tack or tape for each card
3. Blank wall space for each of the three teams to stick their cards
4. Cards with the names (below) written on them (you make these)

Romans

Lamentations

Judas

Hezekiah

Nahum

2 Silas

Malachi

Philemon

Haggai

Numbers

Grecians

Deuteronomy

Hubakkuk

Luke

1 & 2 Phillip

Here's What To Do:

Before the kids arrive clear off three areas of wall space where the teams can stick their cards during the game. Divide each area of wall space in half sticking a sign over one half which says "Bible" and over the other half place a sign which says "Not Bible."

When the kids arrive, divide them into three teams and have them appoint a captain for their team. Give each team their set of cards with the names as described above. At the signal have the team captain stick the names on the correct side of their wall space under the correct heading, "Bible" or "Not Bible." The team can cheer as much as they want, help with verbal direction as much as they want, but may not touch the wall or cards, only the captain can do that. The game continues until one team successfully sticks the cards under the correct heading.

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY



Story Setting:

Tell the kids they are going to write a story. This story will be like no other they have ever written. First give them the background: A young man was separated from his family at birth. The story centers around his effort to be reunited with his family.

Activity:

Now provide pencils and paper. divide into three groups (out of earshot range of each other) with these instructions: Group #1 - write the **Introduction**; Group #2 write the **Story**; Group #3 - write the **Ending**. Re-group later and have them read their part of the story. Do their sections "connect" with the rest of the story? Probably not much, if at all. Yet the Bible was written by forty different writers over 2,000 years, and connects perfectly.



INSTRUCTION TIME

..... ■ What's in the Bible

There are 66 books within the Bible. 39 books in the Old Testament and 27 in the New Testament. (One way to remember this is the formula $3 \times 9 = 27$). The Old Testament shares the promise of the Savior, Jesus Christ. The New Testament shares the fulfillment of that promise.

As you think about the story your teams just wrote, it is obvious that you need one writer to make the details match. For the Old Testament prophecies to come true in the New Testament times, you realize that the men writing the Bible had to be God-inspired.

..... ■ Why is it Important

God has revealed His master plan of salvation and acceptance in the pages of the Bible. He has also revealed principles to help us lead more peaceful, God-pleasing lives. God's Word makes it plain that we need to respond to His direction by using the Bible in our lives. We can use God's Word by reading it, memorizing it, speaking it, and meditating on it.

Read God's Word

We make our lives better when we read God's Word. If we really want our lives to be better, we should read the Bible every day. We need to think about God's Word because we become what we think. The thoughts that we think are sure to come out in our actions and in our words.

Memorize God's Word

The Bible is a Christian's spiritual sword; we need to know it in order to live on the winning side. Knowing God's Word will help us when we are afraid, it will help us make the right choices in our lives.

INVESTIGATION



Using a Bible Dictionary (if you do not have one in your class, borrow one from your pastor), have the kids look up the definition of the following words that relate to the lesson. Ask for the meaning as it related to the lesson.

WORD
INSPIRATION

TESTAMENT
HOLY

..... How to Practice Biblical Meditation

How would you define "meditation?" Students who have been exposed to popular forms of Eastern religions may think of meditation as endless repetition of a mantra to induce an altered state of consciousness. Its goal is to empty the mind.

TAKING HOME THE TRUTH

Biblical Meditation

However, the word meditation comes from the Hebrew word hagah which means to reflect, to ponder, to contemplate something as you repeat the words. Meditation involves the conscious mind and heart. It expresses who God is and what is inside us. It is directed toward God or about what God does for us.

Have the kids look up the following verses:

<i>Psalm 1:2</i>	<i>(meditates day and night)</i>
<i>Psalm 119:15,16</i>	<i>(meditate on His Word)</i>
<i>Philippians 4:8</i>	<i>(meditate on what is true and of good report)</i>
<i>Psalm 35:28</i>	<i>(praise all the day long)</i>
<i>Psalm 63:6</i>	<i>(think of the Lord in bed and throughout the day)</i>
<i>Psalm 77:12</i>	<i>(think of and speak of the Lord's goodness)</i>

According to these verses, how does meditation involve our minds?

(Thinking, musing)

How does it involve our emotions?

(Crying out, complaining)

How does it involve talking?

(Speaking)

When should we meditate?

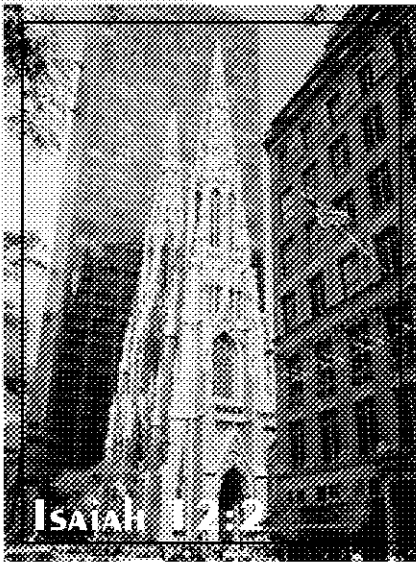
(Often, throughout the day)

What should we meditate on?

(God's Word, His character, His works, Our feelings toward God.)

Bible

NOT Bible



Who is God?

LESSON AIM

To understand what God is like.
To discover ways to know Him.

KEY VERSE

"Behold, God is my salvation. I will trust and not be afraid..." (Isaiah 12:2) NKJV

ITEMS NEEDED

Bibles/ pencils/ paper
"What is God Like" word search puzzle
Optional visual (See Teaching Tip)

GROUP INTERACTION

Discussion Question: *Imagine that you have been at a school activity. You've had fun but stayed too long talking with your friends. You missed the last bus going toward your home. No one else is around and your parent(s) are not home. You only have enough money for one phone call. Who would you call for help? Why would you choose that person?*

Who You Gonna' Call?

Be ready to modify questions of life application to relate to your particular kids' needs. Instead of riding a bus, they might be riding a bike that broke down, or they were walking and took a wrong street.

Note: *You will be discussing the attributes of God. Some of the words are commonly used in "Christian teaching," but may seem foreign to the kids, so we are introducing them to this age group and explaining what they mean. Some of your kids may also have had some negative teaching regarding God. Be prepared to discuss some of their questions briefly.*



We are introduced to God in the very first verse of the Bible. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." We know that God is the Creator and the ruler of all things. But what is God like?

INVESTIGATION

What is God Really Like?

Pass out copies of the word search called "What is God Really Like?" After allowing sufficient time for a majority of the group to finish the puzzle, begin discussing the meaning of the traits/attributes of God. As you discuss the personality of God using the words from the next page, reinforce their learning by asking them to relate the trait to a situation or experience in their lives.

INSTRUCTION TIME

God is omnipresent. II Chronicles 16:9

God is everywhere. He is not limited to being one place at any one time. We have read comics about how Superman® can fly quickly from one place to another, or as children, we heard that Santa Claus would visit every household in the world on Christmas eve. As we get older we realize that these things are not possible. But with God anything is possible! He knows what you are dealing with every day of your life. He knows what is happening at school, in your home, or wherever you may be. Psalm 139:12 says that even the darkness of night cannot hide us from God.

God can see everything that happens to us.

God is omniscient. Hebrews 4:13, Psalm 139:4

God knows everything. He knows every single thing about us. He knows what we are feeling at any moment. He knows what we are thinking. The devil is not able to read our minds, only God can. Because God knows everything.

God will help us handle our problems.

God is omnipotent. Revelation 19:6, Jeremiah 32:17

God is powerful. He can do anything. Sometimes people blame God for bad things that happen in their lives. Although God can do anything, He does not lie (Hebrews 6:18). He does not sin nor does He make people sin (James 1:13).

God is more powerful than any temptation.

God is immutable. Hebrew 6:17, James 1:17

God is unchanging and unchangeable! He does not need to change, He is perfect! His plans and purposes never changes. He will always keep a promise. He will be with us through every situation.

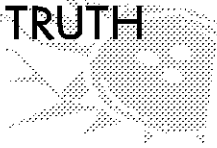
God will never stop loving us.

Tip:

Write the four attributes of God on a visual board or overhead projector. Then list the underlined definitions provided. This will reinforce any new words the kids may be hearing.



TAKING HOME THE TRUTH



WHO'S THE GREATEST?

Give the kids an opportunity to list or share a problem or situation they wish to turn over to God. Ask kids the following questions and have them write down their answers: What is the largest thing you have ever seen? Who is the strongest person you have ever seen? What is the most powerful thing you have ever seen? What is the most beautiful thing you have ever seen? Allow kids to share their answers. We have seen some amazing things but nothing compares to God.

Pass out Bibles and pencils. Have kids look up the following verses which confirm God's awesome power: Daniel 2:21,23; Nehemiah 1:5,6; Psalm 86: 8-10; Psalm 104:24,25. Ask kids to read the verses aloud. Discuss the power of God and how it is shown in His creation. Also tell them to praise Him for His goodness even before He answers their need.

ANSWER KEY

Q	I	M	M	T	A	B	L	E	O	M	N	I	
D	M	N	O	M	N	I	P	R	E	S	E	N	
O	S	N	I	T	E	D	S	A	L	E	S	E	N
O	S	T	I	E	D	T	H	O	L	Y	E	E	
G	E	R	P	P	O	S	L	X	C	E	V	O	
S	N	I	R	S	O	V	E	R	E	I	G	N	C
P	D	N	E	J	G	T	B	C	Z	W	R	E	S
I	O	I	H	E	E	T	E	R	N	A	L	A	
R	O	T	J	U	S	T	N	O	M	N	I	N	
I	G	Y	A	A	N	R	P	A	T	W	A	S	M
T	I	N	F	I	N	I	T	E	P	U	R	N	O

WHAT IS GOD REALLY LIKE?

O I M M U T A B L E O M N I
 D M N O M N I P R E S E N T
 O S N I T E D S A L E S E N
 O S T I E D T H O L Y E Y E
 G E R P P O S L X C E V O I
 S N I R S O V E R E I G N C
 P D N E J G T B C Z W R E S
 I O I H E E T E R N A L A I
 R O T T J U S T N O M N I N
 I G Y A A N R P A T W A S M
 T I N F I N I T E P U R N O

Using the word list below, complete the word search. Then match the word with its meaning.
 Is God worth the personal sacrifice to serve Him?

GOODNESS (Exodus 33:19)

INFINITE (Psalm 147:5)

OMNIPOTENT (Revelation 19:6)

OMNIPRESENT (2 Chronicles 16:9)

OMNISCIENT (Psalm 139:4, Hebrews 4:13)

ETERNAL (Deuteronomy 33:27)

SOVEREIGN (Psalm 24:1)

IMMUTABLE (Hebrews 6:17)

HOLY (Leviticus 19:2)

JUST (1 John 1:9)

TRUE (Deuteronomy 32:4)

FATHER (Matthew 6:9, 2 Corinthians 6:18)

Not counterfeit, genuine

Always has been, always will be

Unlimited, no boundaries

Knows everything

Gracious and compassionate

Honest, impartial, absolutely fair in judgement

Present everywhere at the same time

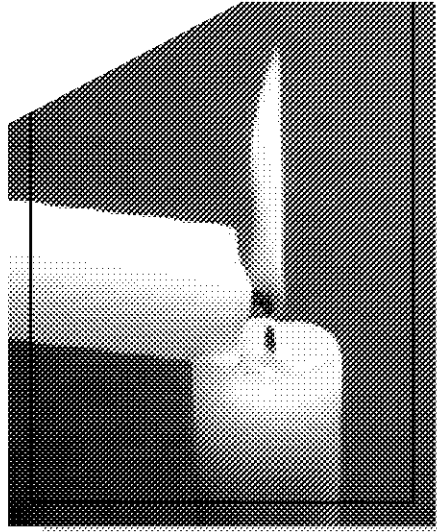
Resigning in total control

All-powerful, capable of doing the impossible

Without sin, perfect

Unchanging, completely dependable

Will do what He promises



The PERSONALITY of the Holy Spirit

LESSON AIM

To understand that the Holy Spirit is a person and part of the Godhead.
To learn the personality traits of the Holy Spirit.

KEY VERSE

"And I will pray the Father and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever —." (John 14:16) NKJV

ITEMS NEEDED

*Cards for password game (see below)
Photocopies of What the Holy Spirit Does (Master Provided).*

DECLARATION OF FAITH

It is by the Holy Spirit that every person is brought into the knowledge of Jesus Christ as his personal Savior. And by Him also do Christians grow in grace, knowledge and power. The realization that the Holy Spirit is a person, who is with us always, will have a tremendous effect upon our daily Christian lives—an effect that a mere power or influence could never exert. It is one thing to believe in His presence and quite another to be actually conscious of it at all times. Let us believe and realize that the Holy Spirit is a friend who is ever at our side to help in every time of need. Were the Holy Spirit not a person this blessing could not be ours, for there is no comfort, consolation, assurance or rest except through personality. There can be no spiritual communion apart from **personality.**



GROUP INTERACTION

Password

Based on a past game show called Password[®]. Set up three teams of two to four people. Give one person a card with one of the following words printed on it.

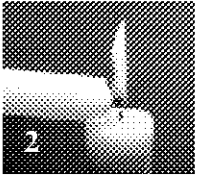
Will

Intellect

Emotion

*Make sure that no one else sees the word. Using one-word clues they must help define the word on the card. The team then tries to guess the word. The team is charged one point for every clue that must be given for the team to guess the word. The team with the least number of points wins.
EXAMPLE: Word card = intellect. Clues could be think, smart, etc.*

*Discussion: Can a person exist without using these personality traits?
Can a person have relationships without these traits?*



INSTRUCTION TIME

Tip:

The Trinity is sometimes difficult to explain. The Godhead is not three separate persons, but three persons in one. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. For example: Water is still water but can be presented in three forms—ice, liquid, steam. Time is made up of three parts—past, present, future.

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Godhead. There is no scripture that uses the words "Trinity" or "Godhead," but rather several scriptures that relate to the Godhead and the relationship of the Holy Spirit to the Trinity.

In the Fourth Century, the Westminster Confession was written as a reformation creed to complement biblical understanding of the Tri-Unity of God. It reads as follows:

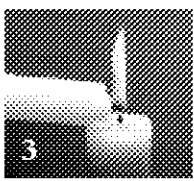
"There is but one living and true God - In the unity of the Godhead there are three persons of one substance, power, and eternity — God the Father; God the Son; and God the Holy Spirit. The Father is one, neither begotten or proceeding; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father; the Holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son."

Though it may defy our full understanding, accepting and appreciating the Trinity is a foundational stone of our Christian faith. The word "Trinity" means three in one. We have only one God, but He makes Himself known in the three Persons of the Godhead. You have heard of God the Father, and God the Son. We will now learn about God, the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity.

Three things are contained in the realm of a personality: will, intellect and emotion. We talked about these in our group interaction. In this sense we were made in the image of God. A person is a being who can be approached, trusted or doubted, loved or hated, adored or insulted. It is hard to think of the Holy Spirit as a personality because we have been accustomed to thinking of a personality as a human being with physical characteristics. Yet our bodies are not our personalities. Our personality is made up of how we choose or act, how we think, and how we feel. The personality of the Holy Spirit is made up of how He thinks, how He acts, and how He feels.

..... ■ The Holy Spirit Has an Intellect 1 Corinthians 2:10,11
Intellect is the ability to think and reason. Since God is all knowing, the Holy Spirit has a mind, thus He possesses knowledge. 1 Corinthians 2:10,11 says "God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the spirit of God."

The Living Bible says "But we know about these things because God has sent his Spirit to tell us, and his Spirit searches out and shows us all of God's deepest secrets. No one can really know what anyone else is thinking, or what he is really like, except that person himself. And no one can know God's thoughts except God's own Spirit."



In other words, we as humans are imperfect and limited in intelligence, therefore, we are limited in understanding the full purpose of God. However, since the Holy Spirit is God He understands the full purpose of God. For this reason the Holy Spirit has been given to the Christian to lead him or her into a greater understanding of God's will for our lives.

• • • • ■ **The Holy Spirit Has Feelings** Ephesians 4:30

The Holy Spirit is a divine person. He loves us. Not only does He love us, He creates that same love in the hearts of Christians. He has come to teach us a love that is perfect, He has come to teach us that God loves us. Because He is God, He reveals to us God's love. As we become more knowledgeable about God and His Word, the growing Christian will learn to love in a similar manner because of the presence of the Spirit. Romans 8:16 states "The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God."

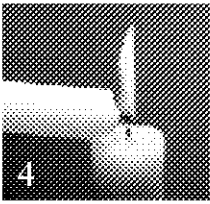
Because the Holy Spirit has feelings, we can also grieve Him by our unloving or sinful actions. Ephesians 4:25-30 talks about our actions and not grieving the Holy Spirit. Think about someone you really love and care about. How would you feel if they ignored you, said bad things about you, or did something that hurt your feelings? It is the same way with the Holy Spirit, we can hurt Him by ignoring what He says to us, doing something that is against what the Bible tells us, or telling people He doesn't matter. Should we hurt someone who loves us?

• • • • ■ **The Holy Spirit Has a Will** 1 Corinthians 12:11

We have concluded that the Holy Spirit can think and feel. Because of His wisdom and love, the Holy Spirit knows and will CHOOSE when and how to bless us and our church family with the proper spiritual gifts at the time we need them. In 1 Corinthians 12:11 says that the Holy Spirit will distribute to each person spiritual gifts as He wills. In verses 7 - 10 those gifts include speaking in another tongue, the interpretation of that spoken tongue, the gift of prophecy, the ministry of healing, working of miracles, the gift of faith, the discernment of spirits, the word of knowledge and the word of wisdom.

Please remember, that if the Holy Spirit is the one in charge, that whatever takes place in the church will always bring attention to Jesus Christ. If attention is drawn to an individual, then the Holy Spirit is not controlling the situation. See 1 John 4:2

The realization that the Holy Spirit is a person, who is with us always, will have a tremendous effect upon our daily Christian lives. It is one thing to believe in His presence and another to be aware of Him at all times. Let us believe and realize that the Holy Spirit is a friend who is ever at our side to help



us anytime, all the time. If the Holy Spirit is a person, and part of the Godhead, then we should love and worship Him. Worship is nothing unless it is directed toward a worthy being. You can only worship personality.

INVESTIGATION

How would you prove the Holy Spirit is God? Break the group into groups and provide them with two or three of the following scripture references to look up. How would that scripture apply to a situation in their lives?

Genesis 1:26; Genesis 3:22; Matthew 3:16, 17; Matthew 28:18; Luke 11:13; 2 Peter 1:21

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY

*What The Holy
Spirit Does*

Hand out photocopies of "What the Holy Spirit does" Then discuss the fact that the Holy Spirit is a personality who has a ministry to complete. These six personal acts, which the Bible ascribes to the Holy Spirit, are conclusive proof of His personality. Only a personality of the highest order could be credited with this kind of ability and power. However, it is important to not only be aware of the ministry of the Holy Spirit, but to also be a part of His ministry.

Answers for page:

- 1. Teach us what God wants us to know/ Bring us to Jesus Christ.*
- 2. He will reveal the truth. He will speak truth.*
- 3. Proves Jesus is from God.*
- 4. Help us to pray when we do not know what to say.*
- 5. Convicts us of our sin.*
- 6. Inspired those who wrote the Bible.*
- 7. Helps us to know we belong to God.*

What does the Holy Spirit Do?

1 JOHN 14:26

3 1 JOHN 4:2

2 JOHN 16:13

4 ROMANS 8:26

5 JOHN 16:8

6 1 PETER 1:20,21

7 ROMANS 8:16

8 LIST ONE WAY THE Holy Spirit
CAN help you this week:



MATTHEW 1:21

LESSON AIM

To know that Jesus is God's Son.
To personally accept His Lordship in their personal life.

KEY VERSE

"... you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins."
Matthew 1:21b

DECLARATION OF FAITH

Two thousand years of world history is dominated by one central figure. All of time is reckoned from the day of His birth and the destiny of humanity is said to hinge upon the proper attitude toward Him. (Mt. 16:16-18)
WHO IS HE? WHY IS HE SO IMPORTANT? WHAT CAN BE KNOWN OF HIM?

To the biologist He is the Life. To the student, He is the Truth. To the carpenter, He is the Door. To the baker, He is the Bread of Life. To the farmer, He is the Sower of Seed. To the architect, He is the Chief Cornerstone. To the builder, He is the Sure Foundation. To the jeweler, He is the Pearl of Great Price. To the geologist, He is the Rock of Ages. To the florist, He is the Rose of Sharon. To the preacher, He is the Word of God. To the lawyer, He is the Counselor and the Advocate. To the sinner, He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. To the Heavenly Father, He is the only

SON OF GOD.

ITEMS NEEDED

Bibles/ Concordance for every group
pencils/ paper
Photocopies of "What's Alike, What's Different" (Master Provided)

GROUP INTERACTION

Who's Who?



- (1) Write the names of all of the kids present on individual pieces of paper and distribute them to the group, making sure that no one gets their own name.
- (2) Have the kids write positive adjectives describing the person whose name they have on their piece of paper.
- (3) Collect the name/ adjectives papers.



Who's Who? Continued

(4) Read the adjectives to the class and see if they can identify the person who is being described.

(5) Allow time for discussion:

- Was it hard to think of adjectives to describe your person? (did it depend on how well they knew the person?)
- If you were going to write a description of Jesus, would it be easy or difficult? What are some of the names or adjectives that you would use to describe Him? How well do you really know Jesus?

Tip:

As the kids start to think and verbalize words to describe Jesus—be aware that this is a form of worship. This is something they can do anytime, anywhere.

(6) Write the responses on a chalkboard, whiteboard or overhead transparency and refer to the words given by the kids throughout the instruction time. Affirm their responses and encourage them to continue thinking about other positive ways to describe Jesus as the lesson progresses.

INSTRUCTION TIME

..... The Promise of A Messiah *Isaiah 7:14*

Many people question who the true Messiah is. If we look at biblical teaching, the first promise of Christ is to Adam and Eve right after their first act of disobedience to God. In Genesis 3:15, God speaks directly to satan and states that He will "put enmity between satan's seed and her Seed; He (Jesus) will crush your (satan's) head, you shall strike his heel." (NIV) This statement is a prophecy of the conflict (enmity) that would exist between satan and Jesus Christ. With Jesus being the final Victor. The woman is mentioned because she will have a part in undoing the effects of this Fall of mankind.

God chose Mary, a young woman who had never been married, to give birth to His Son. Mary was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph when the angel of the Lord appeared to her and told her she would become pregnant. This was a miracle of God because Mary was sexually pure. The prophet Isaiah accurately predicts that "she will give birth to a Son and will call Him Immanuel" which means God with us.

..... The Prophecy Comes True *Luke 1:30,31*

Mary gave birth to Jesus and with His earthly father, Joseph, raised Him in a godly home. The name Jesus means Savior. "...He will save His people from their sins." (Matthew 1:21b) In Matthew 1:23 the angel reminds Mary of the prophecy from Isaiah.



• • • • • Jesus Knew Who He Was Luke 2:51,52

*Even though Jesus is God's Son, He grew up in a physical body just as we do. He was a baby. He grew to be a young boy. He was a teenager. He became a man. He lived during times of great discrimination, political corruption, and poverty. Throughout His life the Bible tells us He learned much about life and God through the divinely inspired writings we now call the Old Testament. Jesus memorized entire books of the Bible just like every boy growing up in a Jewish family. We know from the history recorded in the Bible that Jesus went to church and participated in the activity of the church throughout His life. (Luke 2:48,49) Jesus did not only read and memorize these truths, He **believed** them and **lived** them. Jesus did not just attend services, He did what God wanted Him to and as a young man (age 12) surprised the religious leaders with how well He understood God's Word.*

• • • • • How Does This Relate to Me?

Take time for the kids to identify with Jesus as a child and a young man growing up as they do now. To help them do this, photocopy the handout called "What's Alike, What's Not?" You might have the kids work in groups or pairs to read the brief descriptions of what life was like for the boy Jesus. Then, have them compare and contrast his earthly life to their own by jotting down a few thoughts in the empty boxes. Encourage the groups or pairs of kids to talk about ways that Jesus might face life at their school, home and church.

After sufficient time is given for groups or pairs to share together, have the kids focus on the thought, "In what ways can you become more like Jesus?" After a few kids share their thoughts, move on through the rest of the Instruction Time.

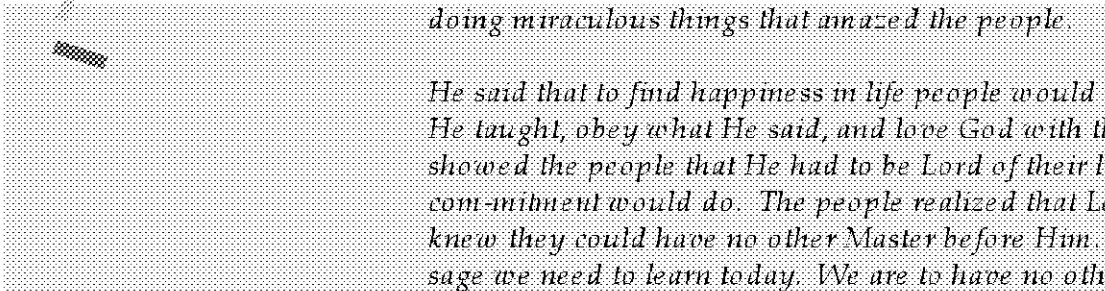
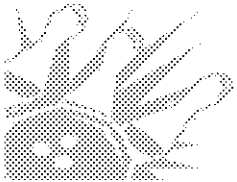
• • • • • Jesus Ministers to People Matthew 4:23

When Jesus began His earthly ministry, He taught the people about the love of God. He taught them by showing the love of God. They found out that Jesus was love itself. He made sure they knew how much He cared about their sickness, their heartache and their failures. Jesus healed them all by doing miraculous things that amazed the people.

He said that to find happiness in life people would have to listen to what He taught, obey what He said, and love God with their whole heart. Jesus showed the people that He had to be Lord of their lives. No "half-way" commitment would do. The people realized that Lord means Master. They knew they could have no other Master before Him. This is the same message we need to learn today. We are to have no other Master before Jesus. Nothing else or no one else is to be first in our lives.

Jesus wants to minister to our needs. We find God's best for our lives when we make Jesus Christ Lord and Master. (Matthew 6:24) In fact, when we serve God with our whole heart, He is able to bless us with healing for all our pain, encouragement for our heartache and a second chance when we fail.

**TAKING HOME
THE TRUTH**





Tip:

Keep the kids focused on the need to give their hearts and lives to Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Make time for a prayer of dedication for that purpose.

Who Is Jesus To Me Matthew 16:15

Whenever He had the chance, Jesus asked questions to see if the people really believed what He taught. Once He asked His friend Peter one of these questions: "Who do the people say that I am?" Peter tried to give his best answer, "John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah or one of the prophets..." (Matthew 6:13,14).

Then, Jesus asked an even harder question. He looked Peter straight in the eyes and asked, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter's answer probably surprised even him because it was not an answer he came up with in his own mind. Jesus told Peter that his answer had been given to him by the Holy Spirit. This truth was to be the basis for the church as we know it today.

What was the answer Peter gave to Jesus' hard question? Have the kids read Matthew 16:16 aloud and explain in their own words the significance of Peter's answer.

INVESTIGATION

THANK YOU
NOTES TO GOD

Encourage the kids to verbally express thanks to God for Who Jesus is. The more personal the expression, the better. Some will easily express themselves verbally. Others may limit their expression to written form. To facilitate this, purchase a package of thank you cards from your local office supply store. Ask the kids to write their own thank you card expressing their heart of thanks. If some of the kids are willing, allow time for the cards to be read aloud.

PRAYER OF
DEDICATION

It is much easier to keep the kids praying throughout their lives if we encourage them to pray in their own words. As they feel more comfortable with the Bible and memorizing and repeating scripture, we can also suggest that they pray Bible verses, too. As a conclusion for this lesson, have the kids recite this verse together as a prayer of dedication of their lives to God.

Psalm 116:1,2 "I love the Lord, for he heard my voice; he heard my cry for mercy. Because he turned His ear to me, I will call on Him as long as I live."

WHAT'S ALIKE

WHAT'S NOT

Home

Jesus lived in a one story house made of sun-dried brick. Stairs on the outside of the house led to the roof where people often slept. Jesus lived with Mary and Joseph and his younger half-brothers and half-sisters. Joseph taught Jesus the trade of carpentry as part of his home life. Mary and Joseph raised a godly family who loved and worshipped God.

Church

On the Sabbath (Saturday), Jesus and His family went to Synagogue to read the Old Testament and pray. The Sadducees (Jewish priests) compromised their beliefs to get along with the Roman government. The Pharisees (about 6,000 men) pressured the people to live perfect lives even though their own hearts were corrupt.

School

During Jesus' time all Jewish boys began school in their synagogue at age six. Girls were not educated outside the home. Boys learned to read and write directly from the Old Testament, and were taught math and the religious customs of their ancestors. When Jesus was twelve years old he became a 'son of the law' which meant he was old enough to be responsible for his own actions.

Read the
summary

Home

of what life
was like for
Jesus as He
grew up.

Then,

summarize
your home,
church and
school life

Church

in the
empty boxes.

Discuss how
your life is

like Jesus'
life? In

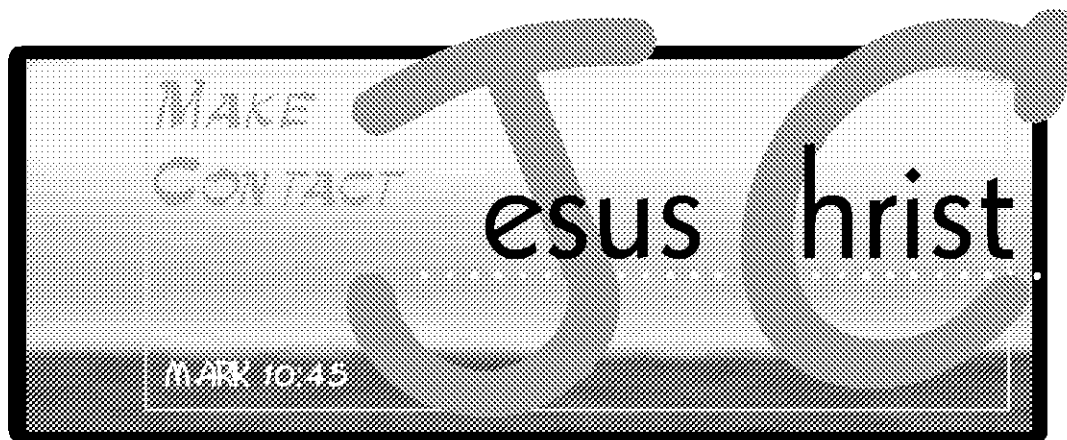
School

what ways

can you

become more

like Jesus?



LESSON AIM

To recognize our relationship with Jesus as members of His body.
To understand that obedience requires the empowering of the Holy Spirit.
To follow Jesus' example of selfless service to others.

KEY VERSE

"...the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many." Mark 10:45 NKJ

DECLARATION OF FAITH

Everything Jesus Christ did was in the interest of others, either mankind or His heavenly Father. Though he possessed all power in heaven and in earth and He is able to perform the greatest of miracles, Jesus never exercised that power for Himself. Every miracle He performed was for another person.



ITEMS NEEDED

Scraps of paper with body parts written on them (group interaction)
Photocopies of the **You Are There Cartoon Strip**
Brightly colored 3x5 cards

GROUP INTERACTION

As the kids arrive give everyone a scrap of paper with a human body part written on it, for instance, arm, foot, elbow, leg, belly button. Tell them to keep their part a secret for now. As you make your strips don't use the head or any body parts from the head. Sound strange? It will soon make sense. Anticipate the number kids you expect and try to have enough slips to make at least two complete bodies when the kids finish this activity. Complete bodies, that is, except for the head. Be sure not to use any body parts on the head! But don't tell the kids they are missing their heads. This is part of the fun.

When you say, "go," the kids try to form complete bodies as quickly as they can by getting into groups. The body that gets together first is the winner. A complete body, of course, has only two arms, one belly button you get the idea. It shouldn't take very long for the kids to figure out that their bodies have lost their heads. Before they panic, you can tell them that in the Body of Christ, Jesus is the head and we are the parts of His body. When you are finished with this activity, be sure to reward the winning team.

INSTRUCTION TIME

Tip:

Emphasize the theme verse of the Foursquare Movement in this lesson: "Jesus Christ the same yesterday and today and forever." Hebrews 1:3-8

..... Jesus Needed the Holy Spirit Acts 10:38

Sometimes Jesus is called the Messiah, which also means Anointed One. In the Old Testament, it was the priests and kings who were anointed with oil by a prophet before they started their work. Jesus was anointed, not with oil, but with the Holy Spirit. He did not accomplish one miracle or teach one parable without the fullness of the Holy Spirit. The great love, power, and the many miracles of Jesus' ministry occurred because of the baptism with the Holy Spirit in His life (review Mark 1:11). When He returned to heaven after His resurrection, Jesus told us that He would send the Holy Spirit to give us this same life changing power (Acts 1:8 and John 14:12). We can be baptized with the Holy Spirit and be effective ministers in Jesus' Name.

..... Jesus Obeyed God. John 6:38

Jesus was not selfish. He always obeyed the will of His heavenly Father. God's will was always to encourage, strengthen, heal and help those in need. Jesus wanted to obey His heavenly Father. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus was able to do just what God said all the time.

Imagine what it would be like to live during the time of Jesus' earthly ministry. Think about what the people must have thought as they watched these miracles happen. Put yourself in their place. You are traveling with Jesus from town to town. He is helping people everywhere He goes. You listen as He teaches the people how to live. You watch as He heals people of incurable diseases. You, too, are amazed at what He can do.

INVESTIGATION

You Are There
Cartoon Strip

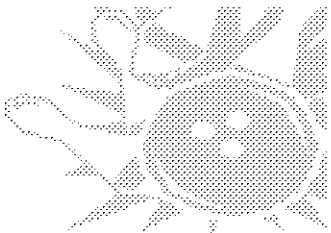
Which story from the life of Jesus would you most like to have seen firsthand? Distribute the **You Are There Cartoon Strip** (master provided). Have the kids draw the story they have chosen and include themselves in the picture. Encourage them to find the story in their Bible and as they draw, include interesting detail from the scriptural account. Then, have the kids share their comic strip with either the entire group or with one other person.

..... Jesus is Our Example John 13:15

Jesus is a good example for us today. He loved and respected Mary and Joseph. He went to school and loved to study. Jesus went to the temple, worshipped God and prayed so He grew spiritually. He also grew socially because He loved people and knew how to get along with them. The Bible says, "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." (Luke 2:52)

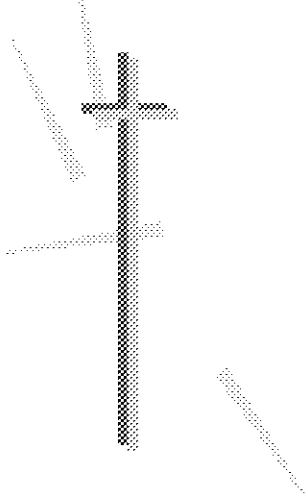
Jesus was always trying to help or serve somebody. He loved everyone. He loved us so much that He was willing to die on a cross so that we could have forgiveness of sin. This is the greatest of all miracles. Jesus is our example of how we can serve God, too. As a young boy Jesus served God, His heavenly Father. As a grown man He continued to minister and serve God by loving and helping all people. You can serve God now and for the rest of your life.

TAKING HOME THE TRUTH



TAKING HOME THE TRUTH (continued)

Remember Who Jesus is



On a chalkboard, or overhead transparency list the responses to this question:
How Can We Follow Jesus' Example of Selfless Service to Others?

We are called to follow Jesus' example in our lives. If we haven't experienced Jesus Christ in our lives or are not living close to Him, we will find it difficult to know what is true about Jesus? The farther we are from Jesus the easier it is for spiritual lies to distract us from God's truth. This activity is designed to help the kids stay focused on God's truth and as a result stay closer to Jesus Christ.

Give the kids brightly colored 3x5 cards found in office supply stores. Or, you can use construction paper strips about the same size. Using the following scriptures, have the kids make mini-posters to hang on their walls at home. Tell them to write out the words of each scripture on a separate card. You might provide a few extras like glitter or tissue scraps and glue sticks so they can add some personal decoration to their mini-posters.

<i>I Corinthians 15:3-6</i>	<i>(Jesus died for us, rose from the dead and was seen by others.)</i>
<i>John 14:6</i>	<i>(Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.)</i>
<i>John 15:9</i>	<i>(Jesus loves us.)</i>
<i>Matthew 1:21</i>	<i>(He shall save His people from their sins.)</i>
<i>Matthew 16:16</i>	<i>(He is the Son of the Living God.)</i>
<i>Philippians 4:13</i>	<i>(Christ strengthens us.)</i>
<i>Hebrews 13:8</i>	<i>(Jesus never changes.)</i>
<i>Hebrews 12:2</i>	<i>(Jesus is the foundation of our faith.)</i>
<i>I John 1:7-9</i>	<i>(Jesus forgives us and cleanses us from our sin.)</i>

When the kids have finished creating their mini-posters, encourage them to take them home and hang them in conspicuous places in their room and around the house. These mini-posters will be a constant reminder of our life in Jesus and how we should continue to love and serve Him.

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY

FOLLOWERS' FOOTSTEPS T-SHIRTS

*Idea from Bible Story Crafts and
Projects Children Love
by Group Publishing, Copyright
1995*

Tip:

Use these projects as a way of reviewing the truths of the two lessons on Jesus Christ. Encourage the kids to make these concepts a part of their heart and their daily thought life.

Help the kids make a public stand for Jesus by creating the banner or T-shirts described here. The projects can involve some time so you might want to devote an entire group session to the task.

Collect: Plain white T-shirts (which might be provided by the church or have the kids bring in a T-shirt from home), scissors, cardboard, paint brushes, markers, name tags, masking tape, clothespins, liquid fabric paint, a chair, pie tins, newspaper, a large basin of warm soapy water and paper towels.

Before this activity, cut cardboard rectangles that will fit inside the T-shirts and prevent paint from soaking through. The cardboard will also give a solid surface for applying paint. Cover an area of the floor with newspaper. Set up a washing area nearby with paper towels and a basin of warm soapy water. If weather permits, do this activity outside on the grass, then hose off the students' feet for easy cleanup. Pour a thin layer of liquid fabric paint into each pie tin.

Distribute plain white T-shirts and have students print their names on the tags or on pieces of masking tape to temporarily stick to the shirts. Show the kids how to gather the back of the shirts so the front is pulled tight against the cardboard insert, then use the clothespins to hold the shirts this way. Have the kids remove their shoes and socks. The kids will take turns sitting in the chair with their T-shirt in front of them, and carefully dipping their feet into the paint. They will step firmly on their T-shirts to make footprints. **(For older ages, allow more freedom in painting).**

As the kids finish, move the T-shirts aside and have them wipe their feet with paper towels and step into the basin of soapy water, and dry their feet with some additional paper towels. Option: The kids may want to add something like "I Follow Jesus" or "Follow Me" with puffy paint.

OR =

Have the kids make a large banner which says...

"Follow My Lead. John 13:15"

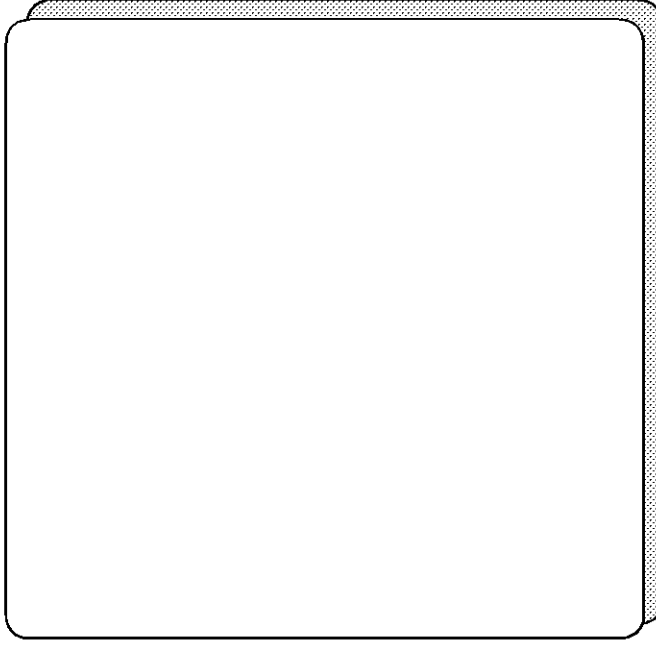
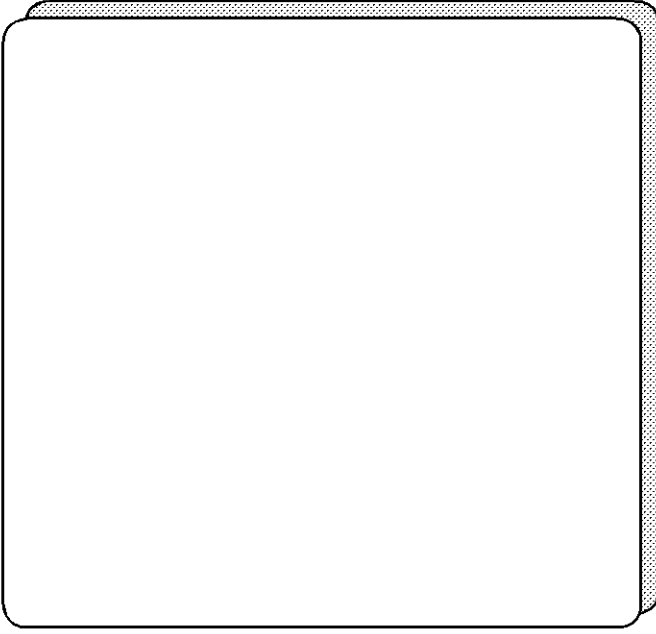
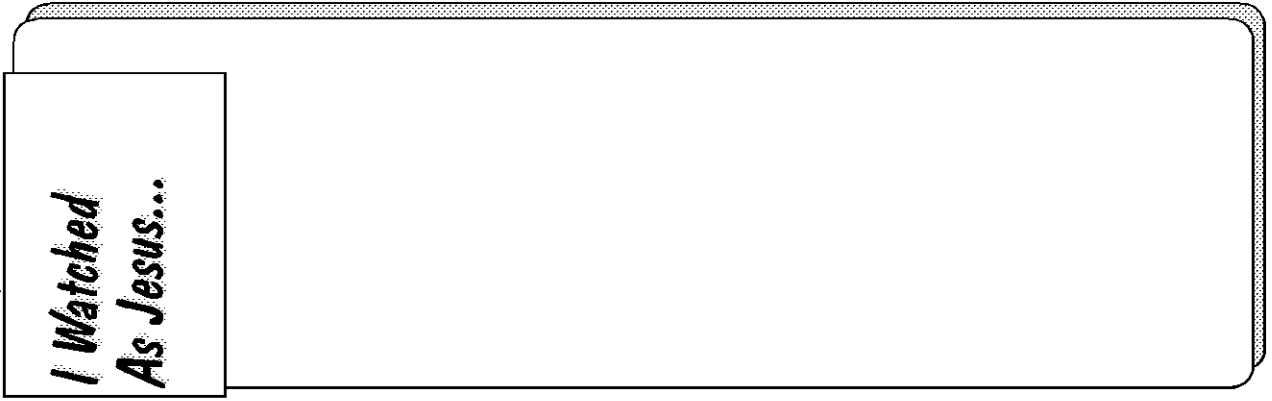
... and then decorate the banner by walking across it with paint covered bare feet. The banner can be displayed in the classroom as a visual reminder that we are to follow Jesus' example.

FOLLOW MY LEAD BANNER

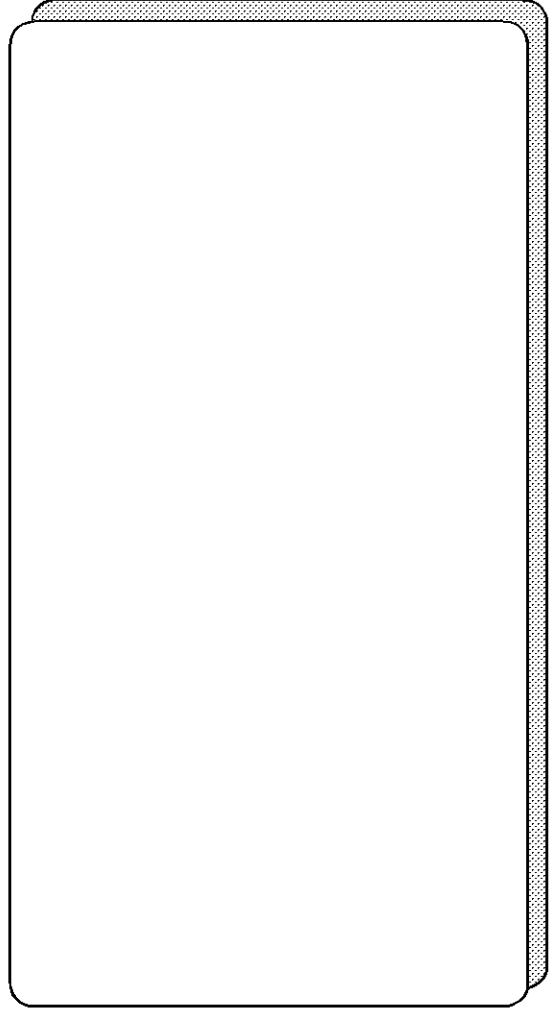
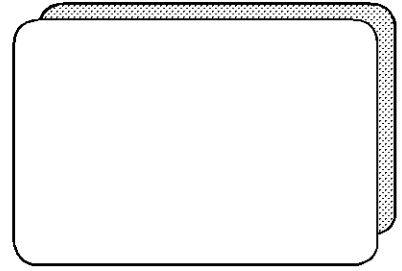
You Are There Cartoon Strip

Put yourself right in the middle of a Bible story where Jesus performed one of His miracles. Draw a cartoon showing what happened.

***I Watched
As Jesus...***



and then...





LESSON AIM

To know that disobedience is sin.
 To know that all have sinned, but can be forgiven.
 To know that God wants to have a relationship with us.

KEY VERSE

"If we confess our sin, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9)

ITEMS NEEDED

Bibles/ pencils/ paper
 Newspaper ads, magazines
 or catalogs (see below)

glue
 butcher paper for mural

GROUP INTERACTION

Provide magazines or catalogs that would contain pictures of items the students would want to have (i.e. automobiles, clothes, electronics, etc.) Working in teams, have them cut out and paste on the mural the items they would want to have.

How far would you go?



Ask them how they would go about obtaining these items. Would they want them bad enough to take them from someone else? Would they kill to get them? Would they choose the items if it meant giving up a friend? Would they choose to get these items at the risk of choosing them over a relationship with God? Does God want to give us what we need?

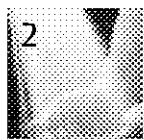
We've heard the story of Adam and Eve and their disobedience to God. (Ask the kids to share from memory what they know about the incident.)

DECLARATION OF FAITH

*Taken from,
 The Spirit-Filled Life Bible,
 pgs. 6, 10.*



Our present world does not reflect the kingdom order God originally intended for man's enjoyment on earth. The perfect will of God is not manifest in the presence of death, disease, discord, and disaster any more than it is manifest in human sin. Through disobedience to the terms of his rule, man "falls," thus experiencing the loss of his "dominion" (Gen. 3:22, 23). Everything comes under a curse as man's relationship with God is severed (vv. 19, 22).



ALTERNATE ACTIVITY

Temptation Confetti

Have the kids tear paper into small pieces, but large enough to write a few words. On each piece, have them complete this sentence: "I am tempted when . . ." Now have them toss these pieces into the air. Have each person pick up a piece of paper and read it aloud. Allow the rest of the group to participate in coming up with solutions to overcome the temptation.

INSTRUCTION TIME

..... ■ What Was It Like In Eden?

God had given Adam and Eve EVERYTHING THEY NEEDED. The Garden of Eden was the PERFECT place to live. It was a beautiful and peaceful place to live. They didn't have to be afraid of anything. They had plenty of good food to eat and they lived in harmony with the animals. It was a safe environment. God would take a walk with Adam and Eve every afternoon. Can we even begin to understand what they had? God gave them only one rule:

Do not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

..... ■ Choices of Adam and Eve

Adam and Eve chose to disobey what God had said. Satan showed up in the form of a serpent and tempted Eve. He told her that if she ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, she would be as wise as God. Besides, God wouldn't really let her die. Eve listened to satan. She wasn't forced to do what he said; she chose to eat from the tree. Adam stood there silent, watching all that happened. Yet he did not attempt to stop her, nor did he encourage her to obey God's command. Instead, Adam listened to Eve's suggestion and ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Again, no one made Adam do this; he chose to disobey.

Help the kids mentally place themselves in the Garden of Eden by a brief discussion using the following questions.

- *Did satan force Adam and Eve to sin?*
- *Did Eve trust God? Did she believe what God had told her?*
- *Did Adam trust God? Did he believe what God had told him?*
- *Did God do anything to make Adam and Eve not trust Him?*
- *Are our actions based on what we believe?*
- *Why didn't God intervene and stop Adam and Eve?*
- *Why didn't God destroy satan?*

Tip:

Invite an amateur illusionist, or someone in your church, to put on a brief magic show. After the performance, discuss how satan tries to trick us with things that aren't what they appear to be.

..... ■ The Result of Their Disobedience

When Adam and Eve realized their sin, notice their reaction:

- * *They hid from God. (Genesis 3:8)*
- * *They placed blame on someone else. (Genesis 3:12,13)*

The result of their sin was eviction from the Garden of Eden and a life of hard work and pain. Their decision led to immediate separation from God. During this discussion be sure to keep the group focused on the similarities between the decision of Adam and Eve and the choices the kids are called on to make every day at school, at home and with their friends. The more the kids can personally identify with the struggles and decisions (good and bad) of Adam and Eve, the more likely they will be to apply the truths of this lesson to their own lives.

..... ■ God has a plan

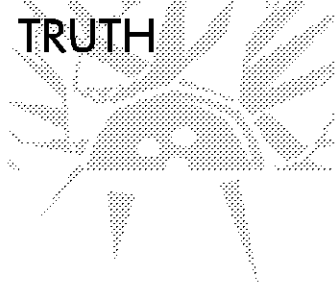
GOD still loved Adam and Eve and wanted a relationship with them. He made a promise to them -- what was it? (Genesis 3:15) He made a way of salvation for Adam and Eve, and promised the future defeat of satan. Direct the kids to answer the following questions to clarify how God's promise is fulfilled in our lives today.

- ☞ *Do we always choose the way God planned for us (choosing for eternity), or do we choose for the moment?*
- ☞ *Do we believe what other people tell us, even if we disobey God in the process?*
- ☞ *Does God still want a relationship with us even though we have disobeyed Him?*
- ☞ *What does John 3:16 tell us? (Have the kids repeat the verse substituting their name in place of the word "world.")*
- ☞ *What can we do if we make wrong choices? (See I John 1:9)*

..... ■ Getting to The Point

God loves us so much that He gave us His only Son. He wants to have a relationship with us. We become more complete when we strengthen our relationship with Him!

TAKING HOME THE TRUTH



..... ■ Obedience Journal

Pass out photocopies of the Obedience Journal (master provided). Instruct the kids to keep track of the temptations that they face during the week. Have them jot down how they chose to handle the challenge and what the results were. It might be a good idea to make a phone call during the week to each of the kids to see how their week is going. Be sure to encourage them as they practice making right choices.

INVESTIGATION

Using the principles in the games, Hangman® or Wheel of Fortune® write enough blank spaces for each of the following words in the order listed. Use the scripture references for clues. An option would be to break the group into even teams for a little added excitement.

Bible Word

Definitions

Eden	"pleasantness; beautiful" (Gen. 2:8, 13:10)
Temptation	"a trail designed to lead to sin" (Lk. 4:13)
Deceived	"no longer...be tossed to and fro" (Eph. 4:14)
Disobedience	"rejecting God's will" (Titus 1:16; Neh. 9:26)
Separated	"broken fellowship; alone" (Isa. 59:2)
Reconciliation	"restore relationships" (2 Cor. 5:18)
Confession	"to declare openly" (Rom 10:9,10)
Jesus	"Jehovah is Salvation" (Matt. 1:21)
Salvation	"to rescue, to deliver" (Psa. 18:2)

obEdience

We are given choices to make everyday. In this lesson we have learned that God will help us make the right choices. Sometimes we choose to obey God's Word and other times we don't.

What is your response to the temptations you face daily?

jouRnAl

DAILY CHOICES

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Take a few minutes every day this week to write down the opportunities you've had that day to obey God. If a particular scripture verse has helped you obey God, write down the reference or the words you remembered which helped you to obey.

IT SEEMED

Obedience

AT THE TIME

SOMETIMES I GIVE IN TOO EASILY.
I KNEW IT WAS WRONG, BUT
I REALLY WANTED TO DO IT.
BUT, I'M LEARNING TO OBEY GOD, SO NEXT TIME I
WILL...

Remember to...

And to say...

1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.



God's Plan of Salvation

LESSON AIM

To acknowledge that everyone is born with a sin nature.
To understand that sin severed our relationship with God and condemned us to eternal separation from God.
To realize we are saved by believing in what God has done in Christ Jesus.

KEY VERSE

"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." Romans 10:9

ITEMS NEEDED

Bibles, pencils, paper, and if possible, doctor coats and hospital decor.
Art supplies for Investigation Activity (see page 2)

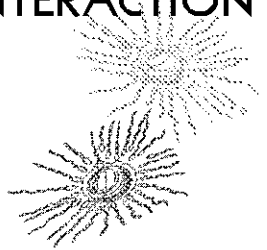
DECLARATION OF FAITH

We believe that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us, the Just for the unjust; freely, and by divine appointment of the Father taking the sinner's place, bearing his sins, receiving his condemnation, dying his death, fully paying his penalty and signing with His life's blood, the pardon of everyone who should believe upon Him; that upon simple faith and acceptance of the atonement purchased on Mount Calvary, the vilest sinner may be cleansed of his iniquities and made whiter than the driven

snow.

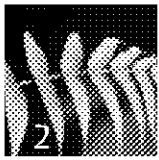


GROUP INTERACTION



Name That Disease

Try to set up a hospital atmosphere in your room. Pick two to four students to act as doctors. (If possible, provide hospital dress). Also have students volunteer to be patients. The instructor should act as the "Chief of Staff" trying to train new doctors. Read the symptoms listed below. The "doctors" must answer by trying to figure out what is wrong with the person.



Name That Disease
(continued)

1. Fungus that causes itchy, burning feet. (What is athlete's foot?)
2. Painful, swollen joints. (What is arthritis?)
3. Red blotchy spots on skin. (What are measles?)
4. Sore throat, swollen glands. (What is tonsillitis or mumps or strep throat?)
5. Wheezing, difficulty breathing. (What is asthma or what is emphysema?)
6. Infection of the liver, yellowish skin. (What is hepatitis?)
7. Itchy, red bumps that spread over your body. (What is chicken pox or poison ivy?)
8. Pain in chest, difficulty breathing, irregular heartbeat. (What is a heart attack?)
9. Separation from God. (What is sin?)

After the skit is completed discuss some of the following questions:

- If these diseases are left untreated, what will be the result?
- If sin is like a disease, what are the symptoms?
- What are ways to treat these diseases?
- How does God treat sin?

INVESTIGATION

Romans

Road

Mural

Romans Road - Divide the kids into six equal teams and assign a scripture topic below. Each team will need a poster board or drawing paper and paint, colored chalk or whatever medium you feel comfortable using.

Have the teams illustrate their scripture topic in a unique, creative way.

Team 1: Romans 3:10 There is none righteous.

Team 2: Romans 3:23 All have sinned.

Team 3: Romans 6:23a The wages of sin is death.

Team 4: Romans 6:23b The gift of God is eternal life.

Team 5: Romans 10:9 Confess Jesus as Lord; believe He is risen.

Team 6: Romans 10:13 Call on the name of the Lord and be saved.

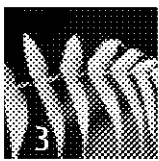
INSTRUCTION TIME

..... All have sinned

Romans 3:23 states "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." This scripture was written to teach us that not one person is born perfect. Because of that wrong decision Adam and Eve made, we are all born with a sin nature.

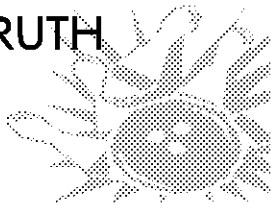
We have discussed the symptoms of sin, which is lying, gossiping, killing, etc. But the disease of sin is not a matter of doing right but of being right with God. When we look at our lives there is not one person on earth that can say "I am not a sinner." (Romans 3:23)

Because God is Holy and pure. He is sinless. He cannot ignore sin in our lives. Romans 6:23a says "The wages of sin is death. . ." Sin is like a disease and everyone is born with it. Sin brings death - spiritual death - a death that will prevent us from going to Heaven and lead us to eternal death if it is not taken care of.



Tip:
 Help the kids recognize the difference between sin nature (what we are) and sin itself (what we do because of our sin nature).

TAKING HOME THE TRUTH



ALTERNATE ACTIVITY



Water Watch (taken from Snap Sessions, Popular Passages and Spiritual Challenges, by Dale and Sandy Larsen, 1990. Cook Publishing, page 117.

..... ■ God Redeems Us!

HOWEVER, because God has so much love for us, He made a way to redeem us from our sin nature. "...but the gift of God is eternal life IN Christ Jesus our Lord" Romans 6:23b. Redeem means "to free us from or release." When God created man, His purpose was to have a close, loving relationship with man. The disobedience of Adam and Eve caused each one of us to be born with a sin nature.

God wants to have a close, loving relationship with you. Even though Adam and Eve sinned and caused separation for each one of us, God still made a way for us to escape eternal separation from Him. In fact, Genesis 3:15 states that the blessing of the Redeemer (Jesus) will come from a woman. God made a way for us to defeat our sin nature. The death of Jesus on the cross and His resurrection from death made it possible for each one of us to have right relationship with God.

..... ■ Our Responsibility

Throughout the Bible God repeats this promise to deliver people from their sin nature and to help them overcome their desire to sin. The punishment of Hell happens when we realize that Jesus came to deliver us from sin, but we refuse to let Him do so.

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

When you visit the doctor you do what he says to overcome the disease (ease the dis-ease). God's instructions to overcome sin are:

CONFESS with your mouth that Jesus is Lord. When Jesus died on the cross, He took the punishment for your sin. **Only the Lord Jesus Christ could take your sin upon Himself.**

BELIEVE in your heart that God raised Him from the dead. His resurrection from the dead guarantees your eternal life with Him. **Only Jesus had the power over physical and spiritual death.**

Water Watch

Set a jar of clear water in front of the group. Ask kids what they can see floating in it (nothing). Then ask them to draw the kind of amoeba, bacteria, dirt, and other things they'd probably see if they looked at the water under a microscope. Or, if you have a microscope, actually examine the water. Discuss how some things (like our sin nature) can be invisible - but destructive.

Pastor's Perspective

Ask your Senior Pastor to share with the kids how he/she came to the Lord. Give him a copy of this lesson to preview and encourage him/her to share personally about what it means to live the Christian life.



November 21st

LESSON AIM

To desire heaven as our future home.

KEY VERSE

"I am making everything new!... Write this down, for these are trustworthy and true." (Revelation 21:5)

ITEMS NEEDED

*Bibles / pencils / paper
A hat for the What's Happening in Heaven skit*

DECLARATION OF FAITH

We believe that Heaven is the indescribably glorious habitation of God; and that there the Lord has gone to prepare a place for His children; that unto this foursquare city, whose builder and maker is God, the earnest believers who have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb and have overcome by the word of their testimony will be carried; that the Lord Jesus Christ will present them to the Father without spot or wrinkle; and that there in unutterable joy they will ever behold His wonderful face, in an everlasting kingdom whereunto comes no darkness nor light, neither sorrow, tears, pain, nor death, and wherein hosts of attending angels sweep their harps, sing the praise of our King, and bowing down before the throne cry:

"Holy, holy, **holy!**"



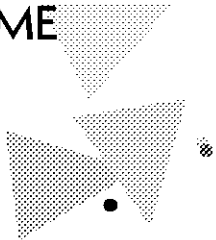
GROUP INTERACTION

"What's Happening in Heaven" Skit

Form several teams. Have each team take the next ten minutes to create and practice a short skit to show what might (or might not) be happening in heaven right now. Then ask them to perform for the group. If possible, lend a hat to the person in each skit who is playing God to help identify this person for the other kids. Whether the skits are funny or serious, show appreciation for everyone's effort. Then have kids summarize the ideas they just saw and some common ideas that other people have about heaven. Use some of these for reference:

H	Some see people floating on clouds and playing harps.
E	Some see God as a judge with a line of people waiting for His verdict.
A	Some see God as an old man with a long, white beard and dozing on a throne.
V	Some see God as a general directing an army of angels at war with demons.
E	Some see a prayer meeting.
N	Some see a party.

INSTRUCTION TIME



Heaven is spoken of as the Father's house, the place where believers in Jesus Christ will live someday soon. We shall not occupy separate castles in heaven; we shall dwell in rooms as members of one family in the Father's house. There will be close fellowship with one another and with God in our heavenly home. The hope of heaven serves as a powerful incentive to live victoriously, serve lovingly, and witness powerfully while in this present world.

Tip:

Some kids find it difficult to imagine a place as perfect as Heaven. Some have negative home environments and naturally see Heaven as they see their own homes. As we present the subject of Heaven, we need to be sensitive to their questions even if they seem cynical at first. The best approach is to keep reminding the kids that Heaven will be **better** than anything they have ever known.

..... Heaven is a real place

Jesus will come in a visible manner, just as He visibly rose into heaven. When He comes there will be a real resurrection of real bodies, followed by a real rapture of living believers. At the rapture the saints will be caught up and taken to a real place. When we stand in God's presence in the coming kingdom we shall do so in real bodies suited to our new existence.

..... Heaven is a spacious place

There will be millions and millions of people from every nation, ethnic and racial group in heaven! (Revelation 5:9) "I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God. . ." (Revelation 21:2a). This special city will be a **huge cube**: 1,500 miles long and wide and high! "The city was laid out like a square, as long as it was wide. . . and as wide and high as it is long" (Revelation 21:16). We have a big God with a big heart, a big plan, a big message and a big heaven.



INSTRUCTION

TIME

continued

..... Heaven is a safe place

"On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there" (Revelation 21:25). Heaven is beyond the reach of evil, death, sin or sickness. "He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away" (Revelation 21:4). Here on earth neither our lives nor our possessions are secure. Our society is constantly being disrupted by war, and our national security is threatened with terrorism. Our insecurity drives us to the only safe refuge: Jesus - now and forever!

..... Heaven is a beautiful place

In all of us there is a longing for order and beauty. All our efforts to create this, however, are disappointing, because sin damages our work. Even the beauties of nature are to some extent marred by decay, weather and man's blunders. But the Holy City is made of pure gold, and will shine with the glory of God. "The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp" (Revelation 21:23). The foundations of the city walls are decorated with every kind of precious stone; the twelve gates are twelve pearls, each gate made of a single pearl; and the glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it. "Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful" (Revelation 21:27).

WORD DEFINITIONS



Kids often have a different way of defining terms which adults take for granted. This activity is intended to put Bible words into current slang and make the concepts better understood.

Appoint one of the kids to be Professor Street. Professor Street is writing a dictionary which defines words in common street language. Ask all the other kids to choose an average type of person they might find in their community (i.e., business man, housewife, construction worker; store clerk, street person, pastor, bag lady, etc). Have Professor Street assign each word below to one of these characters. Each kid should then define the word using words and phrases common to their character.

*The words in **BOLD CAPITAL LETTERS** are the words to assign. The brief definitions are for clarification and will probably be used only by the leader. Let the kids define the terms the way they best understand them.*

GLORY - majesty, dignity, and excellency.

HOLY - pure, blameless, opposite of evil.

HONOR - splendor, glory, adornment, magnificence, beauty.

ALMIGHTY - all powerful, no weakness.

WORSHIP - to bow down, show respect, adore.



INVESTIGATION

One of the most fun and exciting activities of heaven will be entering into a new level of praise and worship of the Lord. **Praise is going to be the “language” of heaven.** We see this throughout the book of Revelation.

There are (5) five sayings or songs listed in chapters 4 and 5 of Revelation that are sung by the four living creatures, the twenty-four elders, the angels, and every creature “in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and in the sea” (4:8; 4:11; 5:9, 10; 5:12; 5:13).

Have the kids search Revelation 4 and 5 for these songs and study their content. Then have them write their own “song” of praise to God (like a poem that doesn’t need to rhyme). **Hint:** Encourage the kids to incorporate parts of the “Professor Street Dictionary” (completed earlier in the lesson) into their songs. Have volunteers read their songs to the rest of the group.

TAKING HOME THE TRUTH

..... This world is not our permanent home

This world, as we know it, can never be ideal. Much has been done to give society an appearance of culture and beauty, but in reality the behavior of mankind still follows the law of the jungle. The aim of the Gospel is not that of creating heaven on earth, but that of calling out of the “world” a redeemed people for the new heavens and the new earth. The citizens of God’s country must always long for heaven as a traveler in a far country longs for his homeland.

..... Who will go to heaven?

“... only those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life” (Revelation 21:27). The Book of Life contains the names of millions of people who have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior. Many try to earn their way to heaven through good works: living a good life, being kind to their families, going to church once in a while, and giving money to the poor. Although everyone should do these things, good works will never get us into heaven.

Tip:

Allow time for the kids to share details of how/when they made Jesus Lord of their lives. Be aware that some kids may be present who are ready to receive Christ as their personal Lord and Savior.

We must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ in order to be saved. He is the only way, the one entrance into heaven. Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me” (John 14:6). Those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life are people who have **admitted** that they are sinners in need of a Savior, **repented** of their sins (turned away from them), and **believed** that Jesus died on the cross and arose from the dead for them.



OPTIONAL ACTIVITY:

Charades:
What Won't Be
in Heaven?

What kinds of things and/or persons will be absent in heaven? The book of Revelation, especially chapter 21, gives great insight. Write each of the descriptions below on slips of paper, fold, and place in an empty container. Have the kids read Revelation 21:1-8, 22-27. Divide the class into two teams and play charades.

No more tears or crying (21:4)

No more death (21:4)

No more suffering or pain (21:4)

No one who is cowardly (21:8)

No one who is unbelieving (21:8)

No one who is vile or abominable (21:8)

No murderers (21:8)

No one who is sexually immoral (21:8)

No sorcerers (those who deal in drugs) (21:8)

No idolaters (21:8)

No liars (21:8)

No more temple (a place for gathering will not be needed)(21:22)

No sun (21:23)

No moon (21:23)

No night (21:25)

No closing of the city gates (to protect ourselves) (21:25)

Nothing shameful or defiling (21:27)

No one who is deceitful (21:27)



Reality of Hell

Revelation Club

LESSON AIM

To begin to understand what hell will be like for those who reject Christ.

KEY VERSE

"But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars - their place shall be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death." (Revelation 21:8)

DECLARATION OF FAITH

We believe that hell is a place of outer darkness and deepest sorrow, where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched; a place prepared for the devil and his angels where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, a place of grief and eternal regret on the part of them who have rejected the mercy, love and tenderness of the crucified Savior, choosing death, rather than life; and that there into a lake that burns with fire and brimstone shall be cast the unbelieving, the abominable, the murderers, sorcerers, idolaters, all liars, and they who have rejected and spurned the love and sacrifice of a bleeding Redeemer, passing the cross to their doom, in spite of every entreaty and warning of the Holy

Spirit.



GROUP INTERACTION

*What sort of things would one take to the dump?
What kind of creatures does rotten garbage attract?
How could such a health hazard be reduced?*



A Trip
to the
Dump

This activity, like this lesson, is not for the faint of heart (or stomach). As you discuss the questions given above, take the kids on an unusual field trip to the garbage cans or dumpsters used by your church or better yet, a nearby grocery store. The kids will act like they hate the smells and are grossed out by the sight of old garbage. In reality, it will really make a point, and kids at this age are really into gross stuff! So, proceed with courage!

GROUP INTERACTION

continued

Do a quick check of the smells and sights of a common garbage bin. (Be sure if you touch the garbage, to use gloves to avoid spreading germs.) Now, enlarge this in the minds of the kids to an entire hillside covered with the sights and smells of the garbage you are looking at. Add to this, the smells of the garbage burning and you're getting close to what Gehenna was like.

Originally, Gehenna referred to a place, the valley of Hinnom, located just outside of Jerusalem. Years before Jesus was born, it was where human sacrifices were offered to the heathen god Molech. By the time of Christ, it had become the garbage dump of Jerusalem. The open garbage pile attracted all sorts of bugs, maggots, worms, rats, and other vermin. To help reduce the health hazard, the garbage was set on fire all the time. Fire, smoke, and awful smells were always part of Gehenna. Jesus described the horrors of hell as a garbage dump.

INVESTIGATION

What's Hell?

*Eternal torment is not a pleasant subject for discussion. God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked. Some people do not believe that hell really exists, but it is just as real as heaven. As a matter of fact, Scripture has **three times as much** to say about God's justice, judgment, wrath, and punishment of sin as it says about the love and mercy of God.*

The kids probably will have many questions about hell. It seems to be a subject of intense interest to young people. As always the best place to find answers is in the Book itself. Have the kids take time to look in their Bibles and answer a few basic questions about hell. Use copies of the What's Hell? handout (master provided) to be sure the kids are with you as you continue with this important lesson.

Some of the points to emphasize as the kids are doing this investigation are outlined here.

- 1) **God doesn't send people to hell for being bad. People go to hell because they reject Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.**
- 2) *God never intended for you to go to hell. Hell was created as a place of punishment for the devil and his angels (Matthew 25:41).*
- 3) *If you go to hell, it will be your own fault, not God's. Because He loves you, He has made a way of escape. "He wants everyone to turn from sin and no one to be lost" (2 Peter 3:9, CEV).*

Tip:

People need to be warned about hell. The pharmacist labels what is poison with a skull and crossbones. The highway department blocks roads with warning signs when a bridge is out. So believers are obligated to warn unbelievers of eternal punishment.

INSTRUCTION TIME

..... The Certainty of Hell

An endless hell for persistent unbelievers is a certainty. "If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire" (Revelation 20:15). Every man has an appointment with God, the great Judge; an appointment that cannot be evaded. "It is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27). All who are not redeemed through faith in Christ have no other hope than that of being separated from God eternally. If we choose to go our own way (the way of death) instead of choosing Jesus (the way of life), we seal our own destinies. The rich man described in Luke 16 was in a hopeless state which could not be escaped nor mitigated. Hell is final. "Whoever puts his faith in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see that life, for God's wrath remains on him." (John 3:36).

..... The aspects of hell

*The Bible has four different words for hell. The word used most often for "hell" in the Old Testament is sheol. Sheol is a dark, gloomy underworld. It is the place of the dead. Nothing is said about fire and brimstone, but sheol is not exactly the kind of place where you would enjoy living forever. In the New Testament, the word hades means much the same as sheol. Another word, tartarus, describes the place where disobedient angels were sent when they sinned (2 Peter 2:4). The most common word for hell in the New Testament is Gehenna. Ten of the eleven times it is used, it comes from the mouth of Jesus Himself. Gehenna refers to the lake of fire, "a final place of punishment for the ungodly." These four words might not all refer to precisely the same location. But the idea is definitely that **heaven** is the place to be!*

..... The nature of hell

One foolish fellow said, "I don't want to go to heaven. I want to go to hell. That's where all the party animals will be. That's where the booze will be flowing and the drugs and the wild and crazy women will be." Oh, really? Seven times in the Gospels, Jesus referred to hell as a place where people are weeping and gnashing their teeth. He called it a furnace of fire. Maybe He had the garbage dump in mind when He said, "The worms there never die, and the fire never stops burning" (Mark 9:48). It is a place of everlasting punishment, a place of outer, absolute darkness. It doesn't sound much like a party.

..... The purpose of hell

Hell was not originally planned for man, but if man chooses to follow the enemy of God, he must share his fate. If eternal punishment seems unreasonable, it seems so because some people are incapable of comprehending the awfulness of sin or the holiness of God. Nothing of a defiling or rebellious nature can be permitted to enter into heaven; therefore, all unholy and traitorous beings must be isolated forever where they can never again disrupt the harmony of heaven. **Separation, or isolation, is the principal purpose of hell.** It is a prison where Satan, the antichrist, his angels, and all the wicked will be eternally shut off from God and heaven in outer darkness. "But there shall by no means enter [heaven] anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life" (Revelation 21:27, NKJV).

TAKING HOME THE TRUTH

Be certain to reassure the kids that when they have prayed for Jesus to be their Lord and Savior, He will save them from the reality of hell. And of course, allow time to pray with those kids who may never have been ready before to pray to make Jesus Lord of their lives. Be careful not to rely on the heaviness of the subject or the fear factor too heavily as motivation in this area. Let the Holy Spirit bring the conviction necessary to lead a young person to Christ.

Jesus told a story in Luke 16:19-31 about "Lazarus and the Rich Man." In it, you can find several facts about what it is like in hell. (Scholars wonder whether Jesus was saying that the events in the story really happened. But the point is that Jesus included these details:)

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY

- The rich man was awake. He wasn't in some state of sleep. He was conscious of his torment.
- He was able to see. He looked up and saw Lazarus and Abraham far off from him (v. 23).
- He could speak. He begged Abraham to have pity upon him, but it was too late (v. 24).
- He was thirsty (v. 24).
- He was suffering terribly in the fire (vv. 23, 24).
- He could not escape. Abraham told him, "There is a deep gulf between us, and no one from either side can cross over" (v. 26).
- The rich man had memories. He could remember his family and even asked Abraham to warn them about the awfulness of hell (v. 28). This may be one of the worst aspects of hell. The person who rejects Jesus will be able to remember the chances he or she had to trust Christ, but decided not to.

WHAT IS HELL?

Got some questions about hell? The Bible is the best place to look for the answers. Get your Bible out, look up the scriptures and write down some of your thoughts about hell.

Who lives in hell?
Read Revelation 20: 10,15

How do they get there?
Read Matthew 25:31-46

What is the plan for
never going to hell?
Read John 3:16, 36

Can I be sure that I won't
go to hell? Read Isaiah 55:7
and Romans 5:1,2



Choosing

God's Way

LESSON AIM

To know that our choices are important.

To understand that choices have consequences.

To learn how to make choices that please God.

KEY VERSE

"Keep me far from every wrong; help me...to obey your laws, for I have chosen to do right." Psalm 119:30 (The Living Bible)

ITEMS NEEDED

Bibles/ pencils/ paper

"Who am I?" photocopies

"My Choices" photocopies

GROUP INTERACTION

How Many Choices?

1) Divide your class into two or more teams. Have each team make a list of all of the choices they have made today. Answers will vary widely. You may need to spark some ideas...the students may not realize just how many choices they make in a day. Examples include:

-Will I get up?

-Will I be in a good mood or a bad mood?

-Will I take a shower?

-Will I wash my hair?

-What should I wear: pants, skirt, shorts, socks, sweater, sweatshirt?

-Will I eat breakfast?

-What will I eat for breakfast?

-Will I go to church?

-Will I bring my Bible to church?

2) Have the teams compare lists to see who could remember the most choices. The teams will probably have several of the same ideas, but different people will remember different kinds of choices. Variety is good.

3) As a class, divide the decisions into two categories: **Important Choices** and **Not So Important Choices**. You may choose to write their responses on a chalkboard or white board. The class may disagree as to which decisions fit into which category.

Tip:

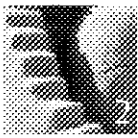
The kids will respond to a teacher who is interested in their life outside of the classroom.

Take time to care about what decisions matter most to your students.

✍ How did you make your decisions?

✍ Do you think our decisions are important to God?

✍ What makes one decision more important than another?



INVESTIGATION

Who am I? Handout

Everyone makes bad choices sometimes...Let's see if you can identify some Bible characters who made important choices - some good and some bad. Copy and distribute the master provided called "Who Am I?" Have the kids form as many teams as you would like and tell them they have four minutes to see how many correct answers their team can come up with. To transition into the instruction time, ask the kids how many Bible characters on the handout made good choices, and how many made bad choices. Then, begin sharing about Daniel, a man of God who made good choices.

INSTRUCTION TIME

* * * * Daniel: Man of God Daniel 1:8

Daniel was kidnapped and taken to Babylon because he was a good guy. The Bible says he was a young man "in whom there was no blemish, but good-looking, gifted in all wisdom, possessing knowledge and quick to understand..." (Daniel 1:4) Daniel was chosen to serve in the king's palace. Part of his training included eating certain foods that were against the Jewish law for Daniel. Instead of breaking God's law, the Bible tells us that Daniel "purposed in his heart" not to defile himself by eating the king's food. That means that Daniel made a CHOICE to serve and obey God rather than men.

The king saw Daniel's wisdom and honesty. He was impressed with Daniel's decision to obey God. God blessed Daniel for this decision: Daniel was trusted and given power to rule the kingdom of Babylon, second only to the king. He was able to interpret dreams and God showed him visions of things to come. Daniel put God first, even when it meant he might die. The king made a decree that anyone who prayed to any god or man other than the king would be thrown into the lion's den. Because Daniel would not stop praying he was put in the lion's den, but God sent an angel to protect him and he was not harmed. Just like Daniel, when you CHOOSE God's way, it may not always be easy, but God will help you and bless you for your obedience.

Tip:

With age comes wisdom. Oftentimes we overlook the value of our senior citizens.

Form a council of senior citizens in your church. Invite them to come to your class and share about difficult choices they've made. Provide time for the two generations to interact with each other. (Snap Sessions Celebrations and Choice Makers: Campbell, Stan; Smith, Card. ©1993 David C. Cook Publishing)

* * * * Overlooking the Obvious

Write the sentence below on a chalkboard, overhead transparency, or on sheets of paper. Be sure to write it exactly as it appears in the box. Next have everyone quickly count the F's in the sentence. Many people don't notice all six F's (they overlook all the ofs).

FINISHED FILES ARE THE RESULT OF YEARS OF SCIENTIFIC STUDY COMBINED WITH THE EXPERIENCE OF YEARS.

Sometimes what is obvious is exactly what we overlook. It takes a little bit of effort to see things the way they really are. Don't be fooled by rushing through choices in your life. Take the time to make good choices with God and His Word. You will find that your life is a whole lot better when you do.



How to Choose God's Way Proverbs 3:6

Making the right choices is like learning to walk. When you were a baby taking your first steps you probably fell down a lot. You had to learn several skills and develop certain muscles in order to walk. Pretty soon it became natural. But even after you were walking and running like a pro, you still tripped and fell down sometimes. In the same way, we have to LEARN to make good choices. We are sinful (Romans 3:23), and we make wrong choices; but as we learn more about God and the Bible, making the right choices becomes easier and more natural. However, no one is perfect and everyone makes mistakes sometimes.

To make good choices it is often helpful to seek godly counsel; in other words, to ask advice from godly people. The Bible says, "Where there is no counsel, the people fall; but in the multitude of counselors there is safety." (Proverbs 11:14) But one of the best ways to make the right decision is to KNOW God. Proverbs 3:6 tells us, "In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths." The Hebrew word for acknowledge is yada which means to know by investigation, reflection, or firsthand experience...direct intimate contact with God. As you grow in your relationship with God, He will direct you in making good choices that please Him.

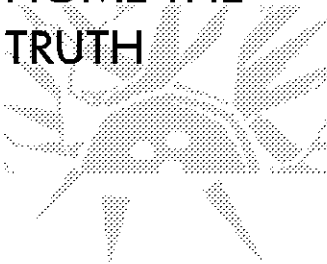
ALTERNATE ACTIVITY



The Bible is a valuable tool for helping you make good choices. Psalm 119:105 says that God's Word is a "lamp to my feet and a light to my path." The Bible can show us which way to go. When we are faced with difficult choices it is important to have God's Word in our hearts. Encourage your kids to memorize scripture now so they will be ready to face any challenge. Some good verses to start with are:

- Psalm 1
- Joshua 1:8
- Proverbs 3:5-6
- Romans 3:23
- Romans 12:1-2
- Acts 1:8
- 2 Chronicles 7:14
- Psalm 119:11
- Romans 8:28
- Ephesians 6:10-11

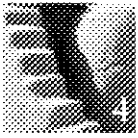
TAKING HOME THE TRUTH



Choices Have Consequences Deuteronomy 30:19-20

Every choice we make has its consequence, whether it is good or bad. God gave us the freedom to choose His way. Adam and Eve made a bad choice to disobey God and they suffered the consequences of having to leave the Garden of Eden. Daniel made a good choice to serve and obey God and enjoyed the consequence: God's blessings.

God has put before us a choose-your-own adventure. Deuteronomy 30:19 says, "...I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live."



TAKING HOME THE TRUTH



Evaluating My Choices

Use the clipart provided below as the heading for a choices poster. Run off copies of a blank sheet of paper with the clipart as the heading. The goal is to help your kids make better choices in their lives. Have them find pictures and headline clippings from old magazines and/or newspapers which best describe the choices they make most often. Have the kids glue or tape the clippings on their posters in any arrangement. While the group completes this activity discuss with the kids why they make the choices they make. Keep the kids focused on the idea that God wants to be part of their choices regardless how important or unimportant they may seem to us.

Encourage the kids to take the completed poster home and discuss the issues of this lesson with their families.

Poster Clipart

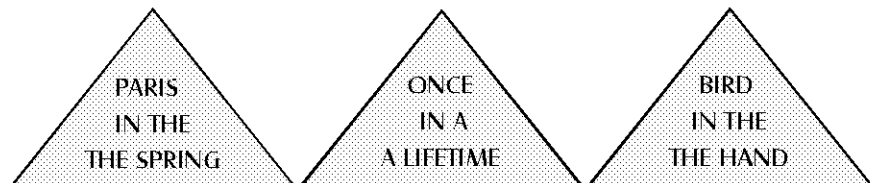


ALTERNATE ACTIVITY:

How Do You See Things?



CAN YOU READ THIS ALOUD?



Kids often make choices according to the values they think they see in their friends. Many decisions are based on immediate appearances, as in the illustration above. However, the choices we make in early life often establish life-patterns, whether good or bad. Encourage your kids to learn God's voice and obey it.

WHO AM I?

Use the following clues about their choices to identify the Bible character.

I LIVED IN EGYPT, IN THEIR PRISONS AND IN THEIR PALACES. EVEN THROUGH THE HARD TIMES GOD WAS ALWAYS THERE TO HELP ME OBEY HIM. HE GAVE ME DREAMS ABOUT THE FUTURE. I HAVE ELEVEN BROTHERS, BUT I WAS MY FATHER'S FAVORITE. WHO AM I?

I have always done my best to put God first, and He has truly blessed me. I still don't know how he chose me to be the mother of His Son! God is so good. Who am I?

Wow! God gave us such a beautiful place to live and He walked and talked with us! But why did He have to tell us not to eat from that one tree? We didn't think it would hurt to try it just once...but it did--a LOT! Now we have to deal with pain and sorrow...Who are we?

WE WERE KIDNAPPED WITH OUR FRIEND DANIEL... BUT WE DECIDED THAT, NO MATTER WHAT, WE WOULD SERVE GOD! SO WHEN WE WERE TOLD TO WORSHIP SOME GOLDEN STATUE OF THE KING, WE KNEW WE WOULDN'T... EVEN IF IT MEANT WE WOULD BURN! THE BEST PART IS--HE WAS WITH US IN THE FLAMES, AND WE DIDN'T GET HURT! WHO ARE WE?

God made me a promise, that I would be the father of many nations--I didn't have any kids! But He is God, and I trusted Him. Sure enough, I had a son! Then God asked me to sacrifice my son to Him! How could I kill my only son? But He is God! As I went to kill my son, God provided a ram, and let me keep my son! Who am I?

God asked me to go to that horrible place!! Can you believe it? So I decided to take matters into my own hands, but I ended up in the belly of a big fish! Boy did I learn my lesson! Now I know to do it God's way first! Who am I?

I WAS A SPY...I SAW SOME GIANTS IN MY DAY! BUT GOD WAS SO AMAZING! WE RAN UP AGAINST A CITY SO BIG THEY COULD RACE CHARIOTS ON TOP OF THEIR CITY WALLS. GOD TOLD US TO MARCH AROUND THE CITY AND BLOW OUR HORNS, AND HE BROUGHT THE WALLS DOWN! MY PEOPLE AND I DIDN'T EVEN HAVE TO FIGHT! WE OBEYED GOD AND HE FOUGHT OUR BATTLE FOR US! WHO AM I?

Money, I always did like it...in fact, I was the treasurer for the apostles. But I just couldn't resist when they offered me the money to turn Jesus in. It seemed so easy! All I had to do was identify Him by kissing Him, but it was so hard. I handed him over to be killed! Who am I?

Do it God's way!
Trust me...I learned my lesson! I tried to do it my way and ended up with disaster. There were frogs in my bed, it was totally dark, our water was turned to blood, and my firstborn son died. Who am I?



Teach Us to PRAY

LESSON AIM

To understand that the Lord's Prayer is a guide to HOW we should pray.
To know that prayer is communication with our loving Heavenly Father.
To understand that prayer strengthens our relationship with God.

KEY VERSE

"And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him." I John 5:14

ITEMS NEEDED

Blindfolds, Scripture cards for Investigation, paper, pencils

DECLARATION OF FAITH

It is well that we understand the scriptural object, or purposes of prayer. It is important that we pray intelligently—that we know what we are doing when we come to God in prayer. It is also important that we are in complete agreement with the revealed will of God in relations to prayer, as that will is made known in the Bible. We shall see that true prayer is very comprehensive. It reaches afar and touches virtually every phase of our being and every aspect of our relations to God and to the world about us. The more we know about God's purposes for prayer, the greater will be our delight that we are given this great and glorious privilege. We want to know these most important purposes of prayer and how they touch our personal spiritual lives and our service for the **Lord.**



GROUP INTERACTION

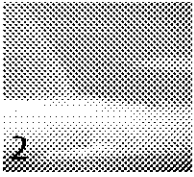
Are We Listening?

Tip:
Do not force participation. Some kids may choose to observe from the sidelines.

Divide the group into teams of two. One team member is blindfolded, one is not. Using two teams at a time, place them across the room from one another. Turn the blindfolded member around a couple of times, face them in the wrong direction. The teammate must verbally direct the blindfolded player to him or her. The teammates cannot touch each other. To make it more interesting add one or two obstacles, especially when the following players get familiar with the game.

After the game is completed, discuss some of the following questions:

- *Was it hard to follow your teammate's directions? Why?*
- *Was it frustrating if the blindfolded person did not follow your directions?*



- *How did you feel when you accomplished your goal?*
- *Was it difficult to trust what your partner was telling you?*
- *How does God feel when we don't follow His instructions?*
- *Is it sometimes difficult to hear what God is saying to us when we pray?*
- *How can we hear Him when we pray?*

INSTRUCTION TIME

In Matthew 6, Jesus had just finished His sermon on the Mount of Olives. The disciples approached Jesus and asked Him to teach them how to pray. This request followed Jesus' teaching on what our attitudes should be, and what our actions as His followers should be. Perhaps the disciples felt the need to grow closer to their Heavenly Father.

Praying, or talking, to God shows relationship. Right after Jesus teaches the disciples to pray, He follows this teaching with the example of a good father. This example gives us the confidence of knowing we can depend on God to hear us and answer our prayers.

Few people doubt the importance of prayer. Christians agree that it is essential to a strong Christian life. Even non-Christian religious groups practice prayer to other gods or a form of meditation. Though people stress the importance of daily prayer, they ignore the fact that it is a form of improving their relationship with God. Most people associate prayer with asking for something rather than strengthening their personal relationship with a loving Heavenly Father. In strengthening any relationship, it is important to LISTEN as well as talk.

In the Lord's prayer Jesus outlines what we are to bring before our Heavenly Father. It is not the wording of this prayer that is important, it is the content. (Use the enclosed sample of the Lord's Prayer and make an overhead or poster to explain Jesus' instruction about prayer.)

Our Father

We all have the need for a loving, providing father. This statement shows our close relationship with God and our recognition of Who He is. God loves us and wants to give us all that we need. Do you believe that God loves you?

Hallowed be Your name

We enter His presence by praising Him. How do you feel when someone tells you something good about yourself? God is all powerful, all-knowing, all-caring. It is good to tell God how wonderful He is – but praising God also helps convince us that He is all we need. When you begin to praise God, try not to let other things distract you from this time of closeness.

Your Kingdom come, your will be done

Establish His presence in your life, your family, your neighborhood. When you understand that God loves you and He can provide all that you need, it becomes easier to give in to His will and allow Him to accomplish what He wants in your life. He can help us overcome problems in our families, with kids at school, or with friends. He never said we wouldn't have problems, He just promised to help us through our problems. He is powerful and there is great protection when you dwell in His kingdom! Do you want Him to take charge of your life?

Give us this day

Jesus tells us to come to God - DAILY - to ask for what we need. Again, when we have a relationship with our heavenly Father, we learn what is important to ask for. This is not saying we can never ask for extra things, we just need to keep our wants and needs in proper perspective. Is God able to take care of your needs? Do you only ask for physical needs, what about your spiritual needs?

Forgive Us

We know we need to ask God's forgiveness for what we do wrong. However, do we realize we also need to ask others for forgiveness when we have hurt them. Are we also willing to truly forgive others when they hurt us? When we release these hurts, we actually make ourselves more open to God's work in our lives. If we hold on to these hurts it squeezes out God.

Lead us not into temptation

Pray for the power to overcome the temptations that face you. Pray for a hedge of protection around yourself. Ask the Lord to help you not have to learn things the "hard way." As you grow stronger in your relationship with God, you will grow stronger to defeat the principalities and powers that face you. Is it possible for you to say "no" to temptation?

Yours is the kingdom, power and glory forever

Close the prayer with your recognition of God's kingdom. His kingdom, power and glory should rule in our lives. We should believe in Who He is and what He is able to do. We should be able to share His kingdom and power and glory with others. Do you truly believe God's kingdom is forever?

Kingdom = rule Power = reign Glory = honor (recognition)

INVESTIGATION

Are There
Rules To
Prayer?

Write on sheets of paper the following scriptures. Break the class up into groups of 4-6 people. Assign one scripture to each group. Have the group look up the scripture and explain what the scripture says about prayer.

Psalm 55:17	(morning, noon, night)
Matthew 5:44	(for those that despitefully use you)
1 Thessalonians 5:17	(without ceasing)
1 Timothy 2:8	(pray everywhere, lifting holy hands...)
Matthew 26:41	(do not enter into temptation)
James 5:13	(if any is afflicted, ask of God)
James 5:16	(confession, prayer to one another)
John 14:13,14	(if you ask anything in my name...)

TAKING HOME THE TRUTH

Letters
to God

For this activity, the kids will need another sheet of paper. Have each kid write a letter to God. It does not have to be long, but it does need to be honest. To protect the privacy of each student, move chairs apart. No one else will read the letter. After they finish, lead the students into a quiet time. Allow them time to hear what God is saying to them. (Some students may not cooperate, but at least make them respect the quiet time.)

Our Father in heaven,

Hallowed be Your name.

Your kingdom come.

Your will be done

ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN.

Give us this day our daily bread,

AND FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS,

As we forgive our debtors.

And do not lead us into temptation,

But deliver us from the evil one.

For Yours is the kingdom and

the power and the glory forever.

Matthew 6:9-13

Amen

John 8:34-36

Free at Last

LESSON AIM

This holiday lesson combines a teaching time and activities usually found at a Fun Night. The aim is to get the kids thinking about their spiritual independence as much as they do about fireworks and the Fourth of July while having as much fun as a July 4th picnic.

ITEMS NEEDED

A ball of twine or yarn

Five or six ears of raw corn with husks

Watermelon wedges (with seeds) for every kid

Prepare the kids ahead of time for the Patriotic Snacks (see page 3)

DECLARATION OF FAITH

One of the most perplexing questions which comes to the human mind is in relation to the presence and origin of sin. That all men are sinners cannot be denied. This is true of every race and tribe. Nor is it necessary for man to learn to sin. The principle of sin is in his very nature from the earliest days of his life. No child needs to be told how to do wrong, but he must constantly be taught to do that which is right.

Before the first sin was committed in the universe, before the sad plight brought on by rebellious man, who had been made in the image of God, the Lord planned and provided the way of escape from the snares and condemnation of sin. Our God was not caught unawares. He foreknew the Fall and He foreordained the plan of

rescue.



GROUP INTERACTION

The kids will need to be in pairs for this activity. Each pair will have a "wrapper" and a "wrappee." The wrappee just needs to stand there. The wrapper will take one end of a ball of twine or yarn and prepare to wrap the wrappee.

Ask the entire group to answer this question: "What people (no names), situations, feelings, and experiences can take away your freedom?" Each time someone gives an answer, the wrapper should wrap the twine or yarn around the wrappee once (but not too tightly). After several suggestions, your wrappees will all be bound by the cord. Talk about how the cord takes away this person's freedom?

Group interaction for this lesson and Patriotic Snacks (pg. 3) were both adapted from SNAP SESSIONS: Holiday Specials and Boredom Busters, copyright, 1990 by David C. Cook Publishing, Co.



INVESTIGATION



Leave the wrappees tied up and ask one of the wrappers to read John 8:34-36. Then have the kids discuss their thoughts on what it means to be a slave to sin. Help direct their thoughts to the following observations...

Sin is bondage and keeps us from doing what we should.

Our personal will is involved in breaking the bondage of sin.

Jesus paid the price for our sin; we do not need to be in bondage.

God's Holy Spirit gives us the strength to break free of sin.

While the wrappees are tied up the leader can expand on the truth of this lesson by going around the room throwing cotton balls at the wrappees and teasing them when their hands are too tied up to catch them. Point out that even though everyone knows the cotton balls won't hurt, when they are thrown at the wrappees face, it causes a flinching reaction. (Be careful not to take this too far, but be sure everyone gets the point: the bondage of sin makes us weak in defending ourselves in life.)

INSTRUCTION TIME

Freedom
From Sin

Have another wrapper read John 15:15. Help the kids see that our relationship with Jesus brings freedom from the bondage of sin. As the group discusses the following observations tell the wrappers to slowly unwrap the wrappees.

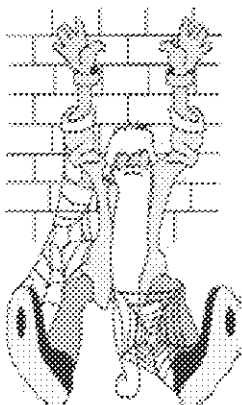
When sin ruled our lives we were helpless and hopeless.

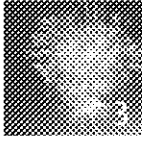
Now that Jesus has set us free from sin, we are His friends and now have His help and the hope of a better life.

Jesus stays in touch with His Heavenly Father and tells us what God wants us to know.

We no longer have to be confused about life or be kept a slave to sin because Jesus teaches us how to think and how to live.

Once the wrappees have been totally "set free" conclude the discussion by talking about how good it feels to be free after you have been in bondage.





JUST FOR FUN

Oh Shucks!



Choose three or four kids to compete in the Oh Shucks! game. Provide raw ears of corn from the produce section of your local grocery store. When you say, "go," the kids try to shuck the husks of the corn with only their bare feet. No hands allowed! Whoever shucks the best in the allotted time is the winner. Reward the winner with a bag of corn chips or popcorn.

Messy Melon



Choose one of these watermelon activities for a mid-summer, outdoor, messy fun time!

Watermelon eating contest - give each kid their own wedge of watermelon and reward the speediest eater.

Seed Spitting contest - have the kids save the seeds from their wedge and go the distance.

Rind Sculpture - the real creative kids can take the left-over watermelon rinds and create a work of art to impress their friends. (Be sure to use caution in providing utensils for this activity. Spoons would be as effective as knives yet safer.)

Patriotic Snacks

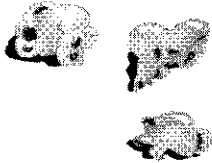


In advance, ask a third of the group to bring red food (cherries, strawberries, red M&M's etc), a third of the group to bring white foods (cake, marshmallows, etc.), and the rest to bring blue food (blueberries, jawbreakers, blue jello etc). Display the food in color-coordinated sections and tell kids they can only have one of each color at a time.



Some preparation might be needed.

LESSON AIM



This entire evening is geared for fun. It is a night in which the regulars of the group could bring a friend from the neighborhood or from school. It is an evening of acceptance, fellowship, and celebration. Let the visitors see alternative ways to have fun. The early church grew as a result of the disciples going from house to house breaking bread with GLADNESS. (Acts 2:46, 47)

PICK-A-FLICK



This will probably be the most difficult part of the evening. Though the kids are already exposed to sexual innuendos, bad language and violence, it would be vital to choose a film without any of these elements. You do not want to choose a film that is too childlike as you won't reach the unchurched. However, you do not want to make it too secular, to exclude the protected kids.

Some suggestions: an old classic, an edited version of a popular movie, some new flicks such as *Babe*, *A Goofy Movie*, *Star Wars*.

FOOD IDEAS

Popcorn, soft drinks, bags of mini-candy bars, large submarine sandwich, pizza.

ITEMS NEEDED

Small prizes, extra popcorn, empty pop cans, masking tape, flashlight, film clips brought in from students, clothing to represent silent film stars (optional)

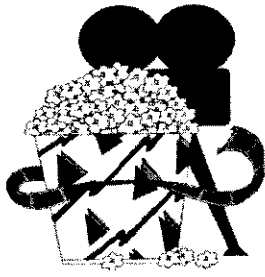
GAMES & ACTIVITIES



Choose a few activities from this list.

Film Clips

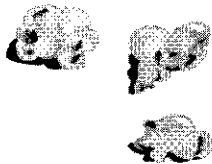
Have kids bring videotapes already cued to one of their favorite parts of a movie. (*Do some investigating, some kids might try to bring in something questionable for shock factor.*) When you have picked a few clips, have the kids give a brief introduction to the clip and after it has been shown, why they like this part. This is a good way to learn something about the kids.



Popcorn contest (unbuttered, keep your maintenance people happy)
Break group into teams of two. Line up teams so that they face one another and stand at least one foot from each other and give each person a small amount of popcorn. Each team member takes a turn being a thrower and a receiver. They must throw the popcorn into the receiver's mouth. The receivers cannot use their hands. The team with the least amount of popcorn at their feet wins.

Another popcorn game

Using the masking tape, mark one or two large squares on the floor. (*This would depend on your floor space.*) Break each square into four quadrants (*similar to the game Foursquare*[^]). Divide the groups so that there is a team assigned to each quadrant. The objective of each team is to keep their quadrant free of popcorn by blowing it into the other quadrants. No hands inside the square.



Canned tower

Using empty pop cans, give three or more kids an equal amount of cans and have them compete by stacking the popcans. The person with the highest stack wins.

Silent Movies

Turn out the lights. Swing the beam of a flashlight quickly across one spot on the wall. Have volunteers go up and impersonate Charlie Chaplin or some other silent movie actor. Another idea is to flash the lights off and on quickly, or buy a strobe light at a novelty store.

WRAPPING IT UP

End the evening by passing out flyers or a brochure explaining what your group is about; or have your pastor come and introduce himself (no sermons). The greater the availability presented by the group, the greater the chances are the visitors will return.