



GOD AND ME AND US

Leaders Guide

God & Me & Us

Leaders Guide

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GOD

ME

US

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Is God Real?

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SESSION 10

God Speaks

God loves to communicate with His people. I can hear Him for myself and others.

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SESSION 12

My Way or the High Way

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GOD

ME

US

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The world teaches that we are descended from monkeys. Evidence for why this isn't true.

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When we realise that we all come from Adam and Eve, it changes the way we think about and respond to people who are different to us, and approach discrimination, and even racism.

SESSION 16

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History shows that Jesus really existed, and His resurrection shows us He really is God.

SESSION 17

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Although Jesus lived 2000 years ago, He is alive today, and we can know Him personally.

SESSION 18

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Jesus loves His church, He leads His church, and He is coming back for her soon.

SESSION 19

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The Bible is God's inspired Word and has been remarkably preserved, just as it was originally written.

SESSION 20

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SESSION 21

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SESSION 22

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SESSION 23

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Jesus said to go into all the world and preach the Gospel. We need to tell the world about eternity and the Good News of Jesus.

FINAL SESSION

SESSION 25

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Although Jesus promised to come back, He gave us signs so we could know when to expect Him. We need to stay alert!

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of This Series

The God&Me&Us series looks at various topics of the Christian faith, from three different lenses, or perspectives:

1. **God:** Who is God and what does He have to say about Himself? During this series we'll get to know Him better and learn more about His character.
2. **Me:** How does this knowledge of who God is, apply to me and my life?
3. **Us:** It's not just about me, but also about the church, the world around me and God's Kingdom.

During this series we'll learn about how these truths impact how I live out my life, in the context I find myself in. Focusing on the above three elements gives us a well rounded and more diverse understanding of Scripture.

Who Is This Aimed At?

"After three days they found him (Jesus) in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him, they were astonished. His mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you."

"Why were you searching for me?" he asked. "Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?"

Luke 2:46 - 49

As we see above, at 12-years old, Jesus was found in the temple, busy with His Father's business. **God&Me&Us** is targeted at this pre-teen age group and is intended to help ground them in truth, settle their foundations and help lead them into their unique calling in God.

This series has been designed to help this specific age group transition from being children in the family of God, to being responsible for their own walk. It is also around this time that they are no longer a part of children's church and need to find their place, and be involved in the main service.

This resource is ideally aimed at pre-teens aged 12 and 13.

However, the content could be slightly adjusted in discussion time to a higher level for youth ages, or slightly lower to age 11, too.

Leaders

The leaders will be intricately involved in shepherding the pre-teens on Sundays and building intentional relationships with them during the week - teaching them the in's and out's of church life, and helping them to find their place in the larger body.

Ideally, leaders for this should be mature in their faith and be able to handle some of the more difficult concepts in the Word. Having the involvement of a few deacons or elders is ideal.

The adult to pre-teen ratio should be about 1:10.

Components of This Series

There are three intentional components to the series, that work together as follows:

1 • Videos

There are 4 sections to each video:

- **Feed on the Word:** This is an informative teaching segment that covers the major content for the session. It is rooted in Scripture and intended to provide truth for life.
- **Word of the Day:** This segment covers commonly used words in a Christian context, not commonly heard elsewhere. The idea is to build understanding of these words so that they can be understood when referenced in a teaching.
- **Verse of the Day:** Key Bible verses that reinforce the concepts that are being taught. The idea is for them to be committed to memory and reflected on, so that the Holy Spirit can bring them to mind when needed.
- **Think Worship:** How can we live our lives differently in response to the truth that was covered in this teaching, and adapt it to a lifestyle of worship?

2 • Journal

The journal is intended to be used as a tool to record notes, as well as create a space for reflection, discussion and application.

3 • Leaders Guide

The Leaders Guide is intended to be a tool, in conjunction with the videos, to assist leaders when discussing the session topics with their pre-teens. The Leaders Guide is simply a guide, and not a strict handbook.

Each session in the series has the following sections:

- **Focus point:** The key truth that needs to be driven home for each episode.
- **Key Truths:** A summary of the contents for that lesson, connecting the information that is taught in 'Feed on the Word'.
- **Scriptures:** Scriptures references to reinforce these truths.
- **Group Discussion Questions:** These open-ended questions are a key component of the series and are intended to help the pre-teens find their own way through the Bible to the truth. We've also provided suggested answers to help guide the discussion.

How To Implement

The following is simply a suggestion and can be adjusted as each congregation sees fit. The suggested implementation would be a three or four week rotating roster as follows:

Week 1 - Be in Church, listen to the sermon and take notes in the G&M&US Journal.

Week 2 - Be in Church until worship finishes. Ideally a deacon or elder would be available to answer questions on the sermon from the previous week and hear from others how it impacted them.

Week 3 - Serve the body. Be involved in an area of serving - Info desk, Coffee, Worship, AV, Kids, etc. If the area of ministry where they are serving allows, listen and take notes on the sermon.

Week 4 - Watch a God&Me&Us episode and discuss in group. Journals will be provided for notes and further discussion.

SESSION 1

IS GOD REAL?

God&Me&Us

Focus Point

God exists and has always existed – and there is exciting evidence which illustrates this.

The Key Truths

While there is not scientific or mathematical proof for the existence of God, there are enough clues, or pieces of evidence, that provide more than enough reason for us to believe that the God of the Bible is most definitely real.

Likewise, because God is real and the Creator of everything, everything belongs to Him – including us. If everything belongs to Him, then everyone is accountable to Him.

Some of the clues are:

- The “Impossibility of the Big Bang Theory” clue – something cannot come from nothing.
- The “Who Says What is Right or Wrong” clue – a common standard of right or wrong can only come from outside our world, and that standard can only be God.
- The “Historical Jesus” clue – His claims to be God must be believed in the light of the evidence for His resurrection from the dead.

People can hold different opinions, but there can only be one Truth and Jesus has stated that this is found in Himself.

Scriptures to Consider

Look again at what Jesus said about Himself:

- **John 14:9** – *“Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.”* Jesus said that, if people wanted to know what God the Father was like, they just had to look at Him.
- **John 8:58** – *“Before Abraham was, I am.”* Jesus said that He was around before Abraham was.
- **John 10:30** – *“I and the Father are one.”* Jesus said that He and God were one and the same God.

Group Discussion Questions

Question 1: What do you understand by the phrase, 'God is "forever"'?

Answer: Revelation 1:17 – *"I am the first and the last, and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades."*

Question 2: If God is forever, what does that mean for those who put their faith in Him?

Answer: Jesus told His disciples that He was going *"...to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me so that you also may be where I am."* (John 14:2-3) When He was praying to the Father for His disciples, He prayed, *"Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world."* (John 17:24)

The "you" and "those" references in the verses above only include people who have put their faith in Jesus for the forgiveness of their sin. The question for each of us is, "Am I included in the "you" and "those"?"

Word of the Day

Resurrection

Verse of the Day

"If you have seen me, you have seen Father." – John 14:9 (ESV)

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SESSION 2

WHO AM I?

God & Me & Us

Focus Point

I am designed and created by God with a purpose. Sin has damaged God's original design.

The Key Truths

Preteens often question their purpose and place in the world. This lesson uses Scripture and science to explain the plan that God had when making us in His image - and how that image was damaged because of sin.

This lesson uses the evidence found in science, specifically genetics, and Scripture to explain how we are "knitted together" in our mother's uterus. Use these biological and spiritual truths to lay a firm foundation of a loving God who has a plan for our lives.

The wonder of our unique DNA speaks for itself. The single DNA strand from each of our parents did not just spontaneously connect - God intentionally "knitted" them together.

Scriptures to Consider

Consider these verses from Psalm 139:

- **Verse 3:** *"For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb." (ESV)*
- **Verse 15:** *"My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth." (ESV)*
- **Verse 16:** *"You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed." (NLT)*
- **Verse 23 & 24:** *"Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life." (NLT)*

Group Discussion Questions

Question 1: Sometimes we might like what we see when we look in the mirror, and other times there may be areas we don't like! Based on what we have heard about how God has knitted us together, how do you think we can respond to these thoughts and feelings?

Answer: God did the "knitting" and the "wool". He used the genetic material from our parents, which came from our grandparents, to knit us together. That is why we look like we do – our height, build, skin tone and a host of other attributes. Even some of the talents we are good at or areas we enjoy, or don't enjoy, come from our parents. God chose which bits of DNA would be put together to make us who we are today.

Question 2: Is my outward appearance who I really am as a person, or is there something more to me?

Answer: If we look at photographs of someone when they were 6 months old, 10 years old and 40 years old, we know that they will look different in each of the photos. There may be one or two things that might make us say, "Yes, I can see a similarity." The real me is not what I look like on the outside but what I am like on the inside. When God "...formed my inward parts...", He gave us the ability to love Him, to know right from wrong and to make moral choices.

Question 3: Based on the Scriptures and science that we were exposed to today, how could this change how you think, react to others or make decisions?

Answer: God formed each one of us and He already knows how long each of us will live our human lives, here on earth. It says that God has good thoughts towards us. King David's response was to ask God to search his heart and reveal to him anything in his life that offends God, such as sin. God calls each of us to respond in the same way to Him. Take time to do that now.

Word of the Day

Immutable

Verse of the Day

"I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows

SESSION 3

WHAT IS CHURCH?

God&Me&Us

Focus Point

The Church has a 2000 year old legacy. It is founded on eyewitnesses to Jesus' ministry.

The Key Truths

The church is often thought of as a building; however, whenever the Apostles in the New Testament talk about Church, they talk about a group of people coming together. The only recorded time that Jesus used the word "church" was in Matthew 16:18 in the context of building His Church, which referred to people - all over the world.

Jesus prayed that His followers would be one as He and the Father are one (John 17:20). It would be impossible for believers to be "one" unless they meet together. This is one of the reasons why the writers of the New Testament used the word "ecclesia" to indicate that it wasn't optional to be part of a local church if one was following Jesus. God "summons" us to be part of the church.

Paul established local churches in many cities and towns that he visited. In the same way, we who belong to Jesus must be a part of and active in our local church. We can't say that we belong to the global Church but are not prepared to be part of our local church.

Scriptures to Consider

- **Ephesians 1:22-23** - *"And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all."* (ESV)

Jesus builds his church by each part of his "body" doing its part.

- **Romans 12:4-8** - *"For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; 8 the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness."*

- **1 Corinthians 12:15-17 (ESV)** – *“If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell?”*

Group Discussion Questions

Question 3: What does it mean to be a member of God’s church? Some people believe that their relationship is just between them and God. How could we respond to this person using the passages from the Bible that we have just read?

Answer: The Church is the “body” of Jesus on earth, and we are the church. So, just as every part of my body has a particular function and purpose, each individual believer has a role to play in the local church. We are all connected to each other and need each other to function.

Question 4: Why do I, as a young person, also need to be part of the local church when it seems like it’s only the adults who do everything? I can’t lead meetings, I can’t play an instrument with the worship team, I don’t earn a salary so I can’t tithe. Does the church even need me?

Answer: Your little finger is not strong and you seldom do anything just with your little finger. However, if you were missing that little finger, there would be lots of things that you wouldn’t be able to do as well without it. Whatever small a part you play in your church, that small part makes a difference. Read 1 Peter 2:5 When stones were used to build the walls of a house, there were big stones and little stones. A small gap must be filled with a small stone.

Make Suggestions: In what ways could you be involved in serving others in the life of your church?

Word of the Day

Ecclesia

Verse of the Day

“And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works.” – Hebrews 10:24 (ESV)

SESSION 4

WHO IS GOD?

God&Me&Us

Focus Point

God is a person who has a particular character and attributes.

The Key Truths

God revealed His character and His attributes to us through the life of Jesus, His Son, during His short time on earth. When Philip requested that Jesus show them (the disciples) the Father, Jesus replied, *"Whoever has seen me has seen the Father..."* (John 14:9, ESV). Our minds are finite or limited; God is infinite! We therefore cannot fully understand what God is like. If we were able to understand Him completely, He wouldn't be God.

The Scriptures below describe some of God's nature. Jesus chose to set aside that nature when He came to earth as a human, to reunite us with the Father by dying on the cross

Scriptures to Consider

Even though God is indescribable, below are some words that describe the character of God. Use the Scriptures referenced alongside them to introduce the preteens to this vocabulary, which they may hear in and around church.

1. Self-sufficient - He does not need anyone to do anything for him.

Acts 17:25 (NLT) - *"...and human hands can't serve his needs—for he has no needs. He himself gives life and breath to everything, and he satisfies every need."*

2. Omnipotent - God's power surpasses all powers.

2 Corinthians 4:7 (ESV) - *"But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us."*

3. Omniscient – God knows our thoughts and what we say even before we say it.

Psalm 139:2-4 (ESV) – *“You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar. You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O LORD, you know it altogether.”*

4. Immutable – God’s attributes and character never change.

Malachi 3:6 (NIV) – *“I the LORD do not change. So you, the descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed.”*

Hebrews 13:8 (ESV) – *“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.”*

5. Omnipresent – Because God is everywhere, we cannot hide from him.

Psalm 139:7-12 (NIV) – *“Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?...”*

Jonah 1:10 (ESV) – *“Then the men were exceedingly afraid and said to him, “What is this that you have done!” For the men knew that he was fleeing from the presence of the LORD, because he had told them.”*

6. Uncreated – He created absolutely everything and therefore He could not have been created Himself.

Genesis 1:1 (NIV) – *“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”*

7. Eternal – Only someone who is eternal by nature can grant eternal life to someone else.

John 5:24 (ESV) – *“Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.”*

8. Holy – God instructs us to be holy, even as He is holy.

Leviticus 19:2 (NIV) – *“...Be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy.”*

Group Discussion Questions

Question 1: We know that God is a loving and kind God. How can these attributes (characteristics) of God be relevant to you in your situation where you might be struggling or confused?

Answer: We don't have to try and explain our struggles to God – He already knows what we have to deal with each day – how we feel, our thoughts, and our fears. He wants us to be honest with Him and ask Him to search our hearts. When we become aware of His characteristics it puts our lives and what we are struggling with into perspective. He is big enough and powerful enough to be in control of our situation.

Word of the Day

Omniscient

Verse of the Day

"To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honour and glory forever and ever."
- 1 Timothy 1:17 (ESV)

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SESSION 5

MY PURPOSE

God&Me&Us

Focus Point

When I consider how I am made by God, I know God has a purpose for me.

The Key Truths

As people, we often have the questions, “Why am I here? What is the purpose of my life?”. This episode speaks of how we can know and understand the God-given purpose of our lives. We are not the result of random cosmic accidents, life is too precise for that to be true. Rather, we are intentionally created, by God, for a purpose - which is to glorify Him and to be His image bearers in the world.

This is our main mission on earth but there may be more specific things that God asks each of us to do. As we follow Him, we learn more about what He is asking us to do.

Scriptures to Consider

- **Genesis 1:27 (ESV)** - *“So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”*
- **Psalms 8:3-6 (NIV)** - *“When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon, and the stars, which you have set in place, what is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them? You have made them a little lower than the angels and crowned them with glory and honour. You made them rulers over the works of your hands; you put everything under their feet.”*
- **Isaiah 43:7 (ESV)** - *“Everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made.”*
- **1 Corinthians 10:31 (ESV)** - *“So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”*

Group Discussion Questions

Question 1: If we have an object, like a calculator or smartwatch, and we want to discover its purpose – how it works or why it doesn't work – how would we do that?

Answer: We find out who made the item and why they made it. For what purpose was it created?

The best place we can take a broken item to be fixed is back to the person who made or designed it. God is our creator so only God can fix us in our brokenness and sin.

Question 2: If God originally made man in His own image and in His likeness, then what damage do you think has been caused by sin entering the world?

Answer: Since sin entered the world, man has been living his life apart from God. Which means that mankind now finds its purpose outside of God. The man of the world says, "My purpose is to be happy, and therefore I'm going to do whatever makes me the happiest". He has no thought about pleasing his Creator, who made him and owns him. The reality is that this approach ultimately does not work, as mankind is only able to find fulfillment in God.

Facilitator note: *Gauge the maturity of the group you are working with and then decide which of the following questions would be appropriate:*

Question 3: How would you describe yourself in the future, having fulfilled what you think your purpose & dreams are?

Answer: Help the preteens to see that any purpose we try to achieve, that is not centered around Jesus and what He wants for us, will not have eternal value in the end. Refer to the verse of the day.

Question 4: What dreams do you currently have that you think might not actually be part of God's purpose for you?

Answer: Help the kids to be honest and feel safe in answering this question.

Question 5: Have you ever asked God to show you His purposes for your life? Ask the kids if they would like to do that now.

Word of the Day

Glorify

Verse of the Day

“So whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.” - 1 Corinthians 10:31 (ESV)

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SESSION 6

ADOPTED

God&Me&Us

Focus Point

As believers, we are part of a spiritual family and have roles to play within this.

The Key Truths

When we are born, we are not born to be left on the pavement. Likewise, when we are spiritually born again, we are born again to be added into God's family.

In this session, we look at the wonderful truth that God adopts us into His family.

This does not only happen when we die but also in this life, the moment we accept Him as our Lord and Saviour we become part of His family. At this point, He becomes our Father and we are His children. It also means that instead of receiving judgement and punishment for our sin, as we deserve - we'll now inherit blessing as heirs of God in eternity.

Scriptures to Consider

- **Ephesians 1:4-5 (NLT)** - *"Even before He made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in His eyes. God decided in advance to adopt us into His own family by bringing us to Himself through Jesus Christ. This is what He wanted to do, and it gave Him great pleasure."*
- **John 8:44 (NLT)** - *"You are the children of your father the devil, and you love to do the evil things he does."*
- **John 1:12 (NIV)** - *"To all who did receive Him [Jesus Christ], to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God."*

Group Discussion Questions

Question 1: Who was our spiritual father before God adopted us?

Answer: We are born with a sinful nature which means that our spiritual father is the devil. We therefore naturally sin as no one has to teach us this. (This is a hard truth that many preteens may not have been exposed to in its raw state. Be prepared to discuss the myth that people are “inherently good”). The Bible says that we are dead in our sin.

Question 2: How do we become adopted by God?

Answer: We become God’s children by accepting the forgiveness that Jesus offers through what He did on the cross, by repenting of (turning away from) our sin. When we believe what He said about Himself to be true, and believe in His name, we become children of God.

Question 3: What does it mean for me to be God’s child?

Answer: I am loved, I belong, I have a spiritual inheritance, I am freed from the power of sin.

Make Suggestions: In what ways could you be involved in serving others in the life of your church?

Word of the Day

Adoption

Verse of the Day

“God decided in advance to adopt us into His own family by bringing us to Himself through Jesus Christ. This is what He wanted to do, and it gave Him great pleasure.” - Ephesians 1:5a (NLT)

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SESSION 7

GOD OF HOLINESS

God&Me&Us

Focus Point

God is holy and pure and hates sin. He wants us to be holy just like Him.

The Key Truths

Using scriptures that describe how completely different God is to us, this episode paints a big picture of the unreachable holiness of God. We look at how perfectly pure He is and, as a result, how sin cannot enter His presence, and that His wrath, or holy anger, is directed at sin.

Finally, we also marvel that, as holy as God is, His desire is to save each and every person who is spiritually lost, and that He does this for His own pleasure.

Scriptures to Consider

- God's holiness is not to be taken lightly.

Numbers 4:15 (NIV) - *"After Aaron and his sons have finished covering the holy furnishings and all the holy articles, and when the camp is ready to move, only then are the Kohathites to come and do the carrying. But they must not touch the holy things or they will die. The Kohathites are to carry those things that are in the tent of meeting."*

- God was obliged to act when His commands were ignored; His holiness demanded the response to Uzzah. There is never any compromise with God.

2 Samuel 6:7 (ESV) - *"And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah, and God struck him down there because of his error, and he died there beside the ark of God."*

- There is no-one in the universe who can even begin to be like God. He is supreme in everything.

Exodus 15:11 (ESV) - *"Who is like you, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders?"*

- Because sin corrupted human nature at the very first sin in the Garden, our hearts are naturally deceitful and wicked.

Jeremiah 17:9 (NLT) - *“The human heart is the most deceitful of all things, and desperately wicked. Who really knows how bad it is?”*

- Even though John had spent three years in Jesus’ company on earth, when he saw Jesus in all His glory, he “fell at His feet as though dead”.

Revelation 1:17 (NLT) - *“When I saw him, I fell at his feet as if I were dead. But he laid his right hand on me and said, “Don’t be afraid! I am the First and the Last.”*

Group Discussion Questions

Question 1: Why does God, who is completely loving, send people to Hell?

Answer: Because God is completely pure and holy, nobody can come into His presence without having accepted Jesus as Lord and Saviour; if He allowed sinful people into His presence, He would no longer be pure and holy.

We read in Romans 3:23 (ESV) that *“all have sinned and fall short of the glory [or standard] of God.”* If the pass mark for an exam is 50%, someone who gets 2% will fail and so will someone who gets 49%. Neither of them reached the required standard. God’s standard is perfection which none of us can reach. However, we read in John 3:16 (NIV) that *“God **so loved** the world that He gave His only Son...”* (emphasis added).

God has made a way for sinners to come into His presence: when someone turns from their sin (repents) and accepts the righteousness that only Jesus can give, He sees the righteousness of Jesus and not our own “filthy rags” as Isaiah called our own righteousness.

Question 2: How will the way I live my life change, when I realise how holy God is?

Answer: When we realise just how holy and perfect God is, we develop a healthy fear of the Lord. Think of it as a lion roaring in the wild. If you are the small buck, you will tremble and freeze with fear. You know that you may be eaten any moment. However, if you are the lion cub, you will draw close and know that you are protected by that same power. The fear of God should cause us to draw close to Him, but also to obey and listen to what He says. This way we are safe.

Word of the Day

Holy

Verse of the Day

“There is none holy like the Lord: for there is none besides you; there is no rock like our God.” – 1 Samuel 2:2 (ESV)

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SESSION 8

SLAVE TO SIN

God&Me&Us

Focus Point

We were dead in sin but God made us alive in Jesus. We have moved from darkness into light.

The Key Truths

When we come to know Christ, through salvation, we move from darkness to light; from being dead in our sin, to being made alive to God.

Using the foundation of the Bible, this episode explores how we are born into darkness and into a state of hostility and rebellion against God. But, by the grace of God, we can be saved by faith in Christ Jesus. Just as we were once slaves to sin, we can become slaves to God. While sin is an evil and demanding master, God is a loving and kind Master. We yield more and more to our new Master, while living free from the power that our old nature had over us.

Scriptures to Consider

- **Romans 3:10-12 (ESV)** - *"None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God. All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one."*
- **Ephesians 2:1-3 (ESV)** - *"And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind."*
- **Romans 6:17-18 (ESV)** - *"But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness."*

Group Discussion Questions

Question 1: What do you think a good person looks like? How would you measure or decide whether a person is good or not?

Answer: Provide answer prompts. Generally we compare ourselves to others, so our definition of good and bad is dependent on who or what we have been exposed to. Introduce the idea that depending on upbringing and background, each person may have a different idea of what they consider good or not - based on the lens that they are viewing this through.

Question 2: Do you consider yourself to be a good person?

Answer: If anyone says 'Yes', then ask them how do they measure their own goodness? Is it against others or is it against God?

Question 3: Have you experienced God changing certain desires and wants that you used to have? Read Romans 3:9-18. What stands out to you about this passage of scripture?

Answer: Help the kids to notice the usage of universal and exclusive terms such as "all", "none" and "not even one", and ask them if they think anyone is excluded from this list?

Question 4: When God makes us born again, He gives us a new heart and new desires to love, serve and obey Him (Ezekiel 36:26). Ask the kids if they have truly experienced this? Or if they think they've maybe just signed up for Christianity as a religion to follow.

Answer: Pray with those who might be feeling a proper sense of conviction of sin and lead them to put their faith and trust in Jesus and His worthiness for them.

Word of the Day

Slave

Verse of the Day

"We know that our old sinful selves were crucified with Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives. We are no longer slaves to sin." - Romans 6:6 (NLT)

SESSION 9

#LoveGodLovePeople

God&Me&Us

Focus Point

The church exists to display God's wisdom. We do this by sharing the Gospel and loving one another.

The Key Truths

Why does the Church exist? God's purpose in establishing the Church "*... was to use the church to display His wisdom in its rich variety to all the unseen rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.*" (Ephesians 3:10, NLT), to preach the Gospel and teach the saints to be disciples of Jesus (Matthew 28:19-20), to love one another as Jesus commanded and "*...if someone asks about your hope as a believer, always be ready to explain it. But do this in a gentle and respectful way.*" (1 Peter 3:15-16, NLT)

The focus of this lesson is to enable each young person to realise that what is expected of the Church is expected of each believer as an individual in community. The writings of the Apostles make it clear that we were created to be in fellowship with, and to love God as well as other believers.

Scriptures to Consider

Colossians 3:12-17 highlights the following truths and the expectations of everyone who belongs to Jesus:

- If we have accepted Jesus as our Lord and Saviour, it is only because **He chose us** (v12) to belong to Him. Before that, we were spiritually dead and needed to be made alive (Ephesians 2:4-6).
- Just as when others look at us, even from a distance, the first thing that they will notice is the clothing that we are wearing. In the same way, others must be able to see our "*...compassionate [caring] hearts, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.*" (v12).
- It is always very easy to be critical of others, especially if they don't measure up to our expectations. Refer to Matthew 7:3-5 and, in the light of what Jesus said, always be "putting up" with one another and willing to forgive those who have wronged us (Matthew 18:21-22).

- The single thing that can bind us together as followers of Jesus is love (v14). Jesus said that our love for one another would show that we are His disciples (John 15:12). John, in his first letter, wrote, *"If someone says, 'I love God,' but hates [or doesn't love] a fellow believer, that person is a liar; for if we don't love people we can see, how can we love God, whom we cannot see? And He [Jesus] has given us this command: Those who love God must also love their fellow believers."* (1 John 4:20-21, NLT)
- Peace must *"rule"* in the hearts (v15) of all believers. Peace doesn't just happen – it takes hard work by everyone. The writer of Hebrews told his readers to *"Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord."* (Hebrews 12:14, ESV)
- We are called to be *"thankful"* (v15). In the words of a song, *"Count your many blessings, name them one by one, and it will surprise you what the Lord has done!"* (Guy Penrod). One of the ways to show that we are thankful is to *"Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts."* (v16)
- Everything that we do or say needs to be done and said in such a way that we will follow Jesus' command to *"...let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."* (Matthew 15:16, ESV)

Group Discussion Questions

Question 1: How is it possible for someone to change the way that they have always been? If someone always had a bad temper, they can't just change, can they?

Answer: We read in 1 Corinthians 5:17 (ESV) that *"...if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come."* That is what the Holy Spirit does in us when He makes us spiritually alive in Jesus. As we allow the Holy Spirit to change us, His fruit begins to show in our lives (Galatians 5:22).

Question 2: What does it mean to "love" other people?

Answer: We become God's children by accepting the forgiveness that Jesus offers through what He did on the cross, by repenting of (turning away from) our sin. When we believe what He said about Himself to be true, and believe in His name, we become children of God.

Question 3: What if someone is genuinely not very likeable – such as someone who is always smelly or doesn't pay any attention to me unless they want something from me?

Answer: Some people are fairly easy to love, especially those who like us and are friendly towards us; however, it can be very difficult to love those who make us want to move as far from them as possible, or those people who make us feel inferior, intimidated or ignored.

When we committed our lives to Jesus, we “died” to our old way of living and were given new life in Him. As His followers, He expects us to follow His example of loving: Paul described that love in Romans 5:6-8 (NLT) where he wrote, *“When we were utterly helpless, Christ came at just the right time and died for us sinners. Now, most people would not be willing to die for an upright person, though someone might perhaps be willing to die for a person who is especially good. But God showed His great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.”* We have to die to ourselves and then the Holy Spirit enables us to love those who we would, of ourselves, not be able to love.

Word of the Day

Ecclesia

Verse of the Day

“And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works.” – Hebrews 10:24 (ESV)

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Group Discussion Questions

Question 1: Who was our spiritual father before God adopted us?

Answer: We are born with a sinful nature which means that our spiritual father is the devil. We therefore naturally sin as no one has to teach us this. (This is a hard truth that many preteens may not have been exposed to in its raw state. Be prepared to discuss the myth that people are “inherently good”). The Bible says that we are dead in our sin.

Question 2: How do we become adopted by God?

Answer: We become God’s children by accepting the forgiveness that Jesus offers through what He did on the cross, by repenting of (turning away from) our sin. When we believe what He said about Himself to be true, and believe in His name, we become children of God.

Question 3: What does it mean for me to be God’s child?

Answer: I am loved, I belong, I have a spiritual inheritance, I am freed from the power of sin.

Make Suggestions: In what ways could you be involved in serving others in the life of your church?

Word of the Day

Adoption

Verse of the Day

“God decided in advance to adopt us into His own family by bringing us to Himself through Jesus Christ. This is what He wanted to do, and it gave Him great pleasure.” - Ephesians 1:5a (NLT)

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SESSION 10

GOD SPEAKS

God&Me&Us

Focus Point

God loves to communicate with His people and I can hear Him for myself and others.

The Key Truths

Many people have questions about how to hear from God, and in what ways He speaks to us. At this age, many preteens are learning to hear God for themselves - yet at the same time, battling with fear that they may not be able to do so. Yet God speaks to all His children.

This session highlights the different ways that God spoke in the scriptures, throughout the ages, and to all different kinds of people. We are able to hear Him through scripture, prophecy, preaching and teaching and our personal relationship with God. God has given us the Holy Spirit to guide us and lead us into The Truth. We can rely on the Holy Spirit each day as a counselor, comforter and a friend, to walk with us and guide our every step.

Scriptures to Consider

- **Isaiah 30:21 (ESV)** - *"And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way, walk in it," when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left."*
- **Hebrews 1:1-3 (ESV)** - *"Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son, whom He appointed the heir of all things, through whom also He created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of His nature, and He upholds the universe by the word of His power. After making purification for sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high."*

Group Discussion Questions

Question 1: In John 14:9, Jesus said to His disciples; *“Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.”* What do you think this means?

Answer: It means that Jesus didn’t just come to earth as another prophet or person that spoke words from God. But instead, He came to earth as the literal word of God. He is the embodiment of God’s own nature and is the fullest revelation of who God is. It means that we don’t have to wonder and guess what God the Father is like, because He has revealed it to us already through His Son, Jesus.

Question 2: How can we learn more about God and know more about Him through the life of Jesus?

Answer: We can read about the life and ministry of Jesus in the Bible. We see how He dealt with people who were just like us. Whatever we see Jesus doing and feeling for people, we can know that God the Father feels the exact same way towards us.

Question 3: What are some of the main ways that we can learn to tell the difference between God’s voice, our own thoughts or feelings and other voices?

Answer: God speaks to us to lead us, encourage us, convict us of sin and to build us up. He will speak to us in a way that brings clarity to us instead of making us feel confused. When He speaks to us it will never contradict His Word. He wants us to become more like Him, and will instruct us in a way that makes us rely more on Him than ourselves. God’s desire is for His Kingdom to come on earth and in our own lives, so He won’t say things to us which aren’t in line with this.

The below questions do not have prescribed answers - let these answers be led by the kids.

Question 4: Have you ever had an experience where you feel like God has spoken to you from reading something in the Bible? Ask the kids to share their experiences.

Question 5: What do you think are some of the obstacles and challenges we can face in hearing God speak to us? E.g. not knowing enough of what Scripture says about God and His character, too much busyness in our lives, not actually believing that He wants to speak to us, fear of being disappointed or rejected by God, etc.

Question 6: We need to find the space and time during our days to quieten ourselves and allow God to speak to us. What are you going to do this week to put this into action?

Word of the Day

Revelation

Verse of the Day

“And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, “This is the way, walk in it,” when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left.” - Isaiah 30:21 (ESV)

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SESSION 11

WHO'S THE BOSS?

God & **Me** & Us

Focus Point

God is the ultimate authority. We need to honour God, our parents and our leaders because they were put in place by God.

The Key Truths

This session seeks to give a Godly view of authority and correct some of the misconceptions and misbeliefs of authority that we may have. From the beginning of time, when Adam and Eve first sinned, they chose not to submit to God's authority but chose their own way.

Using scriptures from the Old and New Testaments, this session shows that to honour those over us in authority, is not only the right thing to do but it also carries with it blessings - both in this world and for eternity.

Scriptures to Consider

- **Hebrews 13:17 (NIV)** - *"Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account. Do this so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no benefit to you."*

Submission to our leaders is God's requirement for His Church. Jesus calls us His friends if we keep His commandments, just like He kept His Father's commandments. We choose to submit to authority or not. Each of us will be held accountable for the choices that we have made.

- **Ephesians 6:1 (NIV)** - *"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right."*

Obedience of children to their parents is described by Paul as the *"right"* thing to do. God expects all Christian children to love and obey their parents. Romans 1 tells us that being *"disobedient to our parents"* can bring God's wrath or anger, so He sees obedience to them as important - therefore we need to see it as important.

Group Discussion Questions

Question 1: If I am never able to do what I want to do, how am I supposed to be happy in life?

Answer: If I am a child of God who has been bought with a price (1 Corinthians 6:19b-20a), I would want to do what pleases Jesus, because He paid such a huge price for me.

The more that I try to do what pleases Him, the more the joy, which the Holy Spirit brings to me, will flood my life. Being in a close relationship with Jesus, through the Holy Spirit, brings joy, which is better than happiness! Joy is internal whereas happiness is external and depends on what is happening around us. When we submit to the Holy Spirit, He will help us to be obedient even when it is hard.

Question 2: What are the benefits of obeying and submitting to our leaders?

Answer: We come under their protection. God will hold us accountable for how we listen to them and follow them and He will ask them how they led us. God has given them gifts and wisdom to lead us so when we obey them, there is blessing that comes to us, simply by doing that. Living as obedient children invites the presence and peace of God into our lives.

Question 3: Is it ever the right thing to do to disobey our leaders?

Answer: When anyone in leadership over us tells us to do or say something that the Bible clearly teaches is sin, we have to choose whether to obey them or to obey God. In Acts 4, we read that Peter and John were called before the Jewish rulers and elders after they had healed a lame man in the Name of Jesus. The Jewish rulers instructed the two Apostles not to teach others about Jesus but the two told the rulers to judge for themselves whether it was right to listen to them, or to listen to God.

If our leaders ask us to do something that we find difficult or don't understand, we can ask them to explain and tell them we are struggling with it. Our leaders will help us seek the truth in God's Word, because that is always the final truth.

Question 4: We sometimes see people in the Church being disobedient to their leaders. How are those people held to account for their disobedience?

Answer: We need to remember that when we disobey our leaders, we are actually disobeying Jesus, because He told us to obey our leaders, and our leaders are listening to Jesus as to how to lead us.

If we don't willingly submit to our leaders, then our hearts are rebellious. We need to repent of being rebellious, otherwise we could face discipline.

In Matthew 18:15-17 Jesus says that if someone intentionally, and continually commits sin, that they should be put out of the church and be treated as someone who is not saved. This is only done by elders and is done to stop sin from spreading through the whole church like a small amount of yeast spreads through a whole batch of bread dough (1 Corinthians 5:6-7).

Word of the Day

Submit

Verse of the Day

"You are my friends if you do what I command you." – John 15:14 (ESV)

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SESSION 12

MY WAY OR THE HIGH WAY

God&Me&Us

Focus Point

Walking alone leaves us vulnerable. But if we are accountable to our leaders, there is safety.

The Key Truths

Ever since Adam and Eve gave in to satan's temptation and made the choice to do things their own way - irrespective of what God had instructed them to do - human beings have naturally chosen to sin. None of us were taught how to sin. The dual focus of this session has to do with the problem of individualism; doing things our own way, as well as the need to remain in fellowship with, and accountable to, other believers in the fellowship of the local Church - helping one another in our walk with Jesus. Someone trying to walk alone can easily stumble and fall into error. But a brother who is humble and walks with others is less likely to fall, and if they do, those they walk with can lift them up.

This session makes clear the truth that we cannot serve our own interests while saying that we follow Jesus. When we follow Jesus we live to serve others. Our choice in this matter will determine whether our Christian faith will bear good fruit for God's Kingdom or not.

Scriptures to Consider

- **John 8:34 (ESV)** - *"Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin."*

Jesus told the Jews who had followed Him that "everyone who practises sin is a slave to sin." Whether we like to acknowledge it or not, all of us are slaves to something.

- **Romans 6:6-14 (ESV)** - *"We know that our old self was crucified with Him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has died has been set free from sin. Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with Him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over Him. For the death He died He died to sin, once for all, but the life He lives He lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus."*

Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace."

Because our old sinful selves were crucified on the cross with Jesus, (v.6) we no longer need to be slaves to sin. Sin cannot have power over us unless we give satan that power by the choices that we make (vv.12-13). When we commit our lives to Jesus, sin is no longer our master (v.14) - we cease to be slaves of sin

Group Discussion Questions

Question 1: Surely I am not being a slave to sin if I do my own thing every now and then? Doesn't being a slave to something, or someone, mean that you are following that way all the time?

Answer: We need to remind ourselves what Jesus said about the impossibility of serving two totally opposite masters. Our allegiance cannot be to both - it's one or the other. However, if we do sin and we are willing to confess and repent, God is willing to forgive us.

Question 2: Sometimes it can feel really easy to do things God's way and sometimes it can feel really difficult. What do you think causes the difference?

Answer: Explain how this is dependent on the position of our hearts. If we are focussed on, and in love with, Jesus, then serving Him becomes easier.

Use this example to help explain. Have you ever seen a movie where a guy is so in love with his girlfriend that he is willing to do ANYTHING for her, even things that he normally hates doing? He doesn't care what anyone else thinks about him, just so long as he can please his girl! When we love God with all our hearts, living as He wants us to live becomes a joy, not a heavy burden.

Question 3: If love is not just a feeling, but also an action, how can I grow in my love for God, and show Him how much I love Him?

Answer: Jesus told the rich young ruler, *"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."* (ESV) That means that with everything that I think, do, or feel, I can and should love God.

When we surrender to the Holy Spirit, He helps us to live lives that please God and His love flows through us. When we love each other, the Bible says that other people will recognise us as being followers of Jesus.

Word of the Day

Cross

Verse of the Day

“...let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith.” - Hebrews 12:1-2 (ESV)

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SESSION 13

CREATION CREATOR

God&Me&Us

Focus Point

God is not created, but He himself made everything and there is amazing evidence for a Creator.

The Key Truths

Did God really make everything and is there evidence to prove it? Using the argument from design, and studying the scriptures that point to our creator - God - this episode establishes a firm foundation for belief in God as creator; an intelligent designer who is also a personal loving God, fully invested in His creation. Nothing came to be that wasn't made by Him, through Him, and for Him.

"Every manifestation of design, which existed in the watch, exists in the works of nature." - William Paley (1743 - 1805)

Scriptures to Consider

- **Genesis 1:1 (ESV)** - *"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth."*
- **Exodus 20:11a (NLT)** - *"For in six days the LORD made the heavens, the earth, the sea, and everything in them..."*

Group Discussion Questions

Question 1: If God created everything, does that mean everything belongs to Him? What else does it mean?

Answer: *"All things have been created through Him and for Him"* (Colossians 1:16, NIV). The world was created by God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, through Jesus, for the glory of God. Everything belongs to Him, and that's why He is in control of everything and sets the 'laws' for everything.

Question 2: What evidence of design have you seen in creation? What does that tell you about God?

Answer: *“The heavens proclaim the glory of God. The skies display His craftsmanship”* (Psalm 19:1, NLT). Everything in creation tells us something about God. The seemingly infinite stars tell us how big He is. The endless burning energy of the sun tells us about His power. The fact that everything has a purpose, even if we don’t understand it yet, tells us how wise God is. He is totally unique and holy. He loves what He created.

Question 3: Do you believe God has a purpose for your life? Do you know what that purpose?

Answer: *“For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do”* (Ephesians 2:10, NIV). God has assigned things for us to do. First, to love God in our worship, to give Him the glory in our lives, and finally, to love our neighbour by serving them with our unique gifts (Matthew 22:37-39). Beyond that, we can serve God in many different ways.

Word of the Day

Creation

Verse of the Day

“Through Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made.” - John 1:3 (NIV)

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SESSION 14

MONKEY DAD?

God&Me&Us

Focus Point

The world teaches that we are descended from monkeys.
Evidence for why this isn't true.

The Key Truths

This episode dismantles the misled theory that humans appeared on this earth by a random process of unguided evolution, using the argument from irreducible complexity. This argument claims that there is no such thing as a "simple cell", and explores the impossibility of a creation of life without life. Finally, we look at the creation account in Genesis, and how all of creation declares the wonder of God! We see Him in all that He has created - and because He created us, we have value, and our lives have purpose.

"In the science, evolution is a theory about changes; in the myth it is a fact about improvements."
- C S Lewis (1898 - 1963)

Scriptures to Consider

- **Genesis 2:7 (NIV)** - *"Then the Lord God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being."*
- **Colossians 1:15-17 (NIV)** - *"The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For in Him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together."*

Group Discussion Questions

Question 1: Do you believe humans were specially created by God? What does it mean to be 'created in His image'?

Answer: *"In the image of God He created them; male and female He created them"* (Genesis 1:27). It is ok to question the things you're taught in school, especially when it seems to contradict the things that God has said in the Bible. To be created in God's image means that we have a spirit. This is different from any other part of creation, and sadly it has been ruined by sin, so it needs to be redeemed.

Question 2: Why is believing we are a special creation by God, better than believing we are descended from monkeys?

Answer: Monkeys were not given authority by God. However, the Bible tells us, *"You [God] made them [us humans] only a little lower than God and crowned them [that's us] with glory and honor. You gave them charge of everything you made, putting all things under their authority"* (Psalm 8:5-6, NLT).

Our right to rule the earth comes from God, who made everything. We also live by values and choice, not by instincts like animals do, which means that we have free will..

Question 3: You have been uniquely created by God, in His own image and likeness (Genesis 1:27). What does that say about how God sees you?

Answer: God sees His own image when He looks at us - yet we are broken and dirty, because of our sin. God loves and values what He created, and wants to bring us back to being fully like Him again.

"For He chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight. In love He predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with His pleasure and will - to the praise of His glorious grace, which He has freely given us in the One He loves." - Ephesians 1:4-6 (NIV)

Word of the Day

Evolution

Verse of the Day

"Then the Lord God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being." - Genesis 2:7 (NIV)

Notes

A series of horizontal dotted lines for taking notes.

SESSION 15

ONE BLOOD

God&Me&Us

Focus Point

When we realise that we all come from Adam and Eve, it changes the way we think about and respond to people who are different to us, discrimination, and even racism.

The Key Truths

Referencing Acts 17:26 – which speaks of our descent from Adam, through Noah – this episode shows how every man and woman alive are related to one another. Looking at the science of DNA, blood, and organ transplants, we show how science confirms that the cosmetic and ethnic differences between people of different nations are only skin deep. We are a lot more alike than some believe. Because of this, racism is foolishness built on lies. Xenophobia does not belong amongst Christians. We are all related – and in Christ, we regain that sense of common family.

Scriptures to Consider

- **Acts 17:26 (NLT)** – *“From one man He created all the nations throughout the whole earth. He decided beforehand when they should rise and fall, and He determined their boundaries.”*
- **Galatians 3:28 (NLT)** – *“There is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male and female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus.”*

Group Discussion Questions

Question 1: What does reconciliation mean?

Answer: To reconcile is to restore to friendship or harmony. *“...[God] reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation”* (2 Corinthians 5:18, NIV). It is to love all people, from any background. It often means that we need to forgive as Jesus forgives, or that there needs to be restoration if there has been wrongdoing. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you (Ephesians 4:32, NIV).

Question 2: Have you received the Holy Spirit and the gift of tongues? Would you like to?

Answer: Jesus said, “...you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses” (Acts 1:8, NLT). Tongues goes beyond human language and understanding

Word of the Day

Xenophobia

Verse of the Day

“From one man He created all the nations throughout the whole earth. He decided beforehand when they should rise and fall, and He determined their boundaries.” – Acts 17:26 (NLT)

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SESSION 16

THE MAN GOD

God&Me&Us

Focus Point

History shows that Jesus really existed. And His resurrection shows us He really is God.

The Key Truths

Using 1 Corinthians 15:3-7, the oldest creed found in scripture and manuscript evidence from the ancient world, this session proves beyond a doubt that there really was a person called Jesus of Nazareth, who lived, ministered and died in first century Palestine. It also uses the same evidence to show there is remarkable proof that this same Jesus rose from the dead. This is good news for us, because His resurrection paved the way for our resurrection.

Scriptures to Consider

- **John 1:14 (NIV)** - *“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”*
- **Colossians 2:9 (NIV)** - *“For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form.”*
- **Philippians 2:6-7 (NIV)** - *“Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, He made Himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant being made in human likeness.”*

Group Discussion Questions

Question 1: Why did Jesus have to come to earth as a ‘man’?

Answer: Only God, who is perfect in every way, could take on the sin of the world. To do this, He had to become a human, be tempted in every way and still be perfect before taking on our sin.

Question 2: What does it mean for us, and how does it help us, that He came to earth as a man?

Answer: Jesus showed us how to live. We have an example to follow and we know that He understands the things that we go through as His followers because He has faced them all Himself. *“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are – yet he did not sin.”* (Hebrews 4:15, NIV).

Question 3: What are the eternal results of Jesus coming to earth?

Answer: When Jesus rose from the dead He overcame death forever, which means that we have an eternal hope. If we’ve trusted in Him to forgive our sins, we can also live forever.

Word of the Day

Martyr

Verse of the Day

“We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And this fellowship of ours is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ.” – 1 John 1:3 (NLT)

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SESSION 17

21st CENTURY JESUS

God & Me & Us

Focus Point

Although Jesus lived 2000 years ago, He is alive today, and we can know Him personally.

The Key Truths

2000 years later, how can I personally know Jesus Christ?

Using scriptures that speak about knowing God, not just knowing about Him, this episode introduces the idea of a personal relationship with God. Like a relationship with a friend at school or church, this will mean spending time together, having two-way conversations together, and sharing our experiences of God with other people in our life.

Scriptures to Consider

- **Matthew 16:15 (NIV)** - Jesus' question: *"But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?"*
- **Matthew 16:16 (ESV)** - Peter's response: *"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."*
- **John 14:6 (ESV)** - *"I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."*

Group Discussion Questions

Question 1: *"...But who do you say that I am?"* (Matthew 16:15, NIV). Ask the preteens how they would answer this question.

Answer: Guide the preteens to express how God has revealed Himself to them in their own lives - through their experience, and in His Word.

Question 2: What do you think are some of the main things that Jesus said about Himself that causes people to hate and reject Him?

Answer:

- That He is the only way to the Father. *"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."* (John 14:6, NIV).
- That you need to die to yourself to follow Jesus. *"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me."* (Galatians 2:20, NIV).
- That we need to repent and change our hearts. Many people like the idea that God loves us, just as we are, but reject the idea that He expects us to repent and change.

Question 3: There are a lot of theories about who Jesus was. What have you heard people say?

The quote from C.S. Lewis said that Jesus was maybe just a nice teacher or even a mad man. 1 Timothy 2:5-6 (NLT) says *"There is one God and one Mediator who can reconcile God and humanity - the man Christ Jesus. He gave His life to purchase freedom for everyone."*

Who does the Bible say He is and what did He come to do? What does this mean for us?

Answer: Jesus has made a way for us to be back in relationship with God, and is the "go-between" or mediator between us and God. For this reason we don't have to live in fear anymore and we can walk with Him, and follow Him, every day. We also have hope.

Question 3: How does it make you feel to know that there is overwhelming historical evidence of Jesus' life, death and resurrection?

Answer: Ask the preteens to share if what they've learnt during this episode has encouraged them? And if so, why?

Word of the Day

Christ

Verse of the Day

"There is one God and one Mediator who can reconcile God and humanity - the man Christ Jesus. He gave His life to purchase freedom for everyone." - 1 Timothy 2:5-6 (NLT).

Notes

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SESSION 18

THE HEAD

God&Me&Us

Focus Point

Jesus loves His church, He leads His church, and He is coming back for her soon.

The Key Truths

We look at Jesus and how He is revealed in Revelation and how He relates to His church.

Using scriptures that show Jesus as the author and perfecter of our faith, this episode establishes Jesus, not man, as the head of the church, and shows the importance of a corporate experience of God to complement our personal relationship with Him. It looks at the picture of the temple, and the bride as ways of understanding how all of us can enjoy the same relationship with God, both individually and together.

Scriptures to Consider

- **Colossians 1:18 (NLT)** - *“Christ is also the head of the church, which is His body. He is the beginning, supreme over all who rise from the dead. So He is first in everything.”*
- **2 Corinthians 11:2 (ESV)** - *“For I feel a divine jealousy for you, since I betrothed you to one husband, to present you as a pure virgin to Christ.”*
- **Hebrews 12:1-2 (ESV)** - *“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.”*
- **2 Peter 3:10 (ESV)** - *“But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.”*

Group Discussion Questions

Question 1: What does it mean for us that Jesus is the head of the church?

Answer: He is in control and over everything in the church, even the leaders. Everyone submits to Him, we know that He builds His church and the gates of Hell will not prevail (Matthew 16:8, ESV). He loves the church and will return for her when she is ready.

Question 2: How should we live, knowing that we will meet Jesus face to face one day?

Answer: We can be assured of eternal life if we have accepted Him and His forgiveness into our lives. We should live lives that are pleasing to Him by being obedient to His commands, living according to the leading of the Holy Spirit and being faithful to the end. This means running the race that God has given each of us and being disciplined.

Question 3: What is accountability, why is it important, and how can we apply it to our lives?

Answer: To be accountable often means that we take responsibility, but in church it means that we all need others to help us grow and become more like Jesus. God put us in a family, in a church so that we can walk together, help each other, encourage one another and even correct each other where necessary. It is something that we choose to do and need to willingly open our lives to our leaders and those around us so that we can grow and learn.

Word of the Day

Accountability

Verse of the Day

“Christ is also the head of the church, which is His body. He is the beginning, supreme over all who rise from the dead. So He is first in everything.” – Colossians 1:18 (NLT).

Notes

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SESSION 19

GOD'S WORD

God&Me&Us

Focus Point

The Bible is God's inspired Word, and it has been remarkably preserved, just as it was originally written.

The Key Truths

Using evidence for the inspiration and preservation of Scripture, and that the Scriptures describe the process of how they are written, this episode confidently presents the Bible as the authentic Word of God. Because the Bible is God's Word, and God is to whom we give account for our lives, this makes the Bible a very important basis for how we live our lives.

Scriptures to Consider

- **Exodus 31:18 (NLT)** - *"When the LORD finished speaking with Moses on Mount Sinai, He gave Him the two stone tablets inscribed with the terms of the covenant, written by the finger of God."*
- **2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NIV)** - *"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."*

Group Discussion Questions

Question 1: What does it mean that Scripture is 'God-breathed'?

Answer: God is not a creature in the way we are, who breathes to stay alive. When the Bible talks about the breath of God, it is most times speaking about His Spirit. In second Timothy, Paul is saying that the Holy Spirit was the one who gave the writers of Scripture the words to record and that He inspired the content. The words of Scripture are not human ideas or wisdom, but are the very thoughts and words of God, given by Him to the authors.

Question 2: If the Holy Spirit wrote the books of the Bible, why are they in different styles and genres?

Answer: The Holy Spirit didn't write the Bible, He inspired it, and that is an important difference. The Holy Spirit gave each author what they should write, but the books of the Bible still contain stylistic differences unique to each writer. Each author wrote in their own literary voice the Truth the Holy Spirit gave them. Each of us will express ourselves in our own way. This doesn't change the Truth or fact, just the way in which it is communicated.

Question 3: So, is it possible the Bible contains mistakes?

Answer: No, that is not possible, because the Holy Spirit guided the whole process, so the Truth of God is preserved for us in Scripture.

The process of copying it from one example to another has also been carefully monitored so the actual text has not been allowed to be passed on with errors in it.

Question 4: So does the Bible tell us everything?

Answer: No, not at all. There are many things the Bible does not speak about. It does not tell us about the history of countries that do not feature in the story of Israel and the church. It does not focus on physical descriptions of people, like Jesus, or on extensive political histories that are not important to the story. The Bible does not tell us everything, but the Bible tells us enough. It tells us enough so that we can be saved and come into relationship with God through His Son. It tells us enough so that we can live lives that please God. It tells us enough so that we can know how to tell others about Jesus and see them come to know Him too.

Word of the Day

Scripture

Verse of the Day

"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness." – 2 Timothy 3:16 (NIV)

Notes

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SESSION 20

Daily Bread

God&Me&Us

Focus Point

The Bible is our spiritual food. Some practical tips on why and how we read the Bible, so that we can understand it, and it can change us.

The Key Truths

Using personal stories and the Scriptures that focus on the practical usefulness of Scripture, this episode shows why the Bible is called a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. It encourages the junior youth to study and feed on the Word so they can grow by it and apply it to their everyday lives.

Scriptures to Consider

- **2 Corinthians 4:4-6 (ERV)** – *“The ruler of this world has blinded the minds of those who don’t believe. They cannot see the light of the Good News – the message about the divine greatness of Christ. Christ is the one who is exactly like God.”*
- **John 17:17 (ESV)** – *“Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.”*

Group Discussion Questions

Question 1: How do you think reading the Bible compares to something like eating bread each day?

Answer: It provides nourishment for our bodies and also isn’t a once-off thing. Just as we are hungry each day and need to eat, so it is with our spiritual lives. God’s Word feeds us and helps us to grow even when we don’t see it at work. We also need to get fresh bread each day. God will give us what we need for that day.

Question 2: Think about how it feels when you eat lots of junk food and fizzy, sugary, cooldrink. How does it usually make your body feel afterward?

Answer: It affects your body negatively and you feel tired, sleepy, sick etc. It feels good for a few minutes while you're eating it but afterward you realize that it didn't help your body at all. You end up feeling worse. It doesn't give your body the nourishment and vitamins that it needs.

When we don't eat for a while, or eat the wrong type of food for a while, our bodies start to get sick or weak. Our spiritual lives are the same. If we are feeding our minds and spirits with an "unhealthy" diet of things that are not in God's Word, then it will affect the way we think, and the way we live.

Question 3: How do you feel about reading & trying to understand the Bible? Is it easy, confusing or hard for you?

Answer: We sometimes feel intimidated by the Bible because it feels too big or too complicated and we are not sure where to start reading and we don't know what it all means! Allow the preteens to respond as honestly as possible and not just give you the "right" answers.

Encourage them that because the Holy Spirit inspired God's Word and is with them when they read it, they can be assured that He will help them to understand it.

Question 4: Group challenge: Ask some of the kids to try their best to summarise what they think the main story and message of the Bible is. Give them the freedom to share whatever comes to mind.

Answer: A: Here is a high-level summary of some of the main themes:

- Creation
- Fall of man
- Sin and death in the world (the problem)
- Israel as God's people
- The promise of a Saviour
- Jesus appearing and His mission
- The cross as the solution for mankind's sin
- The church as God's people
- The final expectation of Jesus' return

Word of the Day

Sanctification

Verse of the Day

"Your word is truth, sanctify them in your word." – John 17:17

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SESSION 21

GOD'S SMUGGLERS

God&Me&Us

Focus Point

Many people have risked and given their lives so that Christians around the world can have the Bible in their own language.

The Key Truths

The Bible is vital to the teaching of correct doctrine. We read in Acts 2:42 that the believers devoted themselves to "...the Apostles' teaching..." They were teaching what Jesus had taught them and this is now recorded for us in the Bible. We cannot get to know our God without the Bible. For this reason, people throughout history have been willing to give their lives to enable others to be able to read God's Word.

This episode explains that, despite numerous attempts over the centuries to rid the world of the Bible, none of them have succeeded. It focuses on early translators and the lengths that some went to in order to provide Bibles for others in their own language. The men and women who risked and gave their lives knew that God's Word was life to those who found it. We too should value what we have and not take the Word of God for granted.

Scriptures to Consider

- **Colossians 1:13 (NIV)** - *"For He has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son He loves."*
- **Romans 1:17 (ESV)** - *"For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."*
- **Ephesians 6:13, 17 (NIV)** - *Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand."*
- Ephesians 6:13 (NIV)
- **Ephesians 6:17 (NIV)** - *"Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."*

Group Discussion Questions

Question 1: What makes the Bible so different from other books that people would risk their lives to get Bibles to others who don't have them?

Answer: It is the only book that tells people the Truth: that God the Father has made it possible for us to be taken out of the kingdom of darkness and placed into the Kingdom of His Son. It is only through His Son (Jesus) that we can be redeemed (bought back) and have our sins forgiven. It is the inspired Word of God so it is His very words to us. Satan wants to destroy the way God communicates with His people.

Question 2: Why have so many political leaders in countries and churches over the centuries done everything in their power to stop the Good News of the Bible from reaching their people?

Answer: The leaders of countries, and even some church leaders from many years ago who were corrupt, became very rich from the lies that they told the people. Many religious and political leaders around the world today know that if their people allow Jesus to become their King through faith in Him, they will lose their power over those people. The Bible teaches that we give our lives to Jesus first, and give up everything to follow Him. This is not good news for political leaders.

Question 3: Why did Brother Andrew not try to hide the Bibles that he was taking into Romania?

Answer: He knew that nothing that he could do would prevent the guard from seeing the Bibles. If God wanted him to take those Bibles to the Christians in Romania, He would have to do something miraculous - and He did! His trust was in God, He was obedient and faithful.

Question 4: How is it that, as we read the Bible, we are more able to stand strongly against evil and temptation?

Answer: Paul, in his letter to the church at Ephesus, said that, in order to stand firm, we need to put on the "*whole armour of God*" - no item should be left out. All the items except one are defensive items. The only **weapon** that we have is "*...the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God.*" As we read God's Word we are equipped to fight the lies and temptations that we face in our everyday life.

Word of the Day

Devoted

Verse of the Day

"And they devoted themselves to the Apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers." - Acts 2:42

SESSION 22

ETERNITY

God&Me&Us

Focus Point

God is the God of the past, now and forever. We explore how eternity works and why it matters.

The Key Truths

God is the God of now and forever. How does eternity work? Why does it matter?

Using Scriptures that explore eternity, how 'long' eternity is and God's view of time compared with ours, this episode brings the reality of eternity to the forefront, in a generation that lives very much for the present. This highlights the implications of eternity for our brief lives. When we see our lives as grass, here today and gone tomorrow, we realise how important investing into eternity is, while we still have the opportunity to do so.

Scriptures to Consider

- **Colossians 1:17 (ESV)** - *"And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together."*
- **Psalms 90:2 (NLT)** - *"Before the mountains were born, before you gave birth to the earth and the world, from beginning to end, you are God."*
- **Psalms 102:26-27 (ESV)** - *"Even they will perish, but You endure; And all of them will wear out like a garment; Like clothing You will change them and they will be changed. "But You are the same, And Your years will not come to an end."*

Group Discussion Questions

Question 1: Who can imagine what it would be like to live for 1000 years, or 10 000. What do we mean by eternal?

Answer: Guide the preteens to consider how much they have experienced in the last year of their lives and then to multiply that out by a 100, 1000 and 10 000. Stress that even though God created us to live for eternity, it is not something that our human minds can really conceptualize properly.

Question 2: What do you think we will do in eternity? Will we just sing and worship, or will we work and grow old?

Answer: If we are followers of Jesus, when we die we will go to be with Him. This is the start of forever, and living with Him in a perfect state. We will worship and we will see God. We will see Him fully and completely for the first time. This means that we will have complete understanding. We will also have work to do for Him, but it will not have the difficulties that work has here on earth with sin. We will never grow old, sick, or tired.

Question 3: If this life on earth is so very short, compared to eternity, should that impact how we live?

Answer: Many people live for today only, but that is so short-sighted. We need to constantly remind ourselves that this life is very short in comparison to the limitless eternity that we will live.

We should invest in eternity and focus on the joys and rewards we will receive. This helps us to be motivated to do right and also helps us in times of difficulty and suffering, because no matter how hard things get, it is only for a very short time compared to eternity.

The decisions that we make now, and the way we live in this life, have consequences in the life to come. This means that when we weigh up our options and choices, we should carefully consider what we are going to do.

Word of the Day

Omnipresent

Verse of the Day

"[God] alone is immortal and lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To Him be honour and might for ever. Amen." – 1 Timothy 6:16 (NIV)

SESSION 23

EYES UP

God&Me&Us

Focus Point

In a world that only lives for today, followers of Jesus are those who live for eternity.

The Key Truths

In this episode we are encouraged to live looking forward, and live for eternity. We are in the world and not of it. As a follower of Jesus I may often feel like I don't fit in.

Continuing to look at eternity, but now with more emphasis on our own mortality and how we view eternity, this episode encourages us to store up treasure in heaven rather than on earth. When we do not feel like we fit in, we can take comfort in knowing we are sojourners (temporary residents) and aliens on this earth, but Jesus has gone to prepare a place for us where we will be truly at home for all eternity. Our home is with God, just as His dwelling place will one day be with us.

Scriptures to Consider

- **John 5:24 (ESV)** - *"Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes Him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life."*
- **Luke 18:29-30 (ESV)** - *"And he said to them, "Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, who will not receive many times more in this time, and in the age to come eternal life."*
- **Matthew 25:44-46 (ESV)** - *"Then they also will answer, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?' Then He will answer, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.' And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."*

Group Discussion Questions

Question 1: How do we choose whether we spend our eternity with, or without God?

Answer: If we accept Jesus as Lord of our lives in this life, by repenting of our sin, then we will have His presence with us as long as we live on earth, and then enter into His presence for eternity as well.

Question 2: If we serve God, will we receive rewards in this life as well as eternity?

Answer: The way we live our lives on this earth has an impact on our life in eternity. We will receive rewards both in this life and in eternity, but the rewards in this life might not be the kind of things the world is looking for. The world values money and health, but these are never really enough, and they are not the things that God values. People always have some and then want more.

The rewards God gives are peace and contentment, and these are always enough. Not only that, but when we get to heaven then we'll see that the more we loved God and served others on earth, the greater the riches stored up for us will be!

Question 3: What examples can we think of in our lives that we would change, or do more of, in order to prepare for eternity?

Answer: Lead the preteens to think of practical examples of things in their lives that they spend large amounts of time or money on, but that they won't be able to take with them into the next life. Then think of practical examples of things that can be taken into the next life. (Hint: people are the only things that can go with us into the next life, not possessions.)

Word of the Day

Treasure

Verse of the Day

"...but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" - Matthew 6: 20 – 21 (ESV)

SESSION 24

OUR MISSION

God&Me&Us

Focus Point

Jesus said to go into all the world and preach the Gospel. We need to tell them about eternity and the Good News of Jesus.

The Key Truths

Go into all the world. Speak of eternity. Tell them that today is not all there is. Preach the Gospel, love your neighbour, glorify God.

Using scriptures that speak of the commission to preach the gospel, the need for people to hear so they can be saved, and the great power God has given us in His Holy Spirit, this episode focuses on the command of Jesus to go into all creation and spread the Good News of the Kingdom. We cannot selfishly hold on to what we have learned, but we have to share it with a lost and dying world, who, without our witness, will continue to move towards a lost eternity.

Scriptures to Consider

- **Matthew 5:15-16 (NIV)** - *“Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”*
- **Matthew 28:19-20 (NIV)** - *“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”*
- **Romans 1:16 (NIV)** - *“For I am not ashamed of the Gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.”*
- **Romans 10:14-15 (ESV)** - *“How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in Him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!”*

Group Discussion Questions

Question 1: What is the Gospel and why is it good news?

Answer: It is the good news that Jesus paid the price for our sin, which was death and which we were not able to pay, so that if we repent and turn from our sin, we can be forgiven and declared not guilty. It is good news because it means that we can now live an eternity in relationship with Jesus, rather than an eternity separated from Him.

Question 2: Who do you know that you can share the Gospel with?

Answer: Remind the preteens that people who are living “good” or moral lives will not qualify for an eternity with Jesus. Only those who have yielded their lives to Him. Each of them should know someone who falls into this category.

Question 3: What things make it hard to share the Gospel?

Answer: Talk about situational and social/emotional factors. At this age, peer acceptance becomes even more important to them and can be an inhibiting factor.

Question 4: What is your story/testimony?

Answer: Help the preteens develop their own testimony and practice sharing with each other a tool for evangelism. Focus on what God has done and the change He had brought about, not the depravity of their behaviour, or lives before knowing Him. A story of salvation should point towards Jesus and bring Him honour..

Word of the Day

Authority

Verse of the Day

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations...” - Matthew 28:18 (NIV)

Notes

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SESSION 25

COMING SOON

God&Me&Us

Focus Point

Although Jesus promised to come back, and He gave us signs so we could know when to expect Him, we need to stay alert!

The Key Truths

The truth is that Jesus is coming back. As that time comes closer, we must not be deceived or misled by false ideas and fake news. Don't be alarmed, but be prepared and alert for His second coming. Don't let our hope be dimmed, but place it in the rock of Jesus. This episode discusses what the signs are that point to Jesus' return and how we can stay alert.

Scriptures to Consider

- **Romans 8:19 (NLT)** - *"For all creation is waiting eagerly for that future day when God will reveal who His children really are."*
- **Matthew 24:30-31 (NLT)** - *"Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He will send out His angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."*
- **Hebrews 10:23-25 (NLT)** - *"Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching."*

Group Discussion Questions

Question 1: How do you know if something you hear or read about God is true? How do you know if what God says about you is true?

Answer: God gave us the Bible, which tells us about God, and conveys what He thinks of us. He also gives us His Holy Spirit to guide us. John 14:16 says: *“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.”*

It is important, especially in the last days, to measure everything we hear or read against what God’s Word says, as that is what determines truth.

Question 2: What signs of Jesus’ second coming do you think we see in the world today?

Answer: (Read Matthew 24:3-14) Wars, rumours of wars, nation against nation, kingdom against kingdom, famines, earthquakes. Take a look at the news from the last week and see which of these have featured. Many of these things have been happening for a long time, so we can’t know for certain when Jesus will return but we do know that He will return.

Question 3: What do you think heaven and the new earth will be like?

Answer: Revelation 21 describes it as a beautiful place, made of precious gems and gold, and that God will dwell there. A place where God dwells will have no tears, no mourning and no night. Only God’s people, who belong to Him, will dwell in it. We will live in perfect unity with God forever.

Word of the Day

Rejoice

Verse of the Day

“And so, dear friends, while you are waiting for these things to happen, make every effort to be found living peaceful lives that are pure and blameless in His sight.” - 2 Peter 3:14 (NLT)

Notes

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