

Unit 8



A LEADER'S AIM & PRAYER

I am discipling young people so that they can say, 'I acknowledge Jesus as my Saviour and Lord.'

I know that they will watch my life. Help me to live so that they only see Jesus in me.

I will study God's word so I can present its great truths faithfully and well.

SAFETY AND CARE

Carelessness is the opposite of loving. True care will be anticipatory (thinking ahead and being responsible), pro-active (their concerns are my concerns) and personal. The most important thing is not the program – it's the person. So keep your ministry safe! Don't assume that everything will be OK – build safety and care into your youth ministry.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many people have contributed to this publication as writers, editors, layout and design specialists and proof readers and we acknowledge their expertise and input. To God be the glory!

We would like to especially acknowledge the Territorial Youth and Children's Ministries, The Salvation Army, Australia Eastern Territory for their resourcing.

Various versions of the Bible have been used including the Good News Bible (GNB), Contemporary English Version (CEV) and the New International Version (NIV).

Printed May 2009

(Reference Part B 2005 & 2009 = Unit 2 AUE)



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LEADER'S NOTES

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to TRIBE! You have chosen a great resource for young people in the 12 to 16 age group who are meeting in small groups within The Salvation Army. Some of your group may be enrolled Corps Cadets and others may be young people not connected with any church. They are attending TRIBE for various reasons and you are holding a tool in your hands that can make an impact on their lives.

In this handbook you will find 20 sessions you can use at any time and in any order. Have a look at the contents page and think about how often you meet and any other events that may be on in the next 6 months that will cut into your group time – things like school holidays, corps events and divisional events. A few of the sessions may go together and others are stand-alone ones. So be flexible and work out how many of the sessions you can fit into a 6 month block and which ones are most suitable for your group.

Each *TRIBE* session has several sections that take you through the teaching material. They are written to last about 45 to 60 minutes and always provide more material than you can use, so you need to carefully plan and prepare.

* **AIM**

What the session is focussing on is spelt out in the aim. Once you are clear about aims, you can prepare in a way that will reinforce the purpose of the session.

* **OBJECTIVES**

These are for your referral only and reflect desired learning outcomes. The objectives state the ways in which the young people's thinking, attitudes or beliefs might be modified or reinforced. Sometimes you may want to concentrate on only one or two objectives and at other times you will be able to work on them all.

* **FROM THE BIBLE**

These will be the main passages included in the *TRIBE* lesson. You need to check out these verses to find out what God has to say on the topic.

* **INSIGHTS FOR THE LEADER**

This is information, advice and so on that may be useful in your preparation and presentation. Sufficient material will be given in order that you have no difficulty in knowing how to answer any questions raised during the session, what the session is about and how to go about conducting the session. Sometimes this is supplemented with side column boxes with LEADER TIPS or NOTES that give specific information.

❖ **GETTING STARTED**

By using one of these warm-up activities at the start of the session, you'll help the group unwind. It will be based around an activity connected with the theme of the session. Sometimes this will lead to a revision of previous work or it will prepare them to tune into the general theme of the session. Try to give a time limit on the starter. The young people should be able to tie this activity into the aim of the session and you can do this under the sub-heading 'Point to make'.

❖ **GOING DEEPER**

By exploring some of the different teaching approaches, you'll find out as a group what the topic is all about. Some of the main ideas will be suitable for large groups; some for small; some for older groups; some for younger groups; some to involve input and some to involve discussion. All should involve interaction. There will always be more teaching ideas suggested than there is time to use, **SO BE SELECTIVE AND FLEXIBLE!** Choose one or more of the teaching approaches, depending on what you want to accomplish. You may have some other ideas to add – just check that you are still true to the aim and objectives.

❖ **TAKING IT HOME**

By this brief summary of the teaching, the young people will be helped to look at how it applies to their living today. This segment also offers a challenge through the Get Involved and Grow strand for the young people to think about how they can do something practical that involves a response from them.

❖ **WORK SHEETS**

Photocopy these for the young people depending on whether they are juniors or seniors. The work sheets have specific activities that arise as part of the session and are a useful tool for feedback on whether you are getting the message across.

Well, now that you have a brief overview of the session format, pray, plan and prepare to lead your group through some exciting times. Think of your young people as unique persons, created and loved by a mighty God who desires the very best for them. As their leader you will want to build meaningful relationships with your group and use the best resources available to help shape their lives. There is help available for you through training and networking with other leaders through your Divisional Youth Secretary. We pray that God will equip you and lead you in this ministry.





GET INVOLVED AND GROW

An important part of nurturing any person in their understanding of the Christian faith is to help them see that Jesus expected us to listen and then obey by doing.

If you love me you will obey my commandments – John 14:15

A great challenge that every leader must present to those they are discipling is that they need to 'get involved' and be committed.

Because of its importance this strand of the TRIBE program is set out at the beginning of this Handbook and is called **GET INVOLVED AND GROW**.

A wide choice of challenges is presented so that every group may choose those that particularly suit their situation – country, city, small or large.

A Your Choice challenge is included because it is always exciting when a group sees a specific need and thinks of a way they can help.

As your group members grow in spiritual discernment you will be able to suggest that they take on a challenge that has appeared to be too difficult or demanding. This will give them the joy of knowing that they can do marvellous things in God's strength.

The challenges are divided into three sections:

1. Get involved in worship
2. Get involved in mission
3. Get involved in training for leadership

As each challenge is listed a short explanation is given for those that are not self explanatory. The suggestions are the same for each year. Following discussion with your group, aim to have each member accept five challenges from each section – every unit (or six months).

Nurturing young people so that they grow to be committed, active members of our corps community is a 'huge' task and one that you as a leader are taking on.

Seek out discipleship partners from soldiers in the corps who will uphold you with their faithful prayers and keep them informed of your needs.

IT WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE!





GET INVOLVED AND GROW IN MISSION (REACHING OUT IN SERVICE)

Motivation: (Matthew 25 :40 GNB) Whenever you did this for one of the least important brothers of mine, you did it for me.

- ❖ **HELP WITH OPEN-AIR OUTREACH**
- ❖ **BE AN ENCOURAGER**
(e.g. Write or phone somebody who is feeling a bit sad, or who should be thanked for a great job.)
- ❖ **TAKE PART IN THE RED SHIELD APPEAL**
- ❖ **BE INVOLVED WITH THE YOUTH GROUP**
- ❖ **PRAY FOR YOUR FRIENDS**
(Pray regularly for the specific needs that a friend has.)
- ❖ **CARE FOR OTHERS**
(Help someone with a disability with a task they find difficult to do.)
- ❖ **HELP WITH TODDLERS**
(If your corps runs a creche, take part as a helper.)
- ❖ **PARTICIPATE IN A SCHOOL GROUP**
(Find out if your school has any Christian gatherings and join one.)
- ❖ **HELP AT A COMMUNITY WELFARE CENTRE**
(for several hours)
- ❖ **BE INVOLVED WITH CAROLLING/ CHRISTMAS OUTREACH**
- ❖ **BE A FRIEND**
(Chat to a newcomer and introduce them around)
- ❖ **HELP ANOTHER CORPS**
(Be involved in leading a meeting at a smaller corps)
- ❖ **ACCOMPANY A COMMUNITY CARE MINISTRIES WORKER**
(on visitation at a special time such as Christmas, Mother's Day etc)
- ❖ **BRING A FRIEND WHO DOES NOT ATTEND THE ARMY ALONG TO A YOUTH GROUP**
- ❖ **HELP AT THE LOCAL SHOW**
(e.g. distribute literature, help on a stall)
- ❖ **BE A HELPFUL MEMBER OF YOUR FAMILY**
- ❖ **VISIT A NURSING HOME AS A MEMBER OF A GROUP**
- ❖ **HELP WITH OTHER APPEALS**
(e.g. Forty Hour Famine)
- ❖ **MAKE A POSTER FOR A SPECIAL EVENT AT YOUR CORPS**
- ❖ **SHARE A CHRISTIAN BOOK/VIDEO WITH A FRIEND**
- ❖ **DO AN UNEXPECTED FAVOUR FOR SOMEONE**
- ❖ **PREPARE INVITATIONS FOR A SPECIAL EVENT AND HELP GIVE THEM OUT**
- ❖ **YOUR CHOICE**





GET INVOLVED AND GROW IN WORSHIP

Motivation: (Psalm 100:1 GNB) Sing to the Lord, all the world! Worship the Lord with joy; come before him with happy songs

- ❖ **WORSHIP REGULARLY**
(By attendance and attitude)
- ❖ **DESCRIBE YOUR PERSONAL DEVOTIONS**
- ❖ **MEMORISE SCRIPTURE**
(Approximately 6 – 8 verses)
- ❖ **READ THE BIBLE IN A MEETING**
(Prepare beforehand and give the congregation time to find the passage)
- ❖ **REPORT ON HOW A WORSHIP SERVICE HELPED YOU**
- ❖ **REGULARLY WEAR THE CORRECT UNIFORM FOR THE SECTION YOU ARE IN**
- ❖ **TAKE PART IN A SMALL GROUP**
(Singing, playing an instrument, drama or creative dance)
- ❖ **LEAD A WORSHIP SEGMENT AT TRIBE**
(Use a song that helps you worship)
- ❖ **OPERATE THE AUDIO VISUAL EQUIPMENT**
(Overhead projector, Power Point presentations and so on – for four meetings, changing transparencies slides efficiently)
- ❖ **KEEP A PRAYER DIARY**
(List your prayers and tick them as they are answered)
- ❖ **TELL OTHERS WHAT GOD HAS DONE IN YOUR LIFE** (Spontaneous or prepared testimony)
- ❖ **GIVE A CHILDREN'S STORY USING A VISUAL AID**
- ❖ **DESIGN A PRAYER BOOK MARK**
(To help you remember the types of prayers we can pray)
- ❖ **TAKE PART IN A MUSICAL SECTION IN YOUR CORPS**
- ❖ **PRAY PUBLICLY IN A MEETING**
(Write out the prayer beforehand so that you can include all the things you should pray about)
- ❖ **CHOOSE SONGS AND CHORUSES**
(Select 4 – 5 that could be used in a worship service on a given theme)
- ❖ **SPEAK ON A GIVEN TOPIC**
(Have 2 weeks' preparation – use a Bible verse or talk on a famous Christian)
- ❖ **TAKE UP THE OFFERING**
(And explain why giving is a part of worship)
- ❖ **TAKE PART IN A SCRIPTURE PRESENTATION**
(Use drama, mime or creative dance or verse speaking with a visual presentation)
- ❖ **MEMORISE A SONG**
(Choose one with words that help you)
- ❖ **HELP WITH THE PA SYSTEM**
(Indoors or outdoors)
- ❖ **YOUR CHOICE**





GET INVOLVED AND GROW IN TRAINING FOR LEADERSHIP

Motivation: (1 Timothy 4:6 GNB) If you give these instructions to the brothers, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus.

- ❖ **LEADERSHIP IN THE COMMUNITY**
(Explain what responsibilities you hold e.g. class captain, prefect, monitor, team captain, patrol leader)
- ❖ **HELP TO ORGANISE A MONEY RAISING EFFORT FOR SELF DENIAL/OWSOMS**
- ❖ **LEAD A SONG IN A PUBLIC MEETING**
- ❖ **HELP THE JUNIOR SOLDIER SERGEANT**
(Assist with bronze level Juniors Soldiers for four weeks)
- ❖ **HELP WITH STREET MINISTRY**
(Hand out literature or help on a stall)
- ❖ **ASSIST A LOCAL OFFICER**
(For one month)
- ❖ **REPORT ON THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A LOCAL OFFICER**
- ❖ **COMPLETE SOME TRAINING IN YOUTH OR CHILDREN'S WORK**
- ❖ **TEACH A CHORUS TO YOUR YOUTH GROUP OR TRIBE GROUP**
- ❖ **ORGANISE AN OUTING FOR YOUR TRIBE GROUP**
(e.g. to a Christian concert)
- ❖ **DEVELOP AN AWARENESS OF OFFICERSHIP**
(Recognise that God calls people to serve Him in full-time work)
- ❖ **HELP TO PLAN A CHRISTMAS PROGRAM**
(e.g. for a nursing home and be involved in presenting it)
- ❖ **LEAD CHORUSES IN A MEETING**
- ❖ **ASSIST WITH THE SETTING UP OR PACKING UP**
(In any section for several weeks)
- ❖ **REPORT ON HOW OUR OFFERING IS USED**
(This may be worked out with the help of the Corps Treasurer)
- ❖ **HELP WITH FUNDRAISING FOR THE YOUTH GROUP**
- ❖ **USE YOUR TALENTS**
(Think about what special talents you have and find out how your gifts could be used for God)
- ❖ **LIST THE LOCAL OFFICERS IN YOUR CORPS**
(Briefly describe their respective roles)
- ❖ **HELP PREPARE SPECIAL GIFTS**
(Ask how you may help the Community Care workers prepare for a special event e.g. Christmas, Mother's Day gifts)
- ❖ **PLAN A MEETING ON A GIVEN THEME**
(Songs, Bible reading, choruses, drama all fitting in)
- ❖ **BE INVOLVED IN SOME FORM OF YOUTH OUTREACH**
(e.g. coffee shop, street theatre)
- ❖ **YOUR CHOICE**



A FEW WORDS FOR YOUTH WORKERS - YES ... THAT'S YOU

George Barna is an American researcher who is known for his nationwide surveys and interviews with teens and pre-teens published in his book *Real Teens* (Regal Books, 2001). This age group born after 1984 (which includes your TRIBE group) is called the 'Mosaic generation' and is said to be 'highly mobile, information drenched, totally connected, decidedly upbeat and dedicated to making a difference in the world around them.'

Barna gives the following suggestions (based on his research) for helping youth workers have positive outcomes in their ministry:

Your preparation for effective ministry to teens should include:

- ❖ Understanding the world of the teenager.
- ❖ Entering your ministry with a worldview (know yourself before you try to know them).
- ❖ Entering with a philosophy of youth ministry (have a clear vision of why you are engaged in youth ministry).
- ❖ Praying daily for each teen in your group by name addressing their individual needs).
- ❖ Finding resources (by calling favours from friends, seeking resources from your corps and developing creative solutions to problems that might hinder effective ministry).

Your performance of ministry duties should include:

- ❖ Intimate involvement (be a friend).
- ❖ Modelling (live the lessons you teach).
- ❖ Experiential learning (learning that is hands-on and interactive).
- ❖ Unapologetic commitment (to loving and serving Christ and to caring for the teens in your group).

(Summarised from *Real Teens* by George Barna, Regal Books, 2001, pages 149 - 155.)



WHAT'S HE DOING WITH HER!

SESSION 1

FROM THE BIBLE
John 4:1 - 42

AIM

To help the young people understand that Jesus constantly broke through racial and social barriers to reach out to people in need and that He challenges us to do the same.

OBJECTIVES

As a result of this session the young people will:

- ❖ be aware that Jesus came to seek and to save everybody;
- ❖ understand the unusual features of the meeting between Jesus and the Samaritan woman;
- ❖ look at their own personal biases and prejudices;
- ❖ be challenged to follow Christ's example.

INSIGHTS FOR THE LEADER

Overall theme for this series

In these four consecutive sessions, we look at Jesus meeting four different people. As the young people observe Him reaching out in openness to these individuals, try to help them to enter into some of the feelings these people experienced. Also try to help them clarify their own experiences of His reaching out to each one of them.

The series should challenge the young people to change in some of their approaches to other people, and some of their attitudes towards people who are 'different' in various ways. We will all be helped in our response to this challenge, as we try to enter into the feelings of the people Jesus met.

As we use our imaginations to stand in the shoes of the various people week by week, we will find our prejudices being challenged, and our genuine openness to other people being expanded.

GETTING STARTED

1. Play the game 'Left Out and Lonely'. Get the young people to form pairs and trios. Have written out on pieces of paper the following discussion points (you may think of others):

- Describe a time you were left out of some fun or excitement because you were too young.
- Describe a time you finally got to do something because you were old enough.

CHECKLIST ✓

There are three suggested Getting Started activities. Choose the one you will use with your young people and prepare accordingly. If you use the video clips, make sure you preview the videos and have them cued and ready to show.

The first teaching approach helps the young people become familiar with the Bible story and has an alternative for younger members.

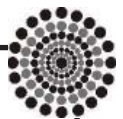
Approach 2 is a discussion.

Suggestion is made that a challenge be chosen from the Reaching Out in Service segment.

LEADER TIP

How would we feel if we were those people:

- a. before Jesus came?
- b. during the encounter with Him?
- c. after the encounter?



- Describe a time you felt lonely because you didn't have a friend or because you had just lost one.
- Describe a time you finally made a friend after being lonely.

Have the young people respond to these points in their group and share their answers with the wider group (if appropriate).

(Adapted from 'No supplies required: crowd breakers and games', Dan McGill 1995, Loveland, Colorado, Group Publishing.)

Or

2. Two new teenagers are placed in your class. Their cultural background is different from yours. After two weeks they are still being ignored by everyone.

Brainstorm with your group suggestions about how you should react. Discuss racial prejudices which have always been present in every culture.

Ask the young people to think of some ways they could include the newcomers and role play their ideas.

Or

3. **Video clips (especially for seniors)**

- Show the interview 'Cross colours' from edition 6 of the 'Edge TV' video series . This interview covers racial issues and could be used as a short Getting Started activity or an extra resource for discussion on racism alone. The *Edge TV Leader's Guide* has extra discussion starters if you want to spend more time talking about racism.
- Show a video clip from 'Tarzan' (Walt Disney films). Use the scene towards the beginning of the movie just before the elephant stampede. Highlight the discussion between the mother gorilla and Tarzan where she tries to emphasise the characteristics they share rather than their differences.

POINT

Jesus made it very clear that every human being is of value to God. In this session we want to examine our own feelings and prejudices to make sure we live by His teaching.

VIDEO CLIP

The *Edge TV* series are available from most Christian bookshops.

Make sure the video is cued beforehand.

LEADER TIP

Read the passage through and explain its significance as outlined OR if you have a junior group use the alternate idea of re-telling the incident and examining the feelings of the key players.

GOING DEEPER

1. **Read John 4:1 - 42.**

The Jews have always enjoyed a sacred racial purity and have worked hard throughout the centuries to protect it. In the 8th century BC the Assyrian Empire was invaded and a large proportion of the Israelites moved out of the empire and people from other towns were brought in. Inevitably there was intermarriage which in turn destroyed the sacred Jewish racial purity. The descendants of these people became known as the Samaritans.

The woman at the well was a Samaritan, an outcast to Jewish society. She was a natural and traditional outcast to Jesus on at least three counts: she was of mixed ethnic lineage (v.9), she came from an unacceptable marriage situation (v.17 - 18) and she was a woman.

- a. The Jews were taught not to associate with the Samaritans at all. This was an attempt to bring the purity back into the Jewish race and stamp out the ethnic intermarriages. A Jew associating with a Samaritan was culturally unacceptable and condemned.
- b. The woman herself was an outcast amongst her own people the Samaritans, let alone the Jews. Her marriage situation had been the cause of this discrimination. She had had five husbands previously and the man she was currently with was not her husband (v.18).

This is almost certainly why she was coming to the well in the heat of the day. The other women came in the evening and it was a social gathering as well as a task to be done. She would have been ignored, so she chose to come at a separate time.

- c. Jewish culture looked down on women. The man was the worker, bread winner, provider and spiritual adviser. A Jewish man would thank God daily that he was not a woman and the rabbis would often debate whether or not a woman had a soul. Jewish men would associate and socialise with other Jewish men only and not with women. Only women associated with women. The disciples were shocked to see Jesus associating with a Samaritan (v.27). The fact that she was a woman was another big cultural barrier Jesus was crossing.

Based on these three points, this passage shows us that Jesus proved that no social or cultural barrier is too extreme for the gospel message to cross. Jesus demonstrated by His actions that every person has value and worth, excluding none. We should all aim to have this Christ-like attitude.

The Samaritan woman's search was for a living encounter with God and Jesus disregarded all barriers in order to offer her what she longed to have. Jesus' conversation made such an impact on her life that she forgot how the other Samaritans felt about her and, leaving her water jar behind, ran to bring the others to hear him speak (v.28 - 30).

Or

(Appropriate for junior groups)

Tell the incident in your own words with an emphasis on the feelings of the people – as you relate the event, stop from time to time to invite responses to questions such as:

How do you think the woman would have felt:

- as she came to the well? . . .
- when she was talking to Jesus? . . .
- when she returned to the town?

How do you think the disciples would have felt when they came back and found the woman in conversation with Jesus? Why would they have felt like that?

2. Suggested discussion questions:

- a. What was unusual about this meeting between Jesus and the Samaritan woman?
- b. Look up the woman's reply to Jesus' question, 'Will you give me a drink?'(v.8) Why do you think she answered like that?
- c. When Jesus explained about **living water**, what do you think He meant?
- d. In verses 15 - 19, Jesus is talking about relationships. What difference do you think that our contact with God should make to our relationships with other people?
- e. The woman (v.19 - 20) changes the topic and begins to talk **about religion**. Why do you think many people would rather talk about religion than allow themselves to enter into an in-depth conversation and relationship with Jesus?
- f. When she had really understood the message of Jesus, what did the woman do next? What was the outcome of this?



LEADER TIP

Note: These questions are suggested to aid discussion – you may cover them all, or only one or two. However, make sure that you specifically include those questions that will be helpful to your group.

- g. Have you ever come closer to Jesus because of somebody else's life or spoken testimony? Can you share this experience with the group?
- h. What link does this story have with the Christian belief that we should help those in need, regardless of race, colour or creed?
- i. What reaction would you get from your friends if you made friends with someone who is 'different'?

TAKING IT HOME

In this story, we see Jesus behaving in an unexpected way. He, a male Jew, speaks to a woman; He speaks to a Samaritan; He speaks to a person who is morally and socially unacceptable. His offer of living water – of a new, vibrant life – is available even to this woman. Not only that, but when she tells people about her encounter with Jesus, they want to come and meet Him for themselves. Jesus came to bring hope and new life to everyone. He showed us the need to accept those who are different and to reach out to help the lonely and rejected.

FOLLOW-THRU

This session challenges the young people to make an effort to become involved with people they would normally ignore.

Help them to select from the Reaching Out in Service segment a task that will specifically carry this challenge into action. e.g. 'Be a friend'.

WHAT'S HE DOING WITH HER!

Give two reasons why the disciples were surprised to see Jesus speaking to the Samaritan woman.

- _____
- _____

What two positive results came from this conversation?

- _____
- _____

Choose a challenge on the 'Reaching Out in Service' segment from Get Involved and Grow that you feel challenged to tackle after considering this story. Explain which challenge it is and why you feel it follows this story.

TRUE OR FALSE?

In this story ...

Jesus sat at the side of a house.

A Samaritan woman came to draw water.

The woman was surprised that Jesus asked her for a drink.

Jesus told her He could give her life-giving water.

The woman had never been married.

The woman said that the Messiah would never come.

Jesus said that He was the Messiah.

The disciples were amazed to find Jesus talking to this woman.

The woman didn't tell a soul what had happened.

Many Samaritans believed in Jesus.

READ MATTHEW 9:13

Go and learn what the Scriptures mean when they say, 'Instead of offering sacrifices to me, I want you to be merciful to others.' (CEV)
What does this verse say to us?



DOES GOD REALLY

LOVE



BE HONEST WITH YOURSELF

Make a list of the 'Samaritans' in your life.
(i.e. people you would rather not contact.)

Compose a prayer asking God to help you
overcome these feelings.



HIGHLIGHTS

- Jesus came to this earth to save everybody.
- We are all equal in value to God.
- Jesus reached across racial and social barriers to help people in need.
- An encounter with Jesus makes a great impact on a person's life.
- We should try to follow Jesus' example.

WHAT'S HE DOING WITH HER!

When Jesus talked about 'never thirsting', He was referring to our thirst for spiritual life.

1.

Read these verses from **Matthew 9:12 - 13**: Jesus heard them and answered, "Healthy people don't need a doctor, but sick people do. Go and learn what the Scriptures mean when they say: 'Instead of offering sacrifices to me, I want you to be merciful to others.' I didn't come to invite good people to be my followers. I came to invite sinners." (CEV)

What message do these words of Jesus give us today?

2.

Be either the woman, a disciple or one of the townspeople. Describe how this incident affected you and what lasting impact it made.

Martin Luther King said that he dreamed of a nation where people would be judged by the content of their character not the colour of their skin.

3.

Choose from the 'Reaching Out in Service' segment of your Get Involved and Grow a task that you feel challenged to tackle after considering this story.

Outline what you will need to do to complete the challenge.

4.

What do you think is the best answer?

Prejudice is often based on:

- * fear of the unknown,
- * bad interaction with a group,
- * stories from the past.

Jesus consistently taught us that:

- * we must reach out to people in need,
- * people are more important than traditions,
- * we should always be in the company of saved people.

A personal encounter with Jesus:

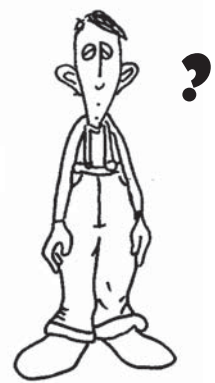
- * is a never-forgotten experience,
- * leaves us with a desire to tell others about Him,
- * only happens for a selected few.

There are still thousands of women in the world who go to wells to draw water each evening.

5. FACING UP TO PREJUDICES

Who are 'the Samaritans' in your life – groups of people you would rather not have too much contact with (perhaps people of another race or culture, another denomination, another socio-economic group, another age-group)? What has God said to you about this through the study of this incident?
What can you do about it?

What is the most important thing you have learnt today?





NO FEAR

SESSION 2

AIM

To help the young people see that Jesus is Lord – even over things that frighten us – be it a violent storm, unusual behaviour in an out of control person, or coping with persistent illness.

OBJECTIVES

As a result of this session, the young people will:

- ❖ know something of the Jewish belief in demon activity both in nature and in people;
- ❖ have considered frightening situations that were controlled by Jesus;
- ❖ understand that fear can affect us all and that it varies in different situations;
- ❖ understand that overpowering fear can destroy people's lives;
- ❖ be more confident that Jesus is Lord in every situation.

INSIGHTS FOR THE LEADER

Background

Many of Mark's stories of the healing miracles of Jesus refer to people being possessed by demons – it is when Jesus casts out the demon that the person is healed (e.g. Mark 1:23ff; 32; 34; 39). So it is not helpful to consider the incident in chapter 5:1 - 20 in isolation – it must be considered in the light of the total earthly ministry of Jesus, and in the context of the way in which Jews of the first century understood illness. Hebrew thinking did not have access to scientific explanations for such violent behaviour and we need to remember that a modern scientific or psychiatric approach must not minimise the forces of evil described throughout the Bible as demon possession.

So care needs to be taken in the presentation of this episode, as it is important that no young person leaves the session holding a first century Jewish understanding of mental illness or mental/physical handicap. They thought that such conditions, and the associated behaviour were always the results of the person being possessed by demons. What is more important than just offering alternate explanations (demon possession or mental illness) for the man's behaviour in particular, is to focus on the calm, controlled figure of Christ who 'cured' the man and the woman, calmed the storm and showed no fear of any of these strange occurrences.

This is one reason why there are three events to be presented – the calming of the storm, the healing of the woman who had been unwell for twelve years and the healing of an out of control man. Each of these incidents presents Jesus as Lord – as in control – as powerful enough to

FROM THE BIBLE

Mark 4:35 - 41; Mark 5:1 - 20, 25 - 34.

CHECKLIST ✓

Familiarise yourself with the Bible events and the background material in the Insights for the Leader so that helpful discussions can occur.

Choose your Getting Started activity and plan it well so it will be effective.

The first teaching approach may well take most of the time allowed for presentation of the lesson.

The second teaching approach is an option for groups who want to discuss the significance of the destruction of the pigs.

The challenge 'Care for others' from the Getting Involved and Grow strand is the one suggested to best follow on from this session.

reach out to people and help them, even in very frightening and upsetting experiences. Each incident also emphasises the value of each person to Jesus – He cares for the disciples, for the out of control man, and for the timid woman who touched His robe, believing that even the smallest contact with Him would help her.

After the Getting Started activity, commence the session by telling the three events in your own words or showing video clips, keeping the emphasis already outlined – Jesus caring for individuals – Jesus in control – Jesus as Lord of all things.



VIDEO CLIP

Short one minute clips from movies such as *Castaway*, *Perfect Storm*, *Twister* and so on, could be shown of scary storm scenes. Stop the clip and ask 'How would you feel in a storm like this?'

POINT

Fear is a natural human emotion. There are many situations that cause us to be fearful. Jesus is Lord in every situation and we can be assured of His presence with us in frightening situations.



LEADER TIP

Be aware of how your group would react to this activity.



VIDEO CLIP

The Jesus video shows two of the incidents – the storm and the demon possessed man.

GETTING STARTED

1. If your group meets at night or if you can darken the room, have a torch ready and turn out the lights. The person holding the torch shines it and describes one incident they have experienced where they were afraid. Pass the torch around the group for group members to share.

Or

2. What has been the most frightening experience of your life?
 - Was it in a storm?
 - Was it because you were really hurt?
 - Was somebody acting in a very strange, unusual way?
 - Were you in a dangerous situation?

Describe what happened, how old you were, and how you felt.

Why do you think you were frightened? Did you think you were in real danger?

Or

3. **(For groups held in the evening)**

Have the young people seated in a small group talking quietly to you about what you are going to think about in this session. Have the lights turned off and a piercing scream fill the air, heavy footsteps come into the hall. (Do not keep this going too long – it will depend on your group whether you do it at all.) Quickly turn the lights on and show the young people that it was a rigged event.

Discuss the feelings and thoughts that went through everyone's mind.

GOING DEEPER

1. **Read/relate and discuss the three accounts**

Afraid of the storms

- a. Have a good reader read the first incident from Mark 4:35 - 41. Explain that the Sea of Galilee is very large and can quickly change from calm water to wind-lashed waves that can engulf a small boat.

Discuss: Why was Jesus unafraid?

What two fears did the disciples exhibit during this incident? (Fear of the storm; then a fear of Jesus' ability to control the elements.) Does it say something to us about facing life's problems that seem to hit us like a storm?

To first century Jews, storms were the work of demons. The same explanation was given for sin and disease – these were the result of the work of forces against God. So, in these events in the life of

Jesus, we see Him being shown as Lord over nature and Lord over all evil forces. Human experience shows that not every 'life-storm' (physical or emotional) is removed from the life of a Christian. And not every Christian who prays for healing for himself or another sees that person miraculously healed from physical symptoms, even when that prayer is offered with a deep faith and confidence in the goodness of God. The key to the meaning of these events is that, when Jesus is with us during the 'storm', we know that we're O.K. We know that He is in ultimate control of our lives.

b. **Fear of out of control people**

Mark 5:1 - 20.

Mark tells us that the man in the second incident was demon possessed. Ask the young people to find from v.3 - 5 what was wrong with him. (His behaviour was strange – so bizarre that he could no longer live in the town with other people. He could not be restrained – when they tried to chain him for his own sake, or for the sake of others who feared him, he was too strong to be held. He was probably, on this day, wearing the ends of the chains he had broken on previous occasions. He was shouting out most of the time – and he would often be seen cutting himself with stones.)

Why do you think he was living in this terrible way? (The people from the town were afraid of this man – and probably with good reason – 'nobody could keep him chained up any more.' (v.3) It sounds as if they had tried all they could think of – and they had then banished him from the town – out of their society and out of their sight.)

We would probably say the man was mentally out of control. How did Mark describe him? (v.2)

Why did the man scream at Jesus? (v.7 - 8) (The evil spirits recognised Jesus as God's own Son.)

The salvation and healing of this man could be accomplished only by a demonstration of Jesus' power over demons – and He still has the same concern for people, and the same power (whether we believe demons to be evil spirits which actually inhabit people, or whether we believe that other sinful feelings such as hate, bitterness, lack of self-control, cause these 'demons').

The point is that Jesus is sovereign over them all. He is Lord. We don't need to stay bound by any emotion or habit that holds us back from wholeness.

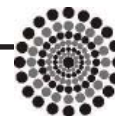
Does this mean Jesus can remove the bitterness or hatred I feel for people who have hurt me?

When the townsfolk saw the man 'sane and dressed' they were afraid – it seemed that they were more afraid of this change than they were when the man was wandering around the tombs, shouting and crying, and dragging his broken chains. **Why do you think they were so fearful?**

They asked Jesus to get out of their territory.

Why were they unwilling to have him stay?

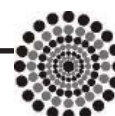
What does this reveal about their values?



LEADER

TIP

Either have young people read this account quietly or several readers read a few verses each until the twenty verses have been read.



LEADER

TIP

People in the ancient world held many superstitious fears. This explains their custom of always describing disease, particularly mental disturbances, in terms of demon possession.

Mark took the activity of the demonic forces very seriously and what was in the forefront of his thinking was the contest of the power of God in Jesus with the supernatural power of the demonic.

For Jesus and the disciples, in the presence of this half naked, wild, shouting man, this was no time for a philosophical discussion about the nature of mental illness and the theology of demons. Jesus, in all of His recorded encounters with people, met each person at his own level – His words and actions were designed to speak to the need felt by the individual.

c. **Timidity that stops us from action**

Read or tell the incident in Mark 5:25 - 34.

Here we see a woman who is extremely timid. She had a health problem, constant menstruation which had lasted for twelve years.

Ask the young people to recall (v.26) what efforts she had made to be cured. According to the Jewish law (Leviticus 15:25), she was not only ill, she was unclean and could not participate in social events or worship until she was well.

No wonder she had low self esteem. What did this make her decide to do? (v.28)

How did Jesus know someone wanting to be healed had touched Him? (v.30)

How do we know the woman was afraid? (v.33)

Why do you think Jesus wanted to speak with her? (v.34) (He commended her faith – raising her self esteem. He told her to go in peace – her anxieties were over. He assured her she was healed – she no longer had to hide.)

Again we see Jesus freeing a person from fear and making her truly whole. Jesus met the need of the ill lady – and commended her for her belief in Him.

2. **Discussion**

Why destroy the pigs?

Re-read Mark 5:11 - 17 or show the video clip from the Jesus video.

- a. The pigs in this incident were a commercial herd – when they ran over the cliff and drowned in the sea after the man was healed, it would have been a huge loss to the owners of the herd. How do you think the herdsman felt when they saw what had happened?

What would they have done?

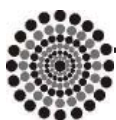
Describe the probable outcome for them.

- b. We live in a world of twisted values, in which commercial interests often seem to be more important to decision makers than the quality of life of individual people – and, sometimes, than life itself. (e.g. Mining companies that cause pollution and environmental damage to local communities because of the financial profits to be made.)

Can you think of any situation in which it would seem reasonable to sacrifice a human life for commercial or scientific progress? (e.g. Pharmaceutical companies who trial vaccinations and medicine on disadvantaged people.)

- c. In using the pigs, Jesus indicated clearly the value of the man – far greater than the commercial value of the pigs. This man believed himself to be possessed by a legion of demons (a legion in the Roman army was a group of six thousand soldiers) – this was the only way he knew to describe his torment. By allowing the pigs to destroy themselves by running over the cliff, Jesus gave the man a clear demonstration that he had, indeed, been released – liberated.

Do you think you would be willing to give up something very



**LEADER
TIP**

If time allows and according to your young people's maturity, choose from these discussion questions those most helpful for your group.

valuable in order for a human life to be saved? Can you think of examples of such behaviour or have you ever considered how you would react? (e.g. You see a bad car accident where the driver is seriously injured and someone asks you to give them the favourite expensive jacket you are wearing to help keep the victim warm and prevent shock setting in. What will you do? Think about the man who has donated one of his kidneys to help save the life of his only brother who has kidney failure. Would you be prepared to do that?) Is it easier to make a costly decision for someone you know and love rather than for a complete stranger?

TAKING IT HOME

Jesus showed us very definitely that each human being is of value to God and that He reaches out to us when we are in distressing situations. He indicated clearly by having contact with the outcasts of society that His love is not selective – nor is it limited because of a person’s limited ability to understand or to communicate. Beyond the obvious disturbance or problem, Jesus sees a person – a valuable person – one worthy of His attention and care.

The three Bible incidents considered in this session challenge us to consider the needs of people in our local area. We should think about the truth that each of these people is valuable to God and has a place in His Kingdom.

How does our corps relate to people with chronic illness or physical and/or mental disability?

Does that need to change?

What can we do to help our corps ministry become more extensive and more effective?

FOLLOW-THRU

Follow through the idea of helping in a home where there is a need because of illness. This could well be tied into the Reaching Out in Service challenge to ‘Care for others’.

NO FEAR

Choose one of the accounts discussed in this session. Explain the fears that overwhelmed the people concerned and how Jesus dealt with them.



How was Jesus' Lordship demonstrated in these three incidents?

HIGHLIGHTS

- Everyone has to face frightening situations.
- Having Jesus take control of these situations makes all the difference.
- Without His help, fear can destroy our lives.
- Jesus is Lord in every situation.
- Jesus has not promised to remove life's problems from our lives – but to be with us in them.



Underline those fears that have at some time been part of your life.
Add two more of your present fears.



What can you do to deal positively with these fears?

NO FEAR FEAR

1.

It is universal to have a fear of falling.

From what you've learned in this session list the different fears that overwhelmed the people in these three events. (Mark 4:35 - 41, Mark 5:1 - 20, 25 - 34.)

Xenophobia is a dislike of foreigners.

2.

The sweats of blood Jesus shed in Gethsemane were a physical sign of great fear and yet He died for us.

How did Jesus deal with these fears?



William Tell's son was not afraid to stand with an apple on his head and be a target for his father.



3.

'Bravery doesn't mean an absence of fear.' Comment on this statement.

Claustrophobia is the fear of closed areas.

4.

Jesus is in control.
I know this is true because

Jesus cares for individuals.
I know this is true because

Jesus is Lord of all.

I know this is true because

5.

Make a list of concerns in your life that cause fear.

What can you do next time you feel they are overwhelming you?

SESSION 3

PRIORITIES MATTER

FROM THE BIBLE

Mark 10:13 - 30.



CHECKLIST

There are two suggested Getting Started activities so choose which one you will use. If you use 'Fire! Fire!' each young person needs a copy of the worksheet.

There is one teaching approach. You need to photocopy the information (enlarged), cut it up and place around the meeting room prior to your time together. The young people will need their work sheet and pens to walk around in small groups to discover the answers.

The other suggestions on the work sheets are extra ideas if you have time. You would need selected magazines, scissors and glue to make the collage. You could make one large one as a group.



LEADER TIP

There are other sessions on money and its management, tithing budgeting.

AIM

To help the young people realise through a study of the rich young ruler that wrong priorities in life can prevent us from entering God's Kingdom.

OBJECTIVES

As a result of this session the young people should:

- ❖ know the story of the rich young ruler;
- ❖ take time to think through a Christian attitude to material possessions;
- ❖ realise that we are responsible for the choices we make;
- ❖ acknowledge that the Lord does not force anyone into His Kingdom;
- ❖ understand that when we fail to respond, we each have the capacity to sadden the Lord.

INSIGHTS FOR THE LEADER

Take time, in preparation, to think through your own attitudes towards money and possessions. Young people are alert to the discomfort of a leader who is not sure what he/she believes about the issue under discussion.

In your preparation, consider also 1 Timothy 6:6 - 10; 18; 19. This passage puts the topic into perspective – to be rich is not sinful – but to be rich places a person under a serious responsibility to keep priorities right, and to keep a firm control on the human tendency to regard money so highly that getting it and keeping it becomes the supreme driving force in a person's life. Paul clearly warns against the love of money and outlines in verse 18 and 19 the responsibilities of the Christian who is rich.

GETTING STARTED

1. Fire! Fire!


Use activity 1 on the work sheet and explain the situation. Your home is suddenly on fire. You have a couple of minutes only to rush through the flames and rescue six things that have a priority in your life. Assume that the important people in your life are there, even if they do not normally live there. Don't worry about size or weight. Abstract things like music skills or passing exams are available for you to pick up and run with as well.

Try to collect one item in each category. When the time limit is up, split into small groups of three and share as much as they wish from their list.


(Adapted from 'YOYO', book 3 by Graystone, Sharpe and Turner published by Scripture Union.)

Or

2. a. There are so many shows on TV that relate to winning heaps of money. What are some of these shows? What point are they putting across?
- b. If you won a million dollars and had to spend it in 24 hours, how would you spend it?



POINT
It's hard to make decisions in a split second! If you had longer to think, would your selection change?



POINT
Many of us think that if we had plenty of money, all our problems would be solved – but would they?

GOING DEEPER

On both junior and senior worksheets are questions relating to the topic of priority matters. (Activity 2.) Each question matches information in Going Deeper.

1. Why did such a successful young man approach Jesus?

This man was young, rich and religious, but still he was unsatisfied. This is why he appealed to Jesus and why the incident can be full of meaning for us.

It illustrates the difference between religion and Christianity. The young man was respectable, but felt something was missing in his life. His religious training had emphasised a series of moral 'do's and don'ts', with the not surprising result that he thought of himself as good simply because he was not bad. This outlook never leads to joyful Christian living; and because of its spiritual associations, it often actually stops the growth of a believer. It prevents us hearing the call to adventurous Christian living.



LEADER TIP

Photocopy each box of information enlarge it and place it around your meeting area so that the young people can discover the answers to the questions.

2. What do you think Jesus is really saying about riches?

In Jesus' day many people thought that material prosperity was a sign of God's approval. That was why they put their trust in riches. Christ, however, brought a new judgment, which we must be careful to understand.

Jesus did not condemn riches, but He did warn of the dangers of giving wrong priorities to riches.

Money seems to always bring power and influence so a person of wealth can be inclined to think they are self-sufficient, and this material world is their permanent home. But Jesus pointed out that placing priority on the things of God is what counts.

Jesus said that only the individual whose priority is in the things of God can live to the glory of God. The development of this idea must have stunned His first hearers.

Jesus taught that success as man judges it was no guarantee that God was pleased with the life being lived. The next world is going to be full of surprises because God's judgments are often so unlike man's.

Why? Because we foolishly see the possession of material goods as all important.



LEADER TIP

Encourage the young people to come back and talk about the answers they have discovered.

3. What was the assumption the young man made about how a person gains eternal life?

Who is fit for the Kingdom? The gospel sets before us who is and who is not. (Read Mark 10:13 - 15.) This earlier encounter with small children showed who was fit; the incident we are studying had to do with one who sadly was not.

A wealthy man is usually treated with respect, not always on account of himself but because of the influence which his money can exercise. In this story the young man himself was acceptable to Jesus. But Jesus could see that his possessions were a barrier. As far as Jesus was concerned the power which wealth can bring is a greater danger to its possessor than to those over whom it may give power. Jesus asked this well-to-do young man to give his money away so that he could enter the Kingdom as a man. But no, his 'great possessions' held him in their grip; they stood between him and eternal life.

This conversation between Christ and a respectable seeker illustrates the difference between seeking Christ and surrendering to Him. He obviously knew something was missing from his life, but his good intentions were not strong enough to overcome his basic self-centredness.

4. What was Jesus referring to in verse 25?

In Jerusalem there was a small gate beside the large city gate known as the 'Needle's Eye' gate. It was to allow travellers entry into the city if they arrived after the gates closed for the night or the Sabbath. Only the traveller could pass through but some merchants had tried to push or squeeze unwilling camels through the gate with rather disastrous results.

A picture of this occurrence would clearly portray to Jesus' listeners how difficult it would be for a rich man to enter the Kingdom.

5. How did Jesus reply to 'Who then can be saved?' (v.26, 27)

Abraham is one example of many rich men who have entered the kingdom because they regarded themselves as trustees or stewards of their possessions. 'With God anything is possible!' Christ's vivid warning applies, not only to those rich in material possessions, but to anyone who takes the praise for their possessions – be they financial, intellectual, social or moral. Whenever we see God's gifts to us as our own rightful belongings, pride creeps in and we no longer see any need for God. However, all people who see their need can be saved. It's people who see themselves as efficiently self sufficient in any area of their lives who find it hard to come to God. (Read v.27.)



LEADER TIP

When they have answered all the questions, bring the group back together and spend time sharing their responses.

TAKING IT HOME

As has already been said – Jesus was not condemning riches. He knew that riches were the stumbling block to this young man because he was not prepared to follow God if it involved loss of his comfortable life. Jesus sees right to the centre of each one of our lives. He knows exactly what holds that place. For most of us it is not riches, because we are not rich, but we need to be honest with ourselves and ask – 'What wouldn't I give up for God?'

In other words, when serving Christ is not the most important desire in our life, we experience a lack of spiritual achievement. When we are halfhearted, we cannot be pure in heart. We seek Christ, but walk away sadly, rather than surrender our riches, whatever their nature, to Him.

Jesus hit this man 'where it hurts' – in his wallet. If Jesus were to challenge something in your life – to 'hit where it hurts' – what do you think He would be challenging? (Allow young people time to consider this.)

FOLLOW-THRU

Encourage the young people to consider the Get Involved and Grow in Worship challenges and think about how seriously and joyfully they worship God because this shows Him where He stands in their priorities.

FIRE! FIRE!

1. Your home is on fire! Dial 000! You have just a few minutes to rush through the flames and rescue six things that have a priority in your life. Be very detailed – don't just say CD's – say which CD.



2. Answer the following questions from information provided by your leader.

Why did such a successful young man approach Jesus?

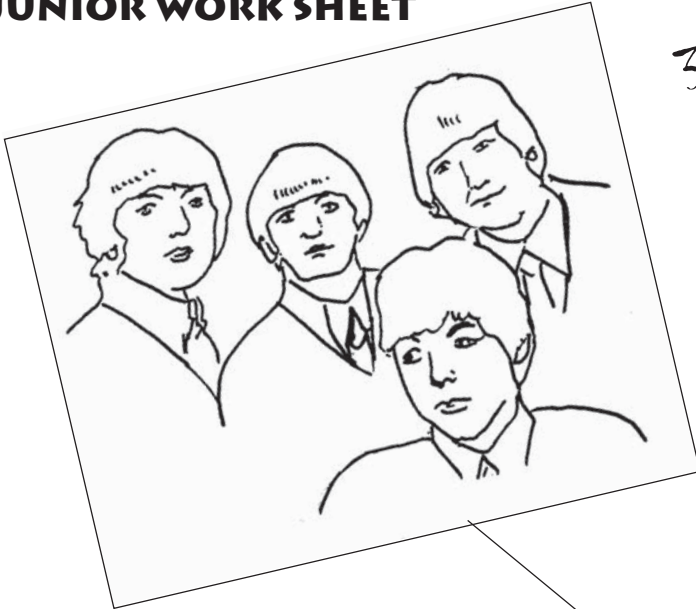
What do you think Jesus is really saying about riches?

What was the assumption the young man made about how a person gains eternal life? Who is fit for the Kingdom?

What was Jesus referring to in verse 25?

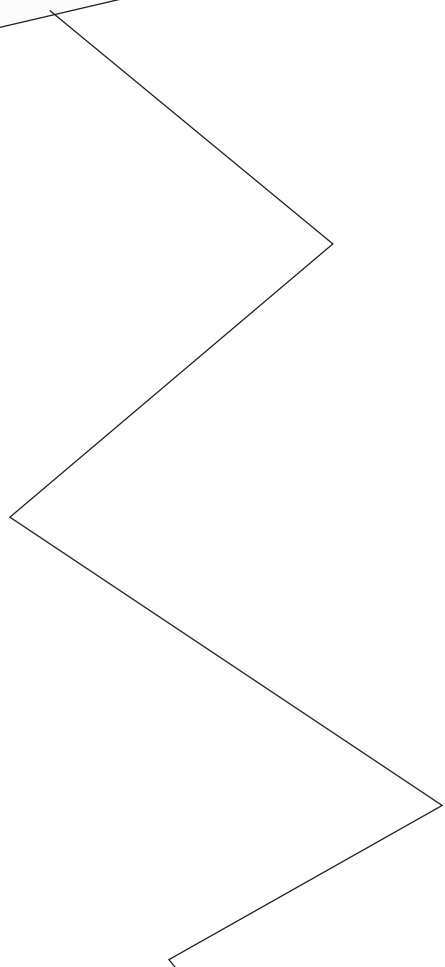
How did Jesus reply to 'Who then can be saved?' verse 26.

JUNIOR WORK SHEET



3.

A group called 'The Beatles' brought out a song called 'Money'. They sang: 'Money isn't everything, it's true; But what it can't get – I can't use!'



What do you think?

Fill this page with pictures cut from magazines of:

- a) Things that money can buy.
- b) Things that money can't buy.

Which are really the more important to possess?

HIGHLIGHTS

- Jesus does not force anyone into His Kingdom.
- When we fail to respond to Him we cause Him pain.
- Jesus loved the Rich Young Ruler for his efforts to live a good life.
- The Christian must realise that the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil.
- God demands first place in our lives.

3.

Read I Timothy 6:6 - 10, 17 - 19
What does it say the love of money can do to us?

What does it say makes us truly rich?

God expects us to be good stewards of
all He gives to us.

What would be the hardest thing of all for me to have to give to God?



The man who began Colgate
business consistently gave God one
tenth of all his earnings
and gradually increased it.



Believing that God would supply all their needs, the Schaeffer
family began a refuge in Switzerland where troubled youth
could come and think through their problems.

What pressures are placed on us by advertisements and
salespeople so that we feel happiness is tied into owning
more and more possessions?



OUT ON A LIMB

AIM

To help the young people understand that the response Zacchaeus made to Jesus affected his whole life – especially his attitude towards material possessions.

OBJECTIVES

As a result of this session the young people will:

- ❖ realise that meeting Jesus had a tremendous impact on the life of Zacchaeus;
- ❖ be more aware of the fact that Jesus reached out to all kinds of people;
- ❖ compare Zacchaeus's response with that of the rich young ruler;
- ❖ be challenged to consider that everyone needs to meet Jesus.

INSIGHTS FOR THE LEADER

This is the final session in the series of how Jesus reached out across all kinds of boundaries to meet those in need – that is, how Jesus built bridges to the outcast and the different.

As our society becomes more multicultural, we need to be aware of our responsibility to make the gospel meaningful to all our neighbours – whatever their economic, cultural or religious backgrounds.

For many young people who first heard this account as 5 year olds – and who focused mainly on the fact that Zacchaeus was 'a very little man' – the point of this encounter with Jesus may be lost. (Do not say, 'They know this story – why bother?' – There is a lot to be learned from it and some of your group may never have heard it.)

It was not because he was physically small that Zacchaeus was unpopular and lonely – it was because he had made an earlier decision that money was to be his main goal in life. So, when the Romans took over the area and looked for local men to become tax collectors, he saw an opportunity to become rich and was an eager applicant for the job.

It did not matter to him that Jews who took on this job were regarded by other Jews as traitors. It is quite possible that, blinded by the chance to become rich quickly, he didn't even stop to think of the side effects of taking on such work. His mind could register only the riches that were to be gained.

It was not long before he was adding to the legal commission allowed by the Romans – by charging his fellow countrymen higher taxes than they really had to pay – and pocketing the extra money.

SESSION 4

FROM THE BIBLE

Luke 19:1 - 10; 24:47.

CHECKLIST ✓

This session is well linked to the challenge 'Bring a friend' in the Reaching Out in Service strand. It involves inviting a non-Christian friend to an activity at the Army. Remember that the young people need encouragement to befriend lonely or difficult acquaintances before they can invite them to the event.

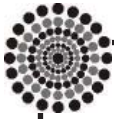
There are 3 suggested Getting Started activities. You will need blocks to play the first suggestion. If you are going to play any other game, choose a simple one that can be played without time needed for long instructions. Do not add to the time allowed for starters.

There are four teaching approaches. Try to use them all. Either use the Jesus video OR ask a young person to prepare for the first teaching approach.

Have the work sheets ready to be used during approach 2 with pens and Bibles on hand. Be aware which questions are for juniors only and which are for seniors only.

The statement to be discussed in approach 3 is on the back of the work sheet.

Make sure you allow sufficient time to give the young people the challenge presented in approach 4. We never have the right to say – 'It would not interest him'. The challenge to invite lonely people to share with us should be issued and if you have members of your group who are sometimes left out of things, a loving reminder of how hurtful this is can be included.



LEADER TIP

Note: If you are willing to take the next step – actually to follow the teaching of this session – and challenge your young people to **do something about it**, it would be good for them to have your own example to follow.

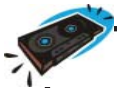
Right now, in your preparation, ask yourself the following questions:

1. Do I really believe that a person without Jesus Christ is **lost**?
2. Do I know anybody who may not know Him as Lord and Saviour?
3. Do I believe that Jesus is able to reach that person?
4. Do I care enough about that person to invite him/her to come to a meeting with me, or to speak to him/her about the Lord, **or both**.

POINT

Feeling lonely or left out can be one of the worst experiences humans go through. We feel miserable and even a social failure.

In this session we look at what Jesus did to reach out to a lonely man who was 'out on a limb'.



VIDEO CLIP

Have the video cued beforehand at the Zacchaeus clip.



LEADER TIP

Scripts can be found in several Christian drama books. Or use the scripture passage from Good News or The Message.

Zacchaeus grew rich but was he really happy?

There was no way the crowd would let him through to see Jesus. He was ready to go 'out on a limb' in more ways than one. First, he forgot the dignity of his social-economic position and climbed a tree to see the Teacher. Next, he spent some time with Jesus. Then he made an amazing offer – to pay back four times as much as he had stolen by crooked practices – and to give away half of his own goods. He would not have had much left after this. But he thought that it was worth it to know the new life that Jesus offered.

This account should make us aware of 'the lost' among our acquaintances. Read again v. 10.

In 'Becoming a contagious Christian' Bill Hybels says: 'The truth is that you have never looked eyes with another human being who isn't valuable to God.' (p.22, Zondervan Publishing, Grand Rapids, Michigan)

Take the opportunity in the session – maybe in closing – to give the same challenge to your young people.

It is amazing how young people's faith is encouraged when they see one of their friends/neighbours/relatives coming to know the Lord, and they know that it all began when they took the risk of speaking about Jesus, or of giving an invitation to a church activity.

GETTING STARTED

1. Game – Have wooden blocks or similar. Each person places a block on top of the previous block until the pile of blocks collapses, when it does everyone points at the person who put the last block on and yells 'Blockhead!'
2. **Especially for juniors**
Select a game to play that suits your size group and one they know well. Invite the group to play but then exclude those young people with big feet or blue eyes or long hair. These excluded young people must sit and not participate in any way. Then get them to describe their feelings.
3. **Especially for seniors**
Have you ever felt lonely – really lonely? Can you share this experience with the group?

Does having had this experience make you more aware of when others are lonely? Do you make an effort to include such lonely people?

GOING DEEPER

1. **Either** use the Zacchaeus clip from the Jesus video.
Or given a week for preparation one young person presents the story to the group – either reading it from the Good News Bible, or telling the story as if he/she is Zacchaeus or have the group act it out.
2. **Bible search (Luke 19:1 - 10)**
You may need to tell the young people some of the material in Insights for the Leader about Zacchaeus so that they can answer the questions more fully.

The following is a copy of the questions on the work sheets. Note that the juniors do not have those questions marked with an asterisk.

Getting inside feelings

- i. How did the people feel about Zacchaeus?
How do you know that? Why would they feel like that?
- ii. How did Zacchaeus feel while he was being jostled in the crowd?
What made him climb the tree?
- iii. How do you think Jesus felt as He looked up at the lonely man?
- iv.* Imagine that you are Zacchaeus. You're safely lodged in a fork of the tree – out of the crowd – away from the sarcastic comments and the pushing and shoving – you have a good view of what's going on.
Suddenly Jesus looks up and speaks to you, 'Hurry down . . . I must stay in your house today.'
How do you feel? Why? What do you do?
- v. How did the people react to this new situation? Do you think they were justified in feeling this way?
- vi.* The story leaves out some details – what do you think may have happened between the time when Jesus invited Himself to Zacchaeus' house, and the time when Zacchaeus made his famous statement of v. 8?
- vii. Why do you think Zacchaeus was so lonely? Do you think it was his own fault?

For juniors only

Write out the promise Zacchaeus made as he stood before Jesus.
How would this have changed his life?

3. Read and discuss

Read and discuss the story on the reverse of the work sheets.

'THE JOY OF BEING WANTED. A young lady just engaged was asked: 'Can you remember what made you so happy?' She paused and then her face lit up. She replied, 'I think it was the feeling that somebody wanted me.'

It is a basic longing of all people to be wanted. When Jesus spoke to Zacchaeus, saying, 'I must stay at your house today', His words gladdened the heart of the little man who, through his own greed, had become lonely and bitter. Nobody wanted him. He was almost certainly the most unpopular man in Jericho. Nobody visited his house socially, fine place though it probably was. But the Teacher said He wanted to and, Luke tells us, Zacchaeus 'received Him joyfully'.

It is a wonderful thing to be wanted, to be accepted as we are. Nothing destroys inner peace and twists the personality more than the feeling that nobody cares; that we do not count with anybody. One old man said, 'I can think of nothing sadder than to die and not to be missed'; and an old lady who lived alone was found dead with a diary at her side carrying the same sad entry day after day, 'Nobody called'!

How wonderful to have the assurance that God wants us. We are precious to Him and He accepts us, as Jesus accepted Zacchaeus, just as we are.'



LEADER TIP

These replies are to be written on the work sheet.

Consequently the time allowed for this segment can include the time normally used to complete the work sheets.

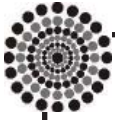


FOR JUNIORS



LEADER TIP

This story is on the back of both work sheets.



FOR SENIORS

These replies are to be written on the work sheet.

Consequently the time allowed for this segment can include the time normally used to complete the work sheets.

For seniors

What the story says to me today

- a. Do you know anyone who seems unable to fit in with your group? (School, church etc.)
- b. Read v. 5 and 6 of Luke 19. In the light of these verses, what do you think Jesus would expect of you in a situation where one person seems isolated from your group?
- c. If you act on what you have just thought about – will everyone in the group understand your motives and your actions? (v. 7)
- d. Do you think you could handle that?

4. Accepting the challenge

Sometimes we decide that there are certain groups of people who will make no response to the gospel – so it is pointless taking it to them.

Do we have the right to decide such matters?

What was Jesus' command about this? (Luke 24:47)

In these four sessions we have looked at four very different people Jesus met and we saw the most unlikely people grasp the good news.

On a list of people unlikely to respond to the gospel, Zacchaeus might come fairly close to the top. He is rich and it would be hard for us to imagine what his life was like or what his house was like, because we belong to a different time and a different culture. But try putting it into the 21st century. Imagine his house and his 'things'. Some people don't like him, they have their own idea of how he got to be so rich.

So it ends up that all he has in his life are his 'high stress job' and all his 'things'.

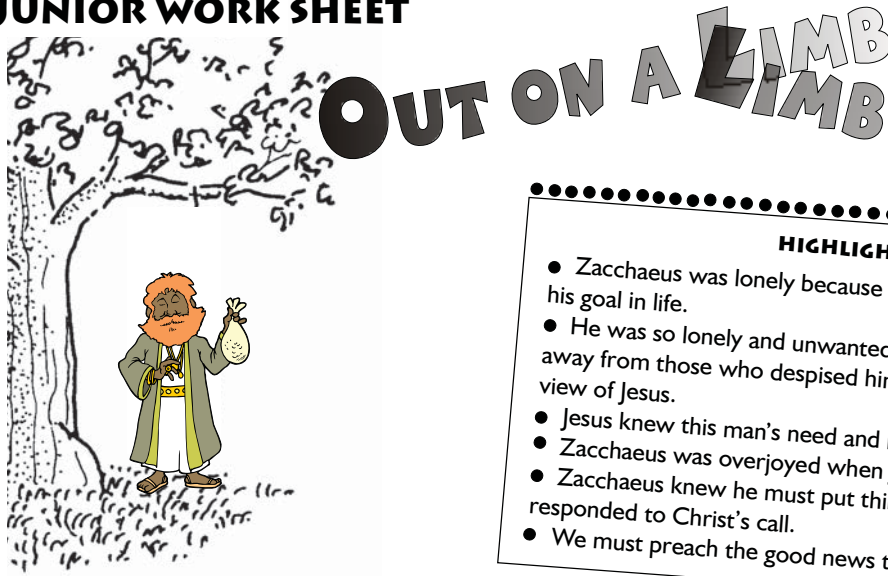
Can you think of reasons why we might consider him to be an 'unlikely prospect' with whom we would share our faith?

TAKING IT HOME

The challenge of the Zacchaeus encounter – ask each young person to accept the challenge to invite someone along to an activity where they will hear the good news of Jesus. Pray that God will help each one of us to do this in His strength.

FOLLOW-THRU

The young people could take up the challenge to invite and bring someone along to a youth group activity.



HIGHLIGHTS

- Zacchaeus was lonely because he had made making money his goal in life.
- He was so lonely and unwanted he climbed the tree to be away from those who despised him as well as to get a better view of Jesus.
- Jesus knew this man's need and reached out to help him.
- Zacchaeus was overjoyed when Jesus spoke to him.
- Zacchaeus knew he must put things right once he had responded to Christ's call.
- We must preach the good news to all people.

Bible search Luke 19:1 - 10 Getting inside feelings

- i. How did the people feel about Zacchaeus?
How do you know that? Why would they feel like that?

- ii. How did Zacchaeus feel while he was being jostled in the crowd?
What made him climb the tree?

- iii. How do you think Jesus felt as He looked up at the lonely man?

- iv. How did the people react to this new situation? Do you think they were justified in feeling this way?

- v. Why do you think Zacchaeus was so lonely? Do you think it was his own fault?

- vi. Write out the promise Zacchaeus made as he stood before Jesus.

- vii. How would this have changed his life?

THE JOY OF BEING WANTED

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How wonderful to have the assurance that God wants us. We are precious to Him and He accepts us, as Jesus accepted Zacchaeus, just as we are.

If God speaks to me about befriending a lonely person I will

What if my other friends threaten not to be my friend if I try to include such a person?

Help me, O God

OUT ON A LIMB

Bible search

Scripture Reference: Luke 19:1 - 10

Getting inside feelings

- i. How did the people feel about Zacchaeus?
How do you know that? Why would they feel like that?

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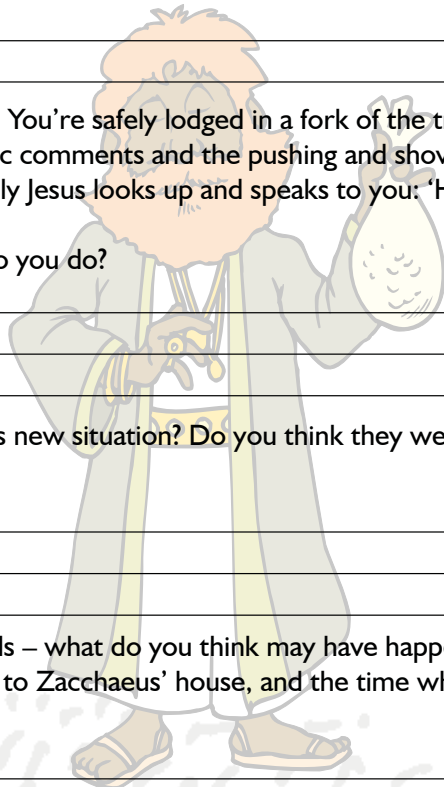
- iii. How do you think Jesus felt as He looked up at the lonely man?

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How do you feel? Why? What do you do?

- v. How did the people react to this new situation? Do you think they were justified in feeling this way?

- vi. The story leaves out some details – what do you think may have happened between the time when Jesus invited Himself to Zacchaeus' house, and the time when Zacchaeus made his famous statement of v. 8?

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Il Jews hated tax collectors and looked upon them as notorious sinners.

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How wonderful to have the assurance that God wants us. We are precious to Him and He accepts us, as Jesus accepted Zacchaeus, just as we are.

Riches can't buy true friends.

Sycamore trees still grow in abundance in Israel.

CONSIDER THESE:

Do I know anyone unable to fit in with your group? Read v.5 and 6 again. What do you think Jesus would expect of you in a situation where one person seems isolated from your group? If you befriend such a person, will the rest of the group understand your motive? (v.7) Could you handle that?

Ever heard this comment?
'No use talking to him. He wouldn't want to know about Jesus.'

Loneliness is a driving force in many suicide cases.

On a list of people unlikely to respond to the gospel, Zacchaeus might come fairly close to the top. He is rich. It would be hard for us to imagine what his life was like or what his house was like because we belong to a different time and a different culture. But try putting it into the twenty first century. Imagine his house and his 'things'. Some people don't like him, they have their own idea of how he got to be so rich. So it ends up that all he has in his life are his high stress job and all his things. Can you think of reasons why we might consider him to be an 'unlikely prospect' with whom we would share our faith?

We must remember that God wants us. We are precious to Him and He accepts us, as Jesus accepted Zacchaeus, just as we are.

FREE TO CHOOSE

AIM

To help the young people realise that God has given to each of us the freedom to choose within revealed limits.

OBJECTIVES

Through the teaching in this session the young people will:

- ❖ realise that the Christian life is not one of numerous restrictions;
- ❖ be aware that God has revealed certain limits for our protection;
- ❖ be aware that there is satisfaction in making any wise choice.

INSIGHTS FOR THE LEADER

Each of us makes hundreds of choices every day, most of which have little effect upon our lives, whilst others can have an incredible effect upon the lives of many people including ourselves!

The will of God has often been presented as something 'out there' whereas it is simply a matter of living, doing and acting as God wants.

This session focuses on choices. The whole of life involves decision making – choosing between one option or another.

Too often, doing the will of God has been narrowed down to the concept that we must 'wait and be sure' leading Christians to non-action and so avoiding the making of even the simplest of decisions unless God is seen to have given a sign.

There is a dilemma, at times, in choices which are equal in value (each within God's moral will, each equally beneficial). It is not a matter of one being right and the other wrong. Either can be God's will. If this is so in simple matters such as what dress/shorts I will buy, it is also with the big decisions in life.

As we develop and grow in knowledge, wisdom and in the understanding of life and God's will, we have the capacity to decide aright – and God is pleased with our decisions.

GETTING STARTED

1. Choices

Have two tables set up. On one table place fruit juice/water and fruit, or some other healthy food. On the other table there are cordial and chips and lollies. The young people must choose which table they are going to eat and drink from. They cannot cross over once they have

SESSION 5

FROM THE BIBLE

Proverbs 3:5, 6; Romans 12:1-21 and selected passages from John's gospel.

CHECKLIST ✓

Decide which of the Getting Started activities you will use and prepare accordingly.

The Going Deeper teaching is a continuous progression that includes discussion, comments, Bible checking and a role play. Prepare for these so you are aware of the time you want to allocate to each one.

The suggestion is made that the true or false questions on the work sheet (activity 1 on junior and 3 on senior) can be used in the session. Although point (c) of approach 2 is suggested as being for seniors only, point (d) is for everyone.

Keep the aims of the session in mind and try not to veer from the session's teaching as this is a very broad subject.

made their choice. They can only eat and drink from the table they have chosen.

Or

2. Remind the young people that although they may think decisions about their lives are being made by other people all the time, in actual fact we all make decisions every day. e.g. Will I get up when the alarm goes off? What will I wear? Will I do my homework? Will I try to be kind to someone today?

Ask them to make a list of at least 5 choices which they have made in the last few days. Give them a few minutes to write and then ask them to share some of these with the group.

On a board have the following headings already written:

- Minor choices
- Choices that really affect me
- Choices that really affect others

As the young people listen to the choices, have them as a group decide into which of the three columns they would place the choice. (Put a tick in the column they decide upon.) Remind them that some choices may belong in more than one column and that a lot of our daily decisions are so minor, we don't even regard them as choices!

Or

3. **Can you remember?**

One of the phrases parents seem to use most is: 'Don't do that!' As we become teenagers such instructions tend to irritate us and make us feel as though we want to do it, just because we've been told not to do it!

So why do parents say this so frequently? Is it said for the purpose of keeping us safe? That is, is it said because they are trying to prevent us from having fun, or out of loving concern for our safety? Consider limits your parents put on you at certain ages which were really for your own protection. How many can you think of? These could be listed for the group to read.

e.g. At 19 months (e.g. the danger of a staircase).

At age 4 years (e.g. the danger of a hot stove).

At age 8 years (e.g. not to wander away in a shopping centre).

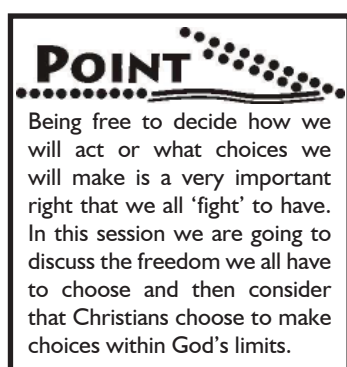
At age 13 years (e.g. what movies or video you can watch).

Discuss: Do those limits set at an earlier age still apply or are they now not necessary because you have a mature understanding about such matters?

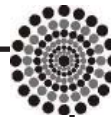
Cross out the ones the young people agree are no longer a concern.

Discuss: Are there limitations placed on you now that:

- seem too restrictive? (Note: Don't allow this to degenerate into an assessment of the parents' value system.)
- seem to you very appropriate for your age?



GOING DEEPER



LEADER TIP

Read the story of The First Supper – or better still have a reader and two actors for the parts of Adam and Eve.

I. 'The First Supper'

(With apologies to Moses Ben Amram)

Adam was hungry. He had had a long, challenging day naming animals. His afternoon nap had been refreshing, and his post-siesta introduction to Eve was exhilarating, to say the least. But as the sun began to set on their first day, Adam discovered that he had worked up an appetite.

'I think we should eat,' he said to Eve. 'Let's call the evening meal 'supper.'

'Oh, you're so decisive, Adam,' replied Eve admiringly. 'I like that . . .'

As they discussed how they should proceed, they decided that Adam would gather fruit from the garden, and Eve would prepare it for their meal. Adam set about his task and soon returned with a basket full of ripe fruit. He gave it to Eve, and went to soak his feet in the river until supper was ready. He had been reviewing the animals' names for about five minutes when he heard his wife's troubled voice.

'Adam, could you help me for a moment?'

'What seems to be the problem, dear?' he replied.

'I'm not sure which of these lovely fruits I should prepare for supper. I've prayed for guidance from the Lord, but I'm not really sure what He wants me to do. I certainly don't want to miss His will on my very first decision. Would you go to the Lord and ask Him what I should do about supper?'

Adam's hunger was intensifying, but he understood Eve's dilemma. So he left her to go speak with the Lord. Shortly, he returned. He appeared perplexed.

'Well?' probed Eve.

'He didn't really answer your question,' he answered.

'What do you mean? Didn't He say anything?'

'Oh yes,' replied Adam. 'But He just repeated what He said earlier today during the garden tour: 'From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat.' I assure you, Eve, I steered clear of the forbidden tree.'

'But that doesn't solve my problem,' said Eve. 'What should I prepare for tonight?'

Patently Adam replied, 'I've never seen such crisp juicy apples. I feel a sense of peace about them. Why don't you prepare them for supper? Maybe while you're getting them ready, you'll experience the same peace I have.'

'All right, Adam,' she agreed. 'I guess you've had more experience at making decisions than I have. I appreciate your leadership. I'll call you when supper is ready.'

'OK,' replied Adam, relieved. But soon Eve called again.

'More problems?' he asked.

‘Adam, I just can’t decide what I should do with these apples. I could slice them, dice them, mash them, bake them in a pie, a cobbler, fritters, or dumplings. Or we could just polish them and eat them raw. I really want to be your helper, but I also want to be certain of the Lord’s will on this decision. Would you be a dear and go just one more time to the Lord with my problem?’

Since he didn’t have any better solution himself, Adam did as Eve requested. When he returned, he said, ‘I got the same answer as before: ‘From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat.’

Adam and Eve were both silent for a moment. Then Adam said, ‘You know, Eve, the Lord made that statement as though it ought to fully answer my question. I’m sure He could have told me what to eat and how to eat it; but I think He wants us to make those decisions. It was the same way with the animals today. He just left their names up to me.’

Eve was incredulous. ‘Do you mean that it doesn’t matter which of these fruits we have for supper? Are you telling me that I can’t miss God’s will in this decision?’

Adam explained: ‘The only way you could do that is to pick some fruit from the forbidden tree. But all of these fruits are all right. Why, I suppose we could eat all of them.’ Adam snapped his fingers and exclaimed, ‘Say, that’s a great idea! Let’s have fruit salad for supper!’

Eve hesitated. ‘What’s a salad?’

[Extract from *Decision Making and the Will of God* (Lancer, 1980) by Garry Friesen. Used with permission.]

This humorous presentation of what could have been the first decision emphasises what we thought about during our starters. There are many choices that we need to make all day – every day and God expects us to use our common sense based on what we know about Him and His laws as we make these decisions.

What this story does remind us is that it was clearly part of the Creator’s design from the very beginning, to give us **freedom of choice within revealed limits**.

2. What are God’s laws for?

God loves and cares for us, the Bible clearly teaches us this. He also set down many rules and laws for us. Did He do this because He wants us to learn to obey rules or because He wants to keep us safe?

By the time Jesus came to earth there were religious leaders who thought that learning to obey the rules was all that mattered. They tried zealously to obtain God’s approval, by keeping laws in ways that God had never meant them to be kept.

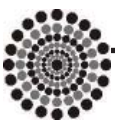
God had given humankind the fourth commandment: ‘Observe the Sabbath and keep it holy’ (Exodus 20:8, GNB), so that people could rest from work as God Himself had done and be refreshed. The day was to be used to delight in the Lord. (See Isaiah 58:13.)

Sadly, over the centuries the ‘explainers’ of the Law (the Pharisees and Scribes) had added and added to the list of what could or could not be done without this law being broken. Some of these rules bordered on the ridiculous, e.g. a traveller could go along the road on the day



LEADER TIP

Write up this last phrase to read together.



DEFINITION

Zealously: single-mindedly, passionately

before the Sabbath and place some of his possessions along it. This then allowed him to travel a lot further on the Sabbath day than the law allowed. Such nonsense was 'the letter of the law'.

The Jews had completely forgotten the spirit in which God had given this law. This legalisation and complication of laws meant that the ordinary people found them a burden to keep instead of a delight. This angered Jesus very much because He knew that God's laws were to keep us safe and to allow us to enjoy fellowship with Him. Jesus made some scathing remarks about these religious people. This angered them intensely. He also behaved very differently by living in contrast to how they expected He should live and their anger grew into deep hatred for Him.

Some examples of this can be found in John's gospel:

* John 5:8 - 11 – the healed man carrying his bed mat on the Sabbath because Jesus told him to pick up his mat and walk.

* John 8:1 - 7 – hypocritical judgement on the woman who had committed adultery and Jesus' magnificent reply as to who could throw the first stone.

* John 8:14 - 15 – their human judgements.

* John 9:13 - 16 – healing of a blind man on the Sabbath day.

The saddest thing about all of this is that the Pharisees were sincerely religious people whose chief desire was to uphold God's law . . . or **what they thought it was.**

Jesus' **choices**, based on the **spirit** of the law, were in contrast to the Pharisees' restrictions of the letter of law.

Knowing that God gave us certain laws to keep us safe, helps us to keep them joyfully.

Jesus did not live by, nor does He want us to live by, a long list of 'no-nos'. He lived a positive lifestyle. He showed us that we can live an abundant, positive life that is in complete harmony with God's will.

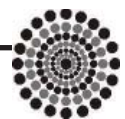
Discuss what Jesus meant when he said, 'People were not made for the good of the Sabbath. The Sabbath was made for the good of people.' (Mark 2:27, CEV)

3. How much does God guide us?

God is most interested in each of us, the Bible declares that He loves us and cares for us individually. He wants us to live according to His will. However as we saw in the drama, He does not have a specific instruction for everything, every moment of every day.

What do we mean when we say that 'we have a freedom of choice but within revealed limits'?

God has provided his moral (general) will which teaches us how we ought to believe and live. The Bible reveals God's moral will. Here we find general instructions which affect all of life, but do not determine each decision we should make. e.g. God's laws say we must not kill, steal, lie, hate, be envious etc. These clear rules prevent me from choosing to 'bash up' my little brother because he annoys me constantly. It helps me to know that I break His laws if I steal from a shop, or hate others.



LEADER TIP

On the work sheet there are some true or false questions that could well be answered at this point of the session.

True and false: No. 1 on junior / No. 3 on senior work sheet.



FOR SENIORS

All our choices/decisions must conform to the moral will of God, revealed in the Bible.

4. **Some verses to help us**

Read together Proverbs 3:5 - 6. It clearly tells us that those who trust God, and trust in His wisdom rather than their own worldly understanding, and acknowledge God in each part of their life, will lead a life that is successful by God's standards.

Read together Romans 12:1 - 2. (If it is not familiar to your group, read it several times.) The twelfth chapter of Romans deals with the right behaviour for a Christian.

Paul is saying, because of God's mercies (His goodness to us), give yourselves to God for obedient living. 'Then,' he says, 'you will be able to know the will of God – what is good and is pleasing to him and is perfect.'

He then gives specific examples of God's will. Read together Romans 12:9 - 13 as an example of this.

TAKING IT HOME

Living in the will of God is simply doing what pleases God. There are some restrictions in the choices we make as a Christian, but, within the limits of God's will we are free to choose from a wide variety of options.

Where do we find help?

Try talking to your leader, parents, discipleship partner, the corps officer if you're not sure about what the Bible teaches. You will find they are understanding and have almost certainly experienced what you're going through. When we really love God, wanting to do His will is important to us. Knowing what He expects comes from knowing His word.

FOLLOW-THRU

Suggest that the young people choose a leadership challenge to do, especially if they have not yet chosen to do any of the challenges in this segment.

REFERENCES

FRIESEN, G., *Decision Making and The Will of God*, Multnomah Press, 1980.



FREE to CHOOSE

1.

God is interested in each of us. The Bible declares that He loves us as individuals. He wants us to live according to His will but He does not have a specific instruction for everything, every moment of every day.

TRUE OR FALSE

God expects us to seek His guidance about:

- which shoe I put on first
- how I spend my pocket money
- my choice of swimming costume
- my attitude to the difficult kid at school
- (girls) my choice of long skirt or mini skirt for the party
- (boys) what joke I should tell my friends
- when I disagree with my parents
- whether I catch the bus or walk to school
- my choice of best friend
- the sport I decide to play
- the time I have tea
- what website to visit

2.

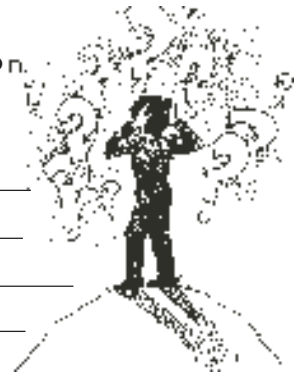
Use the 3 way test on hard decisions:

- Could it hurt me?
- Could it harm others?
- Does the Bible have a specific teaching about it?

Think of a hard decision you are faced with and apply the 3 way test to it. (You could talk this over with your discipleship partner, group leader or another older Christian.)

3.

Write down a decision of some significance that you must make soon. Write down all the possible choices you could make. Then place an asterisk beside the one you think is best.



4.

Circle the questions you feel that you're free to choose. Underline the ones that require knowing what God would want.

Do I look better in blue or red?
Should I defy my parents and stay up as late as I want to?
Will I study at high school?
What subjects will I study at?
Will I have a strawberry milkshake or a lemonade?
Will I play a game or watch TV?
Does it really matter what music I listen to?
Should I take time to read my Bible every day?
Should I go out with that guy/girl?

HIGHLIGHTS
• God wants to keep us safe not keep us in.
• There is satisfaction in making a wise choice.
• As we grow older, we are expected to make more decisions.
• Christians choose to please God in all they do.



FREE TO CHOOSE

Should I really go out with this girl/guy?

Does that yellow shirt look good with these shoes?

Will I do next year? What subjects

Does it matter what type of music I listen to?

Will I leave home?

Will I have grapes or apples for fruit today?

Do I really need to pray every day?

Should I be going to that website?

Which brand of petrol will we buy?

1. Circle the questions you consider are ones we decide after we have sought God's will.

**Decisions!
Decisions!
What will I do?**

2. Choose at least 3 of these boxed statements to discuss with your group.

Choices can be based on the question: 'Is it an important decision or an everyday decision?'

Use the 3 - way test on hard decisions:
Could it hurt me? Could it harm others?
Does the Bible have a specific teaching about it?

One of the greatest dilemmas we face in our teen years is how to make the best choices and decisions. We want our parents and leaders to give us more freedom to choose but we can be overwhelmed when they do leave us to make them alone.

Love God and do as you like. (Use Romans 8:8; Romans 6:1 - 2)

Accepting the privilege to choose for myself means I must also accept full responsibility if the results of my choice do not meet my expectations.

3.

TRUE OR FALSE

God expects us to seek His guidance about:

- which shoe I put on first
- how I spend my pocket money
- my choice of swimming costume
- my attitude to the difficult kid at school
- (girls) my choice of long skirt or mini skirt for the party
- (boys) what joke I should tell my friends
- when I disagree with my parents
- whether I catch the bus or walk to school
- my choice of best friend
- the sport I decide to play
- the time I have tea
- what website to visit

The Scribes were lawyers who interpreted the law and applied it to everyday life.

There is nothing we receive more reluctantly than advice!

For which of these could you find answers in the Bible?

4.

Take one false and one true response and explain why you think this is so.



Decisions!
Decisions!
What will I do?

Leave undone whatever you hesitate to do.



WHERE'D WE COME FROM?

AIM

To explain to the young people how the Army grew out of the Methodist Revival.

OBJECTIVES

As a result of this session the young people will be able to understand:

- ❖ the work begun by the Wesley brothers;
- ❖ the links the Booths had with the Methodist Church;
- ❖ some of the reasons for the structure of The Salvation Army.

INSIGHTS FOR THE LEADER

Over the past two decades society has emphasised that it is important to know 'our roots'. African Americans, adopted children and displaced war refugees have spent much time searching for their background history in an effort to understand themselves.

As part of the Christian Church it is important for Salvationists to understand that our roots go back further than William and Catherine Booth. They are of course biblically based but there are other sessions where this is discussed.

In this session we want to help the young people to understand that the Army 'grew out' of the Methodist revival – which was trying to bring the Methodist Church back to the fervour and dedication shown by the Wesleys. Booth greatly admired the work they did and the methods they employed to reach the masses of unchurched people in their time.

Understanding these roots helps us to understand why the Army was structured the way it was.

William and Catherine Booth, using their divinely-inspired initiative, broke away from a lot of the established church convention by effectively using new methods of reaching people with the gospel.

They were enterprising, hard working, completely devoted to their God-inspired task and The Salvation Army grew rapidly into a worldwide movement. Since William Booth was ordained as a Methodist preacher and was inspired by John Wesley, it is necessary to look more closely at the background of Booth's links with that denomination.

Both the Wesleys and the Booths were moved to follow Christ's command in Mark 16:15 and they urged those to whom they preached to spread the gospel message. (2 Timothy 2:2.)

SESSION 6

CHECKLIST

There is one Getting Started activity.

This session is by nature a 'history lesson.' You will need to be familiar with the content to avoid just reading the notes to the young people. Some pictures of the early beginnings of the Army would be useful, but remember that the session is not just Army history – it is to explain our 'roots' in Methodism, so pictures of Charles and John Wesley would be useful too. These can be found on the internet under several sites.

You have four sections of Going Deeper that need to be taught in order 1 - 4. After each section, refer the young people to the timeline on their worksheet and have them fill in the relevant information. Then move on to the next section.

POINT

It would be great to have famous roots or to be related to a friend. In today's session we are going to find out how The Salvation Army developed from the Methodist Church originally started by the Wesley brothers.

GETTING STARTED

Game: 'Your family tree'

Form into pairs. Each pair is to create a fictional family tree that shows how the two are related and are long lost relatives. Fill your family tree with famous ancestors.

Share your family tree with the group.

(Adapted from *No Supplies Required*, Dan McGill, Group Publishing 1995)



LEADER TIP

Have the young people fill in the gaps on the Army timeline on the work sheets. A completed time line is shown on page 48.

GOING DEEPER

1. The beginnings of Methodism

Methodism began as a society within the Church of England. In the 16th century the Church of England broke away from the Church of Rome and during the 17th century there was constant controversy within the Church of England itself.

It was in fact an age when many people began to look for a deeper, more devoted form of Christian living than simply following tradition. Some gathered themselves into groups of societies to encourage each other in prayer, Bible study and good works.

In 1729 some Oxford University students formed themselves into such a society and because they followed the same method of study as laid down by the university, they were nicknamed the 'Methodists'. Two of those students were brothers, John and Charles Wesley, and they brought that name to the societies which eventually became a Church.

In 1737 John and Charles travelled to America, where a new colony was being founded. Their real conversion experiences occurred within days of each other, in 1738. Charles on May 21st and John on May 24th when his heart was 'strangely warmed'. John became the preacher and Charles the songwriter of the Methodist movement.

Back in London, the established Church of England, fearful of this new, exuberant, public preaching adopted by the Wesley brothers, closed their churches to them. It was then that John began to preach in the open air, travelling on horseback. Wherever people listened to him, he formed societies. They often met in people's homes.

In 1791, when John Wesley died, there were 2,000 societies and 85,000 members in England. These societies were known as the Methodist Connexion.

2. Methodism and the Church of England

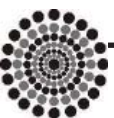
John Wesley lived and died a member of the Church of England. He never contradicted the teaching of the Church but admitted that out of necessity he had varied in some ways by:

- i. preaching in the open air;
- ii. using free prayer (i.e. not following the written prayers set down by the Church);
- iii. employing lay preachers;
- iv. forming societies (cell churches).



DEFINITION

Societies: were cell churches or small groups.



LEADER TIP

The young people could compare each method with how the Army functions.

Because the Wesley's style of preaching was not accepted by the mainstream church, Methodism finally became a separate denomination, growing from the cell churches.

In 1797 a 'new' connexion to the Methodist church was formed. It was as a minister in the 'Methodist New Connexion' that William Booth was ordained and served.

3. **Methodism to Salvation Army**

William Booth himself was totally inspired by the preaching and dedication of John Wesley. Wesley had passion to preach the gospel message to people of all classes, this included preaching in the street.

John Wesley had a real compassion for better conditions for the lower classes.

Wesley opened a labour factory for the poor, along with a medical centre and a bank; he visited prisons to preach to the prisoners.

William Booth followed John Wesley's example – he became a travelling preacher, taking the message to all classes.

Gradually, William and Catherine felt restricted by the boundaries of the Methodist New Connexion and resigned in 1861.

In 1865 an invitation to take charge of the Tent Mission in East London was accepted, which William Booth later acknowledged as the starting point of The Salvation Army.

The fact that he was not permitted to preach in the Methodist churches any longer, meant that Booth used whatever secular buildings were available; theatres, wool sheds, dance halls, disused warehouses and so on.

4. **The Salvation Army's beginnings**

The actual registration of the birth of The Salvation Army was made by William Booth in a letter to a Church magazine, the 'Revival', on 17th August 1865, though 'The Salvation Army' was not then the name of the organisation.

He proposed to establish a Christian Revival Association which became known as 'The East London Christian Mission'.

Basing his outreach on John Wesley's methods, Booth's 'mission' distributed food, clothing and blankets, opened soup kitchens, provided free teas as well as conducting on average 50 services indoors and outdoors each week.

During these early years new Christian Mission stations were opened all over London and the suburbs and in Wales in 1874.

In November 1870, the first conference of the Christian Mission as it was then known, assembled to make its first Constitution. This was based mainly upon Methodism, but with one radical difference: **women were admitted to full participation** not only in the work of the Mission but also in its government. The rules of the Christian Mission and the Methodist New Connexion show basic similarities but total abstinence from alcohol was added to the rules of the Christian Mission and made a condition of holding office.

The title of General Superintendent was dropped for William Booth and he was simply known as **The General**. Terms like the 'hallelujah Army' and speaking at the 'war Congress' were used.



FOR SENIORS

It had to be remembered that military Christianity was very much in the public mind at this time. Hymns like 'Onward Christian Soldiers', 'Hold the fort' and 'Soldiers of Christ arise', were all written and widely used at this time. Political war between countries was also on people's minds. An 'army fighting the forces of evil' caught on quickly. People readily understood the military terms the Army adopted.

The name 'The Salvation Army' came into being when George Scott Railton was writing an article for a report in 1878. He wrote 'the Christian Mission is a volunteer army of converted working people'. William Booth objected strongly to the word 'volunteer' and with his pen struck through it, substituting the word 'salvation'. The name **The Salvation Army** appeared in the Christian Mission magazine in September 1878.

Steps were then taken to have the deed poll changed in Parliament to register the new name officially and no longer would the organisation follow closely the format of the Methodist New Connexion – there was to be a greater freedom for putting into effect the principles of what was now called 'The Salvation Army'.

A time to reflect (senior work sheet)

When asked to define the term 'Methodist', John Wesley replied: 'A Methodist is one who lives according to the method laid down in the Bible.'

- ❖ How would you define 'Salvationists'?
- ❖ How do you feel The Salvation Army is fulfilling the function for which it was born?

TAKING IT HOME

The Salvation Army wasn't just a 'good idea' that someone had 'out of the blue'. It is biblically based and evolved from the Methodist Revival. Understanding this can help us to understand better the reasons behind some of our Army activities and methods.

Share together prayers of thanks for the faithfulness and ingenuity of dedicated people like the Wesley brothers and William and Catherine Booth.

FOLLOW-THRU

The junior exercise links as follows:

- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| 1 with C; | 2 with E; |
| 3 with D; | 4 with B; |
| 5 with G; | 6 with A; |
| 7 with F. | |

Check on the Getting Involved in Outreach/Service and encourage the young people to tackle challenges reflected in today's session e.g. open-air outreach or helping a smaller corps.

REFERENCES

BATES, Jim, *Visiting a Methodist Church*, The Religious Education Press, 1977.


COLLIER, Richard, *The General Next to God*, Fontana, Collins, 1965.

DAVEY, Cyril, *John Wesley and the Methodists*, Abingdon Press.

SANDALL, Robert, *History of The Salvation Army*, Vol. 1, 1865 - 1878.

OUR ARMY TIMELINE

1700



1703 Paul preaching in Rome

1703 John Wesley born
1707 Charles Wesley born

1729 **Methodist Societies** formed

1738 conversion experience of John & Charles

1754 Church of Rome

1754 Break away group becomes **Church of England**

1771 Church of England closed **its doors** on the Wesleys who started **open air ministry**

1771 Methodist Connexion has **2000** societies and **85,000** members



1791 **John Wesley died**

1797 Methodist **New Connexion** formed

1800

1829 Catherine Mumford and William Booth born

1841 William's first Tent Mission


1855 William and Catherine married

1861 William **resigned** from Methodists to be a **travelling** evangelist

1865 **The birth of** The Salvation Army

1870 First conference of Christian Mission admitted women to full participation

1878 William crossed out the word **'volunteer'** and wrote 'salvation' army



1900

1912 William died

2000

My corps _____

My birthdate and name _____

Places where William preached:
* theatres
* woolsheds
* dance halls
* used warehouses

Write this statement where you think it best fits in our Army timeline:
'The Salvation Army exists to save souls, grow saints and serve suffering humanity.'

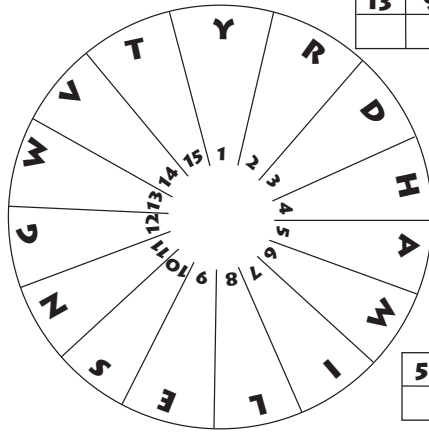
WHERE DID WE COME FROM?

1. The Christian Mission was organised through a conference whose members seemed to spend a lot of time talking and not 'doing'.

William decided to act by setting up a military style of government.

What did he say about the movement?

Use the circle code to decode the answer.



13	9

5	2	9

5	11

5	2	6	1

13	5	12	7	11	12

13	5	2

5	12	5	7	11	10	15

10	7	11

5	11	3

15	4	9

3	9	14	7	8

2.

Read through these features of the early Methodist Church and The Salvation Army. Link together the similar ones.

METHODISM

1. It was a time when people were looking for a deeper, more sincere form of spiritual experience.
2. The Wesleys did not set out to form a new denomination.
3. The Wesleys were inspired by the enthusiasm of the Moravian style of Christian faith.
4. The Church of England was worried by the exuberance of this new way of preaching.
5. Wesley did not ever depart from the basic teachings of the Church of England but his methods differed:
 - * preaching in the open air;
 - * using free prayer (not read from a prayer book);
 - * employing lay preachers;
 - * forming societies (similar to Corps).
6. Wesley sought to reclaim people of all classes.
7. The Wesleys opened a labour factory for unemployed people.

THE SALVATION ARMY

- a. William's philosophy was – 'go for souls and go for the worst'.
- b. The Methodist New Connexion was not impressed with the Booths' open air ministry.
- c. It was a time when people were looking for a practical way to express their Christian faith.
- d. The Booths were inspired by the Wesleys' zeal and forthright style.
- e. William Booth did not intend to start a new church.
- f. William had a vision for providing employment and social opportunity, referred to as 'In Darkest England and the Way Out'.
- g. Booth felt he had to adopt different methods to reach the people. He:
 - * featured testimony by new converts in meetings;
 - * had a program to feed the hungry;
 - * held open air meetings;
 - * used a free style of worship.

HIGHLIGHTS

- John and Charles Wesley were brothers who lived in England in the 1700s.
- They wanted to preach to unchurched people so formed societies to do this.
- The Methodist Church was established from these societies.
- William Booth was a trained minister in the Methodist New Connexion.
- William led meetings in a huge tent before renting halls and opening new Christian Mission stations.

OUR ARMY TIMELINE

1700



Church of Rome

Paul preaching in Rome

1534 Break away group becomes _____

1703 John Wesley born
Charles Wesley born

1729 _____ formed

_____ conversion experience of John & Charles

Church of England closed _____ on the Wesleys who started _____

1771 Methodist Connexion has _____ societies and _____ members

1791 _____

1797 Methodist _____ formed

1800

_____ William's first Tent Mission

1829 Catherine Mumford and William Booth born



1855 William and Catherine married

1861 William _____ from Methodists to be a _____ evangelist

1865 _____ The Salvation Army

1870 First conference of Christian Mission admitted women to full participation



_____ William crossed out the word _____ and wrote 'salvation' army

1900



Places where William preached:

_____ William died

2000

My corps _____

My birthdate and name _____

Write this statement where you think it best fits in our Army timeline:
'The Salvation Army exists to save souls, grow saints and serve suffering humanity.'

WHERE DID WE COME FROM?

A - THE BEGINNING OF METHODISM

1. What was the reaction of thinking Christians to a religion that just followed traditional rites and ceremonies?

2. How were the Methodists named?

3. How were the Wesley brothers responsible for the beginning of this new Church?

4. Why did John begin to preach in the open air rather than in churches?

B - METHODISM AND THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

1. The Wesleys were really members of what church?

2. Four methods were used that were different to those of the established church. Name them:

C - METHODISM TO SALVATION ARMY

1. What were some of John Wesley's practical acts to help the poor?

2. What did William Booth acknowledge as the starting point of The Salvation Army?

3. Why did Booth often preach in theatres, old woolsheds or disused factories?

D - THE SALVATION ARMY'S BEGINNINGS

1. What practical help did William offer to the poor?

2. What was The Salvation Army's name between 1865 and 1878?

3. What two differences were included in the conditions of the Christian Mission?



A TIME TO REFLECT

When asked to define the term 'Methodist', John Wesley replied: 'A Methodist is one who lives according to the method laid down in the Bible.' How would you define 'Salvationist'?

How do you feel The Salvation Army is fulfilling the function for which it was born?



WE BELIEVE@ THE BIBLE.COM

AIM

To remind the young people that the Army's statement of belief and practice is founded on Scripture.

OBJECTIVES

As a result of this session the young people will be able to:

- ❖ better understand the words used in Doctrine I.
- ❖ recognise that The Salvation Army's statement of faith and practice is firmly based on Scripture;
- ❖ determine that they can accept such beliefs and practices for their own lives.

INSIGHTS FOR THE LEADER

This session looks at how our doctrine has a base that is firmly built on scriptural truth. Have the aim and objectives clearly in your mind as you complete your preparation and during the teaching of the session. In this way you will avoid the temptation to be side-tracked from the main thrust of the study.

You will need to be familiar with The Salvation Army viewpoint on several controversial aspects. e.g. The Salvation Army does not believe that God dictated every word in the Bible. Both Jesus and New Testament writers often quoted the Scriptures without repeating the actual words. Having studied the material on pages 57 - 59, you will feel much more confident about answering questions that might arise. If you are unable to give an answer, assure them that you will find out and get back to them. (Make sure you do!)

Extra material relating to the four main points of Doctrine I is at the end of this session (p.57 - 59):

- i. the Scriptures,
- ii. of the Old and New Testaments,
- iii. were given by inspiration of God,
- iv. and that they only constitute the divine rule of Christian faith.

This material is designed to be used with Going Deeper. Become familiar with it and select those parts of the articles which will be most useful for your group.

SESSION 7

FROM THE BIBLE

Selected references.

CHECKLIST ✓

There are two suggested Getting Started activities. Choose and prepare accordingly for the one you will use.

There are two teaching approaches. The first one is the most straightforward way to teach the doctrine if your young people are not familiar with it already. Have on hand a Bible, a song book to show the Doctrines, plus an actual Articles of War to show to them.

Decide whether you will make enlarged copies of the printed material (found on pages 57 - 59) or make photocopies of it, or just read out relevant points from various articles. (Use as many different readers as possible).

Approach 2 is mainly for seniors and should be used in conjunction with the first side of the work sheet.

GETTING STARTED

POINT

What are the advantages of having a written (or printed) 'Word of God'? We can look for ourselves to check something is so. We can see that what we believe is based on God's word. This session is reminding us that our doctrines are based on Bible teaching.

1. Game

Play 'Chinese Whispers'. Read a fairly complex two or three sentence story to the first person at one end of a line of young people, e.g. 'Michael says to tell Nathan that Mark won't be able to meet him at 3.15 pm in Civic Park. He'll meet him instead tomorrow afternoon at 4 pm in front of Clark and Dixon's on Fortunas Street.'

The young people pass it on one by one to the next person (no repeats allowed) until it gets to the other end of the line. Then ask the last person to tell the others what he/she heard. Ask the young people how this sort of confusion could have been avoided. (Write it down, pass on the writing.)

Or

2. Choosing the best

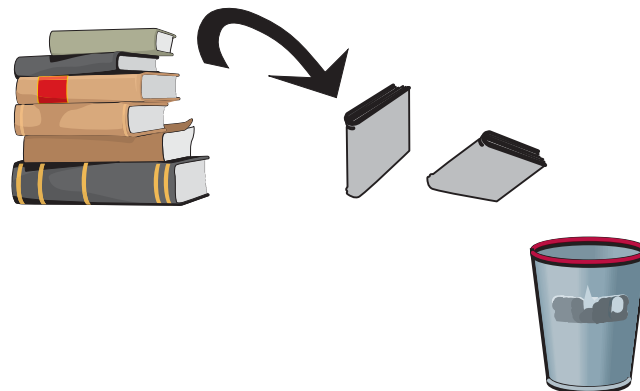
What are we going to base our values on? What will influence our decisions? How do we know what's of lasting importance to us? How can we know when something is second-rate or harmful? How do we decide something is good and helpful?

Have a collection of books in book ends. Include some comics which express violence, also other books of questionable content.

Place your wastepaper basket at the edge of the table. Ask young people to check the books over and decide what is harmful and what is helpful.

POINT

You are at the age where you are forming definite ideas about beliefs that you are going to accept or reject. Many ideas are put before us. Some are good, some are second-rate, some are even harmful to our developing personality. We need to base our values on something that has stood the test of time. It is good to know that what you are asked to believe as a young Christian at the Army is based on the Scriptures and this is what we want to think about in this session.



GOING DEEPER

1. Looking at Doctrine I

Give the young people a few minutes to discuss how they would define the words 'creed' and 'doctrine'. Allow them to write down their ideas and to read them to each other.

Have some/all of the following statements written on a board or chart ready to show to them.

- The word 'creed' comes from the Latin word 'credo' – I believe.
- A creed is what I believe. It need not necessarily be religious.
- How I live actually shows what my creed is.
- Doctrines are a group of religious beliefs sometimes called articles or statements of faith.

Do 'creeds' or doctrines matter? If so, why are they important? If 'my creed' is 'me first, all others after', how would it affect my behaviour:

- a. on the sports field?

- b. at school?
- c. in my home?
- d. when I get my driving licence/drive a car?

Show Doctrine 1 by having it written up previously.

We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God, and that they only constitute the Divine rule of Christian faith and practice.

Have the young people read the doctrine together. Ask them to choose the four key phrases and highlight them:

- Scriptures
- Old and New Testaments
- Inspiration of God
- Christian faith and practice.

Deal with each one of the phrases:

a. **Scriptures**

If you can obtain one, show the young people a picture of the Jewish ceremony of 'rejoicing in the Law', or how the Scriptures are held in deep respect. (e.g. page 194 of *The Lion Handbook of Christian Belief*.)

The Scriptures should be special to us. In some religions if their sacred book is damaged, it will be destroyed because it is an insult to their god to treat his word in such a way.

Some people have died because of their determination to make the Scriptures freely available to all people. That is how precious God's word was to them.

Use the extra material on p.57 as best suits your group. e.g. you could decide to use it in an interview. Highlight the questions so that one young person can ask them and another person or leader could read the replies. (This is always more effective if those taking part have read the material through beforehand.)

b. **Old and New Testaments**

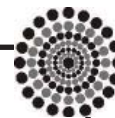
Ask the young people what the word 'testament' means. Some of them will no doubt have heard the term 'This is the last will and testament of ...'

Testament means 'covenant' – it is a solemn agreement between two parties.

When we talk about the Old Testament, we are referring to the old covenant God made with His people.

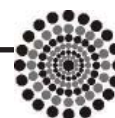
Have the young people read the following verses.

- Genesis 12:1 - 3 (This tells us of God's original covenant with Abraham and through him to the Hebrew nation.)
- Exodus 3:16 - 18a (This shows God assuring Moses that He was working through the covenant with Abraham's descendants.)
- Amos 5:14 - 15 (God had to remind the people constantly that their part of the covenant was to be obedient and to be a blessing to others.)
- Jeremiah 31:31 - 34 (God promises to make a new covenant.)
- Ezekiel 36:26 - 28 (The new covenant will be with individuals.)
- Hebrews 9:15 (It is through Christ that we now come to God in the new covenant.)



LEADER TIP

Have the extra material from pages 57 - 59 photocopied, if you have decided to use it, ready to hand out to senior young people.



LEADER TIP

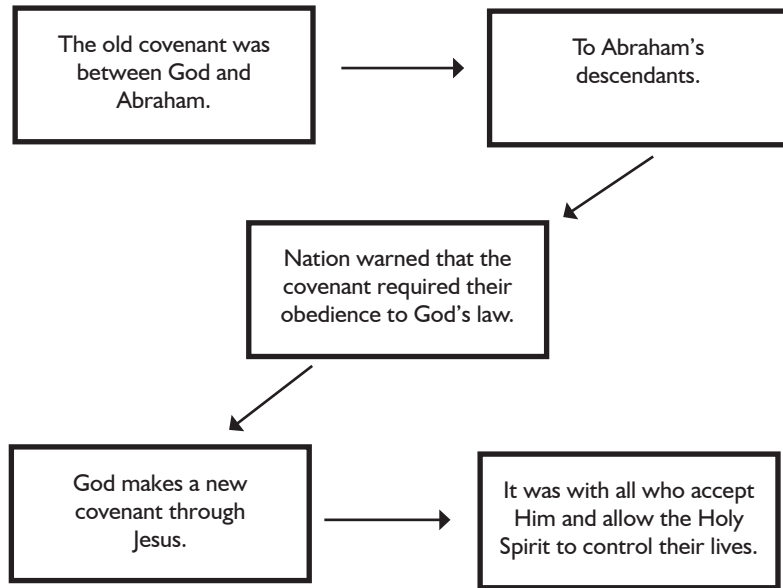
Show the young people the extra material on p. 57 explaining that the Old Testament was originally written in Hebrew and the New Testament was written in Greek. Translations into English were made in the 1500's and today we have more modern translations so that all who want to, may read with understanding God's word.

So the Old Testament tells us about God's old agreement and the New Testament explains His new covenant.



LEADER TIP

Have this diagram copied onto a chart, overhead transparency or Powerpoint presentation and read it with the young people.



LEADER TIP

Photocopies of this page with the diagrams could be discussed with seniors or have a drawing of the illustrations or Powerpoint presentation as you go through each point.

c. Inspiration of God

Use the extra material on p.58 to define and explain this term. Select the quotes most suitable for your group and have them read well. Check that the young people understand what each passage is saying.

(For senior groups especially) Have the young people compose a simple definition to write on the work sheet.

Not dictation ...

but the Holy Spirit 'breathing God' to the authors.

d. Christian faith and practice

Discuss with your group:

- Does what we believe affect how we live our lives?
- Can I claim to be a Christian and not obey God's commands?

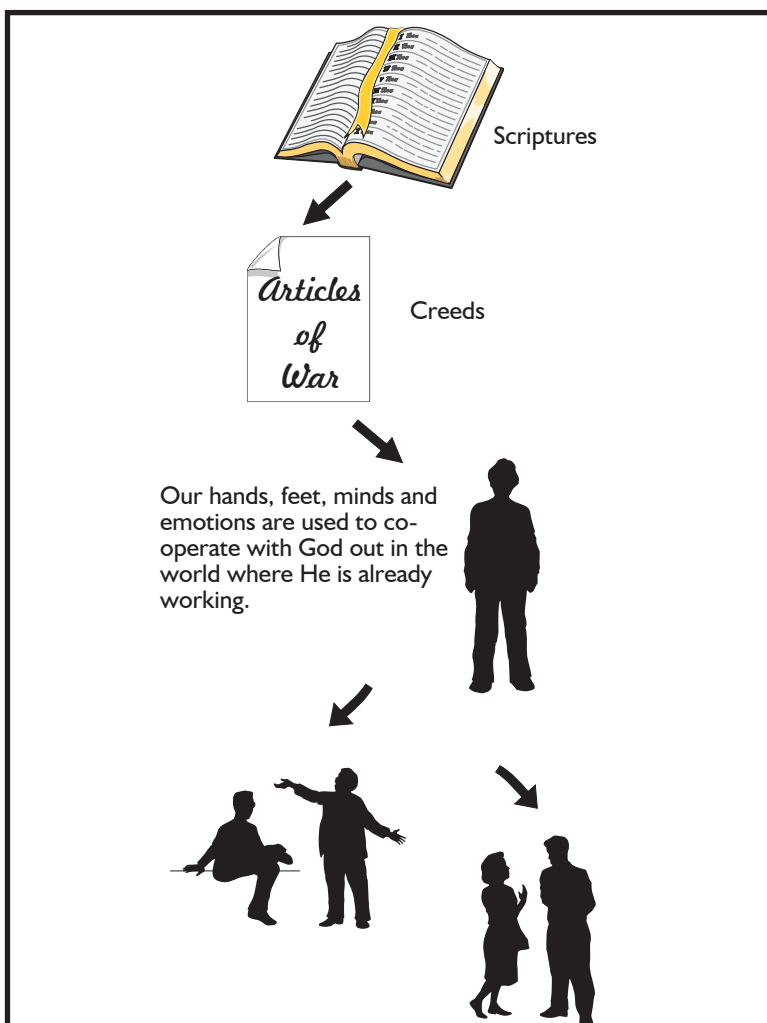
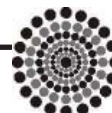
Read and discuss with your group Matthew 7:21. Remind the young people of the teaching Jesus gave in the parable about the sheep and the goats (Matthew 25:31 - 46). What is He telling us?

William Booth quickly learned that the expression of Christianity had to be very practical when he was working with the poor of London's East End. This was why The Salvation Army's social work grew at such an amazing rate.

It is also why a person being enrolled as a Salvation Army soldier makes a covenant about their faith – what they believe and also about how they will practise that faith by living it out in their daily life.

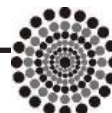
LEADER TIP

Do not try to read aloud Matthew 25:31 - 46 as it is too long, but it does show us very plainly that Jesus expects all of His followers to put their faith into practice.



LEADER TIP

Show a copy of this diagram to your group and discuss what it is saying.



Ask the young people to consider which parts of it talk about our faith and which parts speak of our practice. Allow them several minutes to look at it noticing this. Then ask various young people to read one section explaining what we believe and another about how we are to practise that belief.

It would be appropriate at this point for the group to complete the activity suggested on the work sheet.

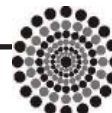
Our creeds are based on the Bible and lead to us putting into practice what God teaches us.

2. Workshop (Suited for senior groups.)

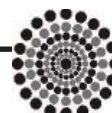
Give out senior work sheets. Go through the session material in the four sections as they are shown on the work sheet. (Alternately you could enlarge each section.)

LEADER TIP

Have a copy of the Articles of War for each young person to read. (It is on the senior work sheet, but only parts of it are on the junior one.)



FOR SENIORS



Ask the young people to make their own definition following the section titles i.e. 1) Scriptures; 2) Old and New Testaments; 3) Inspiration; 4) Christian faith and practice.

Allow enough time for hearing each outline before the session ends.

TAKING IT HOME

We need a lot of wisdom to deal with living in today's world. We need the best guidance we can get. We need words and ideas tried and tested so that we know we can depend on them. Everyone, whether they realise it or not, lives by some 'doctrine' – a set of beliefs and values. We believe these need to be firmly based on Scripture.

Our doctrines come from the inspired Scriptures. Doctrines, however, as articles of belief, may be known without having any positive effect upon life and conduct. The essential link between intellectual faith and day-to-day Christian living is our commitment to God. When we 'hand over' to Him, the Holy Spirit will communicate truth, and help us to live it out – wherever we are, in whatever age.

FOLLOW-THRU

Encourage the young people to look at a challenge in the Get Involved and Grow in Worship section e.g. read the Bible in public or take part in a Scripture presentation.

REFERENCES

BETTENSON, (Editor), *Documents of the Christian Church*, 1963, Oxford University Press.

COUTTS, John, *This We Believe*, Challenge Books, 1976.

CUNNINGHAM, Commissioner Alfred G., *The Bible – Two Studies for Salvationists*, I.H.Q. London, 1961.

LARSSON, John, *Doctrine Without Tears*, The Salvation Army, London, 1974.

The Doctrine We Adorn, I.H.Q. London, 1982.

'THE SCRIPTURES'

Establishing the Canon of Scripture

How did people decide which books were Holy Scripture and which were not? This process took place over many years, and the most important questions were:

Was the book read in church services? There was no printing in those days and all books were written in pen and ink on papyrus. A single Gospel would form a complete book in itself, rather like a large exercise book. Only a wealthy church could afford a complete Bible and the average Christian would hear the Scriptures read aloud. Books which had been so read for generations were felt to be holy.

Did it date back to the apostles? The early Christians, like the North Africans in A.D. 180, felt that the words of Jesus, and the story of His life and death and resurrection, were especially precious. So too were the writings of the great apostles, especially the 'just man', Paul. Teaching which came from the apostles, they felt, could not be false.

Did it teach the true faith? There was much confusion in the Early Church about true and false doctrine. This is seen in the New Testament itself. We read in 1 John 4:1 (CEV), '... Many false prophets have already gone out into the world'. Such wrong ideas were sometimes spread in writings named after apostles who never composed them! So there was a 'Gospel of Peter' that had nothing to do with Peter!

Hence the Christians needed to decide which books were 'canonical' and which were not. In A.D. 325 Bishop Eusebius, of Caesarea, summed up the situation like this:

Accepted books. These included all those in our New Testament except those in the 'disputed' category.

Disputed books. These included the letters of James and Jude, 2 Peter, and 2 and 3 John. Some felt that these did not belong in the New Testament, whilst others had doubts about the book of Revelation. Also in the 'disputed' class were other valuable writings like the 'letter of Barnabas', which some churches regarded as 'canonical'.

False books. These were writings like the so called 'Gospel of Peter' which gave wrong teaching.

Doubts lingered longest in the Eastern churches, chiefly about 2 Peter, Jude and Revelation; but, by A.D. 367, Athanasius of Alexandria gave a list of New Testament books identical with the ones we have today.

Taken from *This We Believe*, pages 16 - 18

The making of the New Testament was spread over a long period. The first time we read of a list of books exactly the same as ours is in A.D. 367. There were several reasons for the delay. The Early Church was born into a non-literary situation and memories were much more retentive than ours are today. The normal way of transmitting knowledge was by word of mouth.

The first to be collected were Paul's letters.

Although these had been written, in most cases, to deal with an immediate situation in a definite community at a particular time, they are still relevant to our needs today. Mark's was the first Gospel to be written down. The stories of Jesus' life and teaching had been preaching material since His resurrection, but we must rejoice that they have been preserved for us in writing in this way.

From *Manual of Bible Teaching*, 1971, page 96.

'...OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS...'

צה	Psalm XCV. צה
1	לְכוּ נִרְנְנָה לַיהוָה
2	נִקְרָמָה פָּנֵינוּ בַתְּהוֹרָה
3	כִּי אֵל גָּדוֹל יְהוָה
4	אֲשֶׁר בְּיָדוֹ מִחַקְרֵי-אָרֶץ
5	אֲשֶׁר-לֵו הַיָּם וְהוּא עֲשֵׂהוּ
6	בָּאוּ נִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה וְנִכְרַעַה
7	כִּי הוּא אֱלֹהֵינוּ
8	הַיּוֹם אִם-בִּקְלוֹ תִשְׁמְעוּ:
9	כִּיּוֹם מָסָה בַּפִּיךָ:

The Scriptures of the Old Testament were written in Hebrew. This is how Psalm 95 appears.

The New Testament was originally written in Greek. This is what Ephesians 4:1 - 10 looks like.

The Unity of the Body

4 Παρακαλῶ οὖν ὑμᾶς ἐγὼ ὁ δέσμιος ἐν κυρίῳ ἀξίως περιπατῆσαι τῆς κλήσεως ἧς ἐκλήθητε, 2 μετὰ πάσης ταπεινοφροσύνης καὶ πραΰτητος, μετὰ μακροθυμίας, ἀνεχόμενοι ἀλλήλων ἐν ἀγάπῃ, 3 σπουδάζοντες τηρεῖν τὴν ἐνότητα τοῦ πνεύματος ἐν τῷ συνδέσμῳ τῆς εἰρήνης· 4 ἐν σῶμα καὶ ἐν πνεῦμα, καθὼς καὶ ἐκλήθητε ἐν μιᾷ ἐλπίδι τῆς κλήσεως ὑμῶν· 5 εἰς κύριος, μία πίστις, ἐν βάπτισμα, 6 εἰς θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ πάντων, ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων καὶ διὰ πάντων καὶ ἐν πᾶσιν.

7 Ἐνὶ δὲ ἐκάστῳ ἡμῶν ἐδόθη ἡ χάρις κατὰ τὸ μέτρον τῆς δωρεᾶς τοῦ Χριστοῦ. 8 διὸ λέγει,

Ἄναβας εἰς ὕψος ἠχμαλώτευσεν αἰχμαλωσίαν, ἔδωκεν¹ δόματα τοῖς ἀνθρώποις.

⁹ τὸ δὲ Ἄνεβη τί ἐστίν, εἰ μὴ ὅτι καὶ κατέβη² εἰς τὰ κατώτερα [μέρη] τῆς γῆς; 10 ὁ καταβὰς αὐτός ἐστιν καὶ ὁ ἀναβὰς ὑπεράνω πάντων τῶν οὐρανῶν, ἵνα πληρώσῃ

'WERE GIVEN BY INSPIRATION OF GOD...'

DICTIONATION OR INSPIRATION?

We speak of the Bible as the 'inspired' word of God, but there are at least two mistaken views concerning this 'inspiration'. Some suggest that the various authors were inspired by the Holy Spirit only in the same way as a poet or preacher might be inspired. If this were so, then David and Milton, Isaiah and John Bunyan, Paul and Plato would be on a par in this respect.

The other view is that God dictated every word of Scripture – which is therefore His direct utterance – without any error whatsoever. This view enables unbelievers to discredit the Bible. Any slight inaccuracy in historical or scientific fact is seized upon and taken as proof of lack of divine origin.

Jesus Himself often quoted from the Scriptures and neither He nor the New Testament writers concerned themselves to repeat actual words.

From 'Manual of Bible Teaching', 1971, page 96.

In Latin, spiro means 'I breathe'. Ancient people naturally thought of the mysterious life of God as breath, wind or spirit. Thus, 'inspiration' means 'inbreathing', and indicates that God gave special help to the minds of the men who wrote the Bible.
From 'This we believe', page 19.

The Salvation Army claims for the Bible that it contains a revelation of the feelings of God towards us and of His wishes as to our conduct toward Him and our fellow men. It gives us everything in the way of a written revelation that is necessary to salvation, holy living and our welfare. Among other things the Bible describes:

1. The history of much of God's dealings with the human race.
2. His view of human conduct, and the principles which ought to regulate it.
3. The redemption of mankind by Jesus Christ.
4. The possibility of our restoration to His favour.
5. The conditions of salvation.
6. The final future judgement.
7. The everlasting destiny of mankind.

The Army also claims that the Bible is the only authorised and trustworthy written revelation of the mind of God. In this, it stands alone, not one among other such scriptures.

From 'The Bible – Two Studies', pages 13 - 14.

'...AND THEY ONLY CONSTITUTE THE DIVINE RULE OF CHRISTIAN FAITH...'

Creeds

THE APOSTLES' CREED

a. 'The Old Roman Creed'

1. I believe in God almighty.
2. And in Christ Jesus, his only son, our Lord
3. Who was born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
4. Who was crucified under Pontius Pilate and was buried
5. And the third day rose from the dead
6. Who ascended into heaven
7. And sitteth on the right hand of the Father
8. Whence he cometh to judge the living and the dead
9. And in the Holy Ghost
10. The holy church
11. The remission of sins
12. The resurrection of the flesh
13. The life everlasting.

ONE CHRISTIAN FAITH

These two great creeds hold the essentials of the one Christian Faith. They do not take the place of the Bible. In fact, their importance came from the Bible. Different churches use them in different ways and understand them rather differently. They are like 'labels' for what we, as Christians, believe. Archbishop Temple found a good way for expressing this when he said, 'The creed is like a flag at the head of the Army of God'. William Booth, our Army's founder, wrote in 1867 about The Christian Mission (which afterwards became The Salvation Army): 'Our creed is the Bible, our work is to publish the gospel, and we welcome as co-workers [workers with us] all who hold the word of God as the standard of faith and practice.'

Salvation Army doctrine is Christian doctrine. In other words we do not believe differently from the churches in the great basic doctrines of Christianity, we share the one Christian Faith.

- (1) I believe in God the Father almighty
- (2) I also believe in Jesus Christ his only son, our Lord,
- (3) conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary,
- (4) suffered under Pontius Pilate, crucified, dead and buried; he descended into hell,
- (5) Rose again the third day,
- (6) ascended into heaven,
- (7) sat down at the right hand of the Father,
- (8) thence he is to come to judge the living and the dead.
- (9) I believe in the Holy Ghost,
- (10) the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints,
- (11) the remission of sins,
- (12) the resurrection of the flesh and life eternal.

b. A Gallican Creed of the Sixth Century

c. The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible:

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all the worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made:

Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man, and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried, and the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father. And He shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

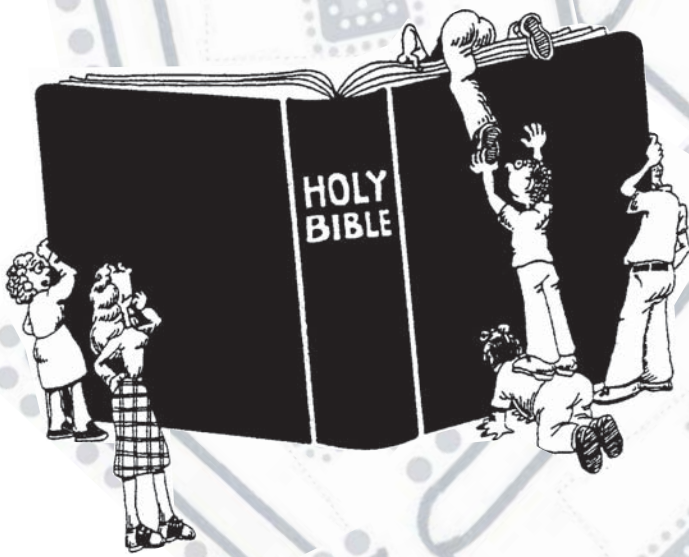
And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and the Giver of life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, who spake by the prophets.

And I believe in one catholic and apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins. And I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.

We believe@thebible.com

Salvation Army doctrines are based on _____

Doctrine 1 says: _____



HIGHLIGHTS

- God inspired the writers of the books of the Bible.
- From the Bible we find how God expects us to live.
- The doctrines of The Salvation Army are based firmly on the great biblical truths.

2 Peter 1:21 says:

Here are some statements (articles) from The Salvation Army Articles of War.

They are part of what soldiers promise on their enrolment.

Read them through with your leader.

Using a highlighter or other pen, colour or underline with one colour those articles that have to do with our faith. Use another colour to indicate those that tell us how we should conduct ourselves (i.e. our practice).

Articles of War A SOLDIER'S COVENANT

WE BELIEVE that the Lord Jesus Christ has, by His suffering and death, made an atonement for the whole world so that whosoever will may be saved.

I WILL uphold Christian integrity in every area of my life, allowing nothing in thought, word or deed that is unworthy, unclean, untrue, profane, dishonest or immoral.

HAVING accepted Jesus Christ as my Saviour and Lord, and desiring to fulfil my membership of His Church on earth as a soldier of The Salvation Army, I now by God's grace enter into a sacred covenant.

WE BELIEVE that repentance towards God, faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and regeneration by the Holy Spirit are necessary to salvation.

I WILL abstain from alcoholic drink, tobacco, the non-medical use of addictive drugs, gambling, pornography, the occult, and all else that could enslave the body or spirit.

WE BELIEVE in the immortality of the soul; in the resurrection of the body; in the general judgment at the end of the world; in the eternal happiness of the righteous; and in the endless punishment of the wicked.

I WILL maintain Christian ideals in all my relationships with others; my family and neighbours, my colleagues and fellow salvationists, those to whom and for whom I am responsible, and the wider community.

I WILL be a faithful steward of my time and gifts, my money and possession, my body, my mind and my spirit, knowing that I am accountable to God.

WE BELIEVE that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament were given by inspiration of God; and that they only constitute the Divine rule of Christian faith and practice.

I NOW call upon all present to witness that I enter into this covenant and sign these articles of war of my own free will, convinced that the love of Christ, who died and now lives to save me, requires that the this devotion of my life to His service for the salvation of the whole world; and therefore do here declare my full determination, by God's help, to be a true soldier of The Salvation Army.

WE BELIEVE that continuance in a state of salvation depends upon continued obedient faith in Christ.

These Articles of War are based on the teachings of the _____

We believe @ the bible.com

Write down the definition your group forms about the underlined words.

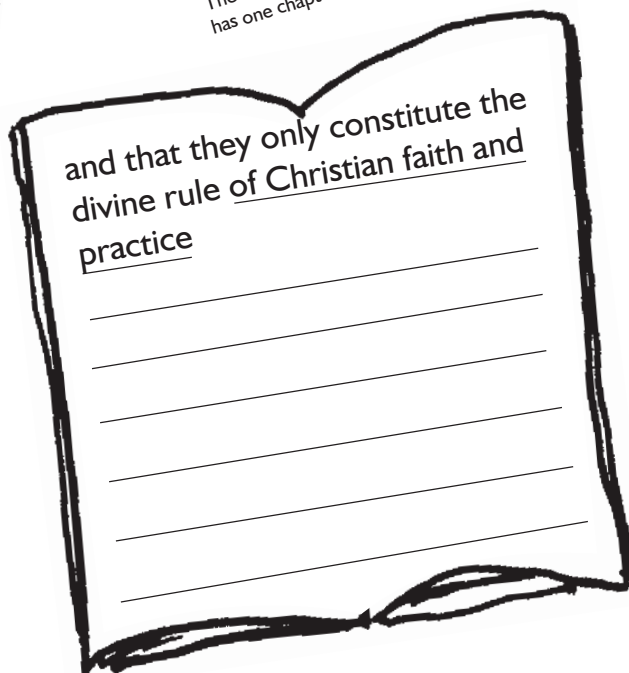
There is a span of approximately 400 years between the Old and New Testament.

Ezra assembled most of the books of the Old Testament.



Psalms 90 was written by Moses.

The letter to Philemon has one chapter only.



The longest chapter in the Bible is Psalm 119.

With your group and leader read through these Articles of War. Salvationists sign them when they are enrolled as a soliders prepared to commit their lives to God's service.

The Salvation Army Articles of War

A Soldier's Covenant



HAVING accepted Jesus Christ as my Saviour and Lord, and desiring to fulfil my membership of His Church on earth as a soldier of The Salvation Army, I now by God's grace enter into a sacred covenant.

I believe and will live by the truths of the word of God expressed in The Salvation Army's eleven articles of faith:

- We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God; and that they only constitute the Divine rule of Christian faith and practice.
- We believe that there is only one God, who is infinitely perfect, the Creator, Preserver, and Governor of all things, and who is the only proper object of religious worship.
- We believe that there are three persons in the Godhead—the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost—undivided in essence and co-equal in power and glory.
- We believe that in the person of Jesus Christ the Divine and human natures are united, so that He is truly and properly God and truly and properly man.
- We believe that our first parents were created in a state of innocence, but by their disobedience they lost their purity and happiness; and that in consequence of their fall all men have become sinners, totally depraved, and as such are justly exposed to the wrath of God.

- We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has, by His suffering and death, made an atonement for the whole world so that whosoever will may be saved.
- We believe that repentance towards God, faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and regeneration by the Holy Spirit are necessary to salvation.
- We believe that we are justified by grace, through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; and that he that believeth hath the witness in himself.
- We believe that continuance in a state of salvation depends upon continued obedient faith in Christ.
- We believe that it is the privilege of all believers to be wholly sanctified, and that their whole spirit and soul and body may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- We believe in the immortality of the soul; in the resurrection of the body; in the general judgment at the end of the world; in the eternal happiness of the righteous; and in the endless punishment of the wicked.

THEREFORE

- I will be responsive to the Holy Spirit's work and obedient to His leading in my life, growing in grace through worship, prayer, service and the reading of the Bible.
- I will make the values of the Kingdom of God and not the values of the world the standard for my life.
- I will uphold Christian integrity in every area of my life, allowing nothing in thought, word or deed that is unworthy, unclean, untrue, profane, dishonest or immoral.
- I will maintain Christian ideals in all my relationships with others: my family and neighbours, my colleagues and fellow salvationists, those to whom and for whom I am responsible, and the wider community.
- I will uphold the sanctity of marriage and of family life.
- I will be a faithful steward of my time and gifts, my money and possessions, my body, my mind and my spirit, knowing that I am accountable to God.
- I will abstain from alcoholic drink, tobacco, the non-medical use of addictive drugs, gambling, pornography, the occult, and all else that could enslave the body or spirit.

- I will be faithful to the purposes for which God raised up The Salvation Army, sharing the good news of Jesus Christ, endeavouring to win others to Him, and in His name caring for the needy and the disadvantaged.
- I will be actively involved, as I am able, in the life, work, worship and witness of the corps, giving as large a proportion of my income as possible to support its ministries and the worldwide work of the Army.
- I will be true to the principles and practices of The Salvation Army, loyal to its leaders, and I will show the spirit of salvationism whether in times of popularity or persecution.
- I now call upon all present to witness that I enter into this covenant and sign these articles of war of my own free will, convinced that the love of Christ, who died and now lives to save me, requires from me this devotion of my life to His service for the salvation of the whole world; and therefore do here declare my full determination, by God's help, to be a true soldier of The Salvation Army.

Signed

Signature of corps officer

Witness or officiating officer

Corps

Date



Where would you put these two headings?
What I believe How I will live out my Christian beliefs

SESSION 8

TOUGH DECISIONS

PART 1 – ABORTION AND EUTHANASIA

AIM

To help the young people understand The Salvation Army's attitude about abortion and euthanasia.

OBJECTIVES

As a result of this session, the young people will be able to:

- ❖ have a clear understanding of the meaning (and definition) of the above topics;
- ❖ develop a balanced view of these topics after consideration of Christian principles, biblical references and The Salvation Army Positional Statements;
- ❖ show a balanced response if they encounter other people influenced by these topics in a real life situation in society;
- ❖ confidently take part in discussion or debate with others, and comment on The Salvation Army viewpoint on these topics if necessary.

INSIGHTS FOR THE LEADER

INTRODUCTION

This session could prove difficult for some leaders who may feel uncomfortable, embarrassed, inexperienced or ill-informed about these topics. These feelings are **NORMAL** and would be expected as the topics are sensitive and involve a wide scope of knowledge and information. However, such issues need to be faced and discussed as they are part of the world in which we live, and hence young Christians need to have exposure to – and explanation of – the Army's attitudes on such social and moral issues, so they can develop an informed opinion based on Christian doctrine. If we neglect to teach them, then young people's attitudes to such matters will develop from other sources e.g. TV shows.

Therefore, evaluate your own feelings and then plan and prepare thoroughly. Keep before you the aim of the session, avoiding unnecessary 'off the topic' discussions and try to cover the objectives for the topic.

Be sensitive to the variation of sexual education and knowledge within your group. Some simple explanations may need to be given but avoid turning the session into a sex education program. Furthermore, it may be wise to avoid discussion groups for juniors as they may not have the

FROM THE BIBLE

Abortion

Psalm 139:13 -16; Ecclesiastes 11:5; Jeremiah 1:5.

Note: Exodus 21:22 - 25 is the most frequently referred to passage regarding the biblical view of the status of the foetus or embryo, as it is the only one in which a termination of pregnancy is mentioned. These verses are in a section dealing with various laws and three different interpretations of these verses are possible. The arguments and interpretations are complex and not only has this passage been used to support a lack of personhood or lack of full value of life in the womb, but also it may be used to argue the full personhood status of the fertilised ovum. When there is such a wide range of opinion, caution should be exercised in giving a lot of weight to such a passage in any discussion.

Euthanasia

What Jesus did and taught about:

- * The value of human life – Luke 12:6 - 7.
- * The value of the individual life – Matthew 18:12 - 14.
- * The relative values of physical and spiritual life – John 11:25 - 26.

proper understanding on these topics. Seniors could cope with discussion as long as it is supervised.

Be perceptive to the fact that unfortunately, a few of your group may have had personal experiences of either of the topics. Allow and encourage the group to be open and honest with some of their possible misunderstandings of the topics and conflicting views of their peers.

Before the session, study will need to be made of biblical references, definitions and Salvation Army Positional Statements. Be supportive of The Salvation Army Positional Statements and the fact that 'Salvationist Ethics' are 'Christian Ethics' based on the person of Jesus Christ and His teaching, and consistently show 'Strong Doctrine tempered with Strong Mercy'. Not all Christians agree on the right answers to ethical problems and not even all Salvationists share one common view on them, but by and large the stances taken by the Army are conservative. Therefore, avoid imposing any personal viewpoint on these topics, but rather reinforce biblical references and Salvation Army Positional Statements.

BACKGROUND

These background notes and the Positional Statements on page 72 are needed for Going Deeper.

Abortion

See Going Deeper 4 where young people are asked to take part in a conference on the issue of 'abortion on demand'. These background notes are set out as discussion points to support the attitudes your group will represent.

- ❖ Pro-abortionists emphasise the rights of the mother (especially her right to choose); they see abortion as little more than a form of contraception. They appeal for compassion for the mother and the existing family.
- ❖ Anti-abortionists emphasise the rights of the unborn child (especially his or her right to live), they see abortion as killing a baby before birth. They appeal for compassion and justice for the rights of the unborn, defenceless child. The foetus becomes capable of surviving if born during the 6th or 7th month.
- ❖ When does human life begin? From your answer to this question, your overall views on abortion will be predictable. If life begins at conception, the foetus' rights are human rights, it is not just part of its mother, but an unborn child with a life of its own. (Most Christians looking to the Bible's teaching on life before birth support this view.) If life does not begin until birth, the foetus can have no rights at all – it is merely a part of its mother's body and abortion on demand makes sense.
- ❖ Nowhere does the Bible say 'You shall not terminate a pregnancy', but it does speak about the unborn child as a person to whom God relates. (Refer Jeremiah 1:5; Ecclesiastes 11:5; Psalm 139:13 - 16.) The message is clear – human life begins in the womb and therefore terminating a pregnancy means ending the life of a human being. Once this is accepted, any abortion becomes very hard to justify.
- ❖ The Salvation Army supports this view. The status of the foetus is the central issue in the debate. The unborn child should be seen as alive, an individual with the potential of a person from

CHECKLIST

This is one of two sessions in this unit dealing with some moral and ethical issues. Session 18 deals with family planning and in vitro fertilisation. The young people will be given the opportunity to study The Salvation Army's Positional Statements on such tough issues. The basic principles of 'Strong Doctrine tempered with Strong Mercy' apply to both sessions.

Prayerfully consider your group's readiness for the topics of this session (and your own). Decide then whether you want to touch on both the issues or focus on one in particular. Be thoroughly prepared on the chosen topic(s) and read the whole session carefully.

You may prefer to invite a guest to come and deal with the topics.

It could be useful to have a range of relevant Christian literature for reference in discussions. Consider the maturity of your group and what is appropriate to their level of understanding.

Have sufficient copies of the Positional Statements on page 72 ready for each young person to use during the lesson.

Begin with the 'Getting Started' activity.

Decide on your approach and read the background notes and be prepared. Summary of approaches:

Approach 1 is for juniors and uses the work sheet.

Approach 2 uses part 1 of the senior work sheet.

Approach 3 is particularly for seniors and has extra background material in the session.

Approach 4 is for seniors and deals with the abortion issue only.



WEBQUEST

All the Positional Statements of The Salvation Army can be found on the Army web site under 'About us'.

the moment of conception, and a potential member of a family and society.

- ❖ Life begins at fertilisation as at this time the foetus is a separate organism, biologically identifiable as belonging to the human race and containing all the genetic information. It will naturally develop into a new living human individual (it would never be made human if it were not human already).

Euthanasia

Literally means 'dying well' – something everyone would be in favour of doing.

Most of the controversy surrounding mercy-killing concerns voluntary euthanasia where the patient gives his/her consent for his/her life to be taken in the event of terminal illness or a terrible accident. It is the deliberate, requested extinction of life.

Voluntary euthanasia does not include cases where drugs are given to relieve pain which might shorten the patient's life to some small degree. Nor should it include cases where decisions are made by medical staff or relatives of a patient not to preserve life unreasonably by artificial means and equipment.

If dying people experience much physical distress, have no companionship, feel no understanding, are uncertain of adequate care and feel there is no longer anything that matters in their life, there will be quite a few who will ask for voluntary euthanasia. Once pain and the feelings of isolation have been relieved, requests drop in number. The demand for euthanasia lies in the belief that death will be peaceful and dignified only after a lethal injection. The vast majority of deaths are peaceful, whatever the preceding illness, even the majority of patients suffering from cancer die peacefully.

Euthanasia **seems** to be the most **compassionate** answer to the problem of terminal illness for the patient (relieved of suffering), for the loved ones (relieved of the mental agony of watching death approach), for the family (relieved of the strain of long intensive care) and for society (relieved from the financial burden).

Christians, like Jesus, respond warmly to compassion, but Jesus knew that what may look like a compassionate action can hide selfish motives. No sufferer need feel his/her life is useless either to himself/herself or others. Terminal care can provide the healthy with an opportunity to express unselfish love for the sick and thus, to compassion which meets the human need more than euthanasia's easy way out.

Those in favour of euthanasia argue that life's value lies in quality and when this is non-existent the patient should be allowed to die with dignity. From the Christian's point of view, this measures the value of the human life by a subhuman standard. If people are only sophisticated animals, then euthanasia is a logical way out, but the Bible speaks about another dimension to human life. (Refer Luke 12:6 - 7; Matthew 18:12 - 14.)

'Being made in God's image' means that every man and woman has the potential to relate to God in a way no other creature can. (It must be in a completely different category from the vet giving our pet an injection.) Humanity's rightful destiny is life with God. Jesus said, 'I have come in order that you might have life'. (John 10:10 GNB)

Euthanasia is **not** the Christian solution to fatal illness, but the human problems do not disappear with the settling of an argument. If mercy killing is wrong, some better alternative must be found such as the hospice movement for terminal care. Under such care patients are treated as people of value and generally their pain is controlled by medication. Psychologically and spiritually they are prepared for death as the gateway to new life. They are taught that death will terminate their illness, but not them. (Refer John 11:25 - 26.)

The demands of compassion are met at a deep level and the value of a life created in God's image is upheld. It is this kind of intensive caring which quietens the demands for euthanasia – by showing how unnecessary it is.

Read Doctrine 11: 'We believe in the immortality of the soul; in the resurrection of the body; in the general judgment at the end of the world; in the eternal happiness of the righteous; and in the endless punishment of the wicked.'

Extra background notes for small group discussion

ABORTION

1. In which circumstances should abortion be seen as morally permissible?

Circumstances or reasons why abortion may be considered:

- a. Where pregnancy involves risk to the health of the mother (whether or not her own health is threatened) or the nurturing of other children or an additional baby can strain a family to breaking point.

Argument against:

Abortion is not justifiable if we concentrate on the right to life of the unborn child. Support provided by our modern society should prevent risks to other family members.

- b. Where there is substantial risk that, if the child were born, it would suffer from such physical or mental abnormalities as to be seriously handicapped.

Argument against:

A modern community should be equipped to care adequately for a disabled person – such disabled persons may both inspire and give love and devotion. The quality of life is much more important than physical perfection. Many disabled people are quite contented with the quality of their lives. It is love which gives quality to life and makes it worth living, and it is we (their neighbours) who can choose whether to give that love or withhold it. The quality of their lives is in our hands. If we think that in most cases it is the best thing to kill a badly disabled unborn child because the disability would threaten the domestic routine of the family, we must also think that in most cases it is the best thing to kill other severely disabled human beings e.g., the deformed new born, the comatose patient, the senile. (If foetal life is potentially human, why offer it less reverence, less protection, just because it is not physically perfect!)

If we abort the disabled, we would be 'playing God'. We must remember that God has expressed His special protective care for the disabled and weak. God already allows for the abnormal foetus to be expelled in the majority of cases, in a process known as miscarriage or spontaneous abortion.

- c. Cases where the child is conceived in unethical circumstances such as rape, or where the mother is below the age of consent. Generally the child would be considered an 'unwanted child'.

Arguments against:

There are a vast range of circumstances and each case would need to be individually considered. (Usually by the doctor and patient.) This is a difficult situation with no easy or clear answer. To say 'no' to a woman in desperate trouble is unloving, and therefore un-Christlike. However, a difficult situation does not turn a 'wrong into a right'. The choice sometimes has to be on the basis of a lesser of two evils. If she is refused a termination, some other way must be found to meet her personal, family or social needs.

- d. When the physical or mental health of the mother is seriously threatened. The Army's view is that abortion should continue to be legalised on adequate medical grounds, both physical and psychological, but not for social reasons.

Arguments against:

Physical: If the cost of saving an unborn child is the death of its mother, most people would agree the price is too high.

- According to Christian tradition, human life can be taken to protect and preserve another life e.g. in self defence.
- This kind of life and death situation is now rare.
- It must be remembered that the abortion procedure can have its own potential physical complications such as death, infection and the chance of resultant future infertility.

Psychological: These health risks and reasons are difficult to calculate. They can be 'easy to find' if the doctor concerned sees nothing wrong with the principle of abortion. However, there are difficult, borderline situations where an unwanted pregnancy can threaten an overburdened mother with such a complete breakdown that she would be in danger of taking her own life. Most importantly is the fact that abortion is not a quick fix to any pregnant woman's psychological well-being. The operation is often followed by feelings of guilt and remorse, and these can lead to far more deeply-seated and longer lasting complications than the pregnancy itself. 'Abortion does not end all the problems, often it just exchanges one set for another.'

- e. For society's interest – to prevent too many mouths to feed in the world.

Argument against

Contraception should be used as a prevention – not abortion as a cure. It is not in society's interest to encourage a view that the unwanted are disposable.

EUTHANASIA

2. Is it right to legalise the deliberate termination of life by a doctor, authorised by the patient while in health?

Arguments FOR legalisation.

- a. Incurable patients are occupying scarce hospital resources which should be used for patients with a chance of recovery. This is true, but the killing of incurable patients is not the answer. Rather it is our moral duty to increase the facilities available.
- b. To kill a suffering and incurable patient if he/she requests it, is the compassionate thing to do. (This is a superficially attractive answer

to many.) If we are swayed by this argument to kill a patient who is capable of consenting to euthanasia, then it is logical to suppose that it is more compassionate to kill one who by reason of his/her extreme condition is unable to consent (i.e. compulsory euthanasia). To consider that it can be sometimes morally right to kill a person against his/her wishes is against what the gospel teaches about the value of each individual human life.

Arguments AGAINST legalisation.

- a. Legalised, voluntary euthanasia would hasten the erosion of moral standards as humankind is sinful by nature and any weakening of the respect for human life will eventually be exploited and abused. (e.g. By compulsory euthanasia.)
- b. The possibility always exists for diagnostic errors by doctors or confusion and errors in medical records. A recommendation for euthanasia would have to be based upon a diagnosis of irreversible physical or mental illness. Mistakes would inevitably be made.
- c. The consent for euthanasia by a patient must be voluntary and to be valid, it must be by a person in a sound mind. Yet an expressed desire for death may be a sign of mental illness.
- d. There is a sound and proven alternative to the killing of dying patients – namely good pre-terminal care and the skilled use of painkilling drugs. There is a need for a change of emphasis of care and in attitude, rather than a change in the law.
- e. Legalising voluntary euthanasia affects the doctor-patient relationship because the doctor is seen as the healer, as well as the provider of euthanasia – this may lead to the patient's lack of confidence, and arouse mistrust in a patient's mind.
- f. From the Christian point of view, it is not right to legalise voluntary euthanasia, not only because of the points above, but also because of the belief that if God is the source of human life, the reasons for ending it must be more compelling than human consent or convenience.

A Christian sees the weakening of his/her physical life as a step towards a new life in God. (John 11:25 - 26.) Contemplating the approach of death is a desirable and even necessary preparation for the life that is to come. Death reminds us of humankind's helplessness before God and our ultimate dependence upon Him. Faith requires us to wait in patience and a request for euthanasia is a refusal to trust a loving God. However, keeping terminally ill patients alive in an artificial manner by the use of machines can be humankind's efforts to prolong life. The turning off of such machines after consultations by medical staff and relations is not seen as euthanasia.

GETTING STARTED

Quiz – What are Salvationist ethics?

There are many issues in the world today that we all have to consider and decide as to what is right and wrong conduct. (That is, we have to make an ethical or moral decision.)

Salvationist ethics are quite simply the rules of behaviour that Salvationists accept as a guide for their lives. The basis of Christian ethics is the person of Jesus Christ and His teaching. He is divine and is our perfect, sinless example and the means to learn of His life and words is Scripture.

POINT

There are other issues which are difficult to understand and on which it is difficult to make a clear statement.

Although they are controversial they need to be discussed. We can find a balanced view by considering Christian principles, biblical teaching and The Salvation Army Positional Statement on such issues, so that we can avoid being squeezed into the opinion or mould of the world. (Romans 12:2)

We need to be careful not to impose our standards, beliefs or ethics onto others but we must also realise that Salvationist ethics allow for 'Strong Doctrine', shown with 'Strong Mercy'.

Salvationists are a distinctive part of God's church and we have a few fine distinctions in our ethics. The public expectation of Salvationists in moral issues shows itself by the trust exercised by those who are seeking help and counsel.

We need to know what The Salvation Army's viewpoint is on any ethical issue (these are called Positional Statements).

Some are clearer and more easy to understand than others.

For example, what is The Salvation Army Positional Statement for each of these issues? (Quick, short answers needed.)

1. Alcohol and drug addiction?
(Answer: The deliberate misuse is condemned.)
2. Gambling?
(Answer: All gambling is motivated by selfishness and is counter to Christian love.)
3. The use of tobacco?
(Answer: Tobacco is a narcotic and is harmful to the body.)
4. Pornography?
(Answer: The Salvation Army condemns all forms of pornography and stands against evils which threaten the personal character.)

GOING DEEPER

1. Particularly for juniors

Have the Positional Statements on page 72 photocopied to give to each young person. Decide whether you will read the statements aloud or just give your group time to read silently. If you have slow readers, it is probably best to have fluent readers read to the whole group.

Discuss the Positional Statements.

Have the Bible references for the subject(s) (see 'From The Bible') written out on slips of paper for different members to look up and read out to the group. These Bible verses can be discussed to support the Army's position and the findings of the group can be recorded on the work sheet.

Using the 'Insights for the leader' notes, you may have to explain further some of the definitions and the meaning of biblical references. Some references are suited to more than one topic.

You could have a mix-and-match game where the Bible references are discussed and then matched with the Positional Statement.

2. Positional Statement formulation (Particularly for seniors)

The General has asked your group to formulate 'Positional Statements' on the ethical issues of abortion and euthanasia. Using biblical references, Salvation Army Doctrines and the reference material in the background notes, discuss the Christian approach to these issues. Formulate a brief statement on each for other Salvationists to use as guidelines.

Use the work sheet to write out the group findings.

Guide and assist the group by raising controversial points or questions on the selected topic(s) and let them logically answer each. (Use 'Insight' material.)



**FOR
JUNIORS**



**FOR
SENIORS**

Or

**3. Small group discussion
(Particularly for seniors)**

Discuss the following ethical questions.

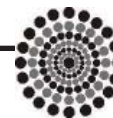
- a. In which circumstances could abortion be seen as morally permissible?
- b. Do people have the legal right to authorise the deliberate ending of their life by a doctor if they become terminally ill?

**4. Preparation for conference
(Particularly seniors)**

You have been asked to take part in a conference on the issue of 'abortion on demand', representing the Christian attitude (in particular The Salvation Army) towards abortion. Pro-abortionists (i.e. in favour of abortion) will be taking part who will be emphasising the right of the mother to make up her own mind and take her own action on this topic. Prepare some discussion points to support the attitudes you will represent.

(Have the 'Insight' notes setting out the pros and cons available for the group to use.)

**FOR
SENIORS**



TAKING IT HOME

The moral issues we have discussed can be a real challenge to Christian standards and character. Salvationists recognise the need for creative, moral and Christian reasoning as the world, rich in new knowledge and technology, constantly races ahead of its moral development, bringing new ethical problems. The Army has based its ethics on the person of Jesus Christ and His teachings, and has a consistent approach to matters of personal morality – strong doctrine balanced by strong mercy and compassion.

The ultimate source of all human life is God. Life is a gift of God and **all** human life is sacred. We are accountable to God for what we make of his gift of life. Christians believe that control over life and death belongs to God alone.

FOLLOW-THRU

It is always good when your group becomes so involved in discussion (on the topic!) that there is no time for written answers. Remember that what they write gives you an insight into what they are thinking. When discussion is not working well, go to the work sheet and use the quotations there as a discussion starter before answers are written down.

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WHERE THE ARMY STANDS

(From The Salvation Army Positional Statements)

ABORTION



Definition: The removal of a human foetus before it is viable. (Foetus – the growing baby after 2 months in the womb. Viable – capable of living outside the womb.)

The Salvation Army believes in the sanctity of all human life from the moment of fertilisation. It considers each person to be of infinite value, and each life a gift from God to be cherished, nurtured and preserved.

The Salvation Army supports efforts to protect and promote the welfare of the weak and defenceless person, including the unborn. It takes seriously the rights and needs of both the foetus and the mother. It accepts that termination of a pregnancy may be justified on certain limited grounds; that is where, in the judgement of competent medical and allied staff, the pregnancy poses a serious threat to the life of the mother, or could result in irreversible physical injury to the mother. In cases of proven rape or legally defined incest an abortion may be justified because of the extent of which rape and incest violate the whole person. Termination of a pregnancy may also be justified where reliable diagnostic procedures determine that a foetal abnormality is present which is incompatible with life other than brief post-natal survival or where there is total absence of cognitive function.

It is The Salvation Army's experience that, where unwanted pregnancies occur, in most instances it is best to counsel acceptance of the situation by all involved, and for the foetus to be carried to term, and for all possible supportive help to be given.

When our counsel has not been accepted and an abortion has taken place The Salvation Army will offer loving and compassionate pastoral care.

A serious commitment to the protection and care of the unborn calls us equally to promote and work for a society in which all those born into it find loving acceptance and the resources necessary to enable them to reach their fullest potential.

IHQ March 1990

EUTHANASIA



Definition: The deliberate putting to death of a person painlessly, especially if suffering from an incurable and painful disease, Euthanasia – literally means 'gentle easy death'.

Modern medicine allows people to survive illnesses and injuries which would previously have proved fatal, though possibly with long-term permanent disability and impaired quality of life. This could be as a direct result of the initial pathology or as a consequence of side effects of the treatment given.

Since the Bible displays so clearly that every person is important to God, The Salvation Army, like other Christian communities, places great value on the life of all people. For this reason Salvationists oppose actively taking or shortening human life through rational choice, with or without medical assistance.

In non-emergency situations medical workers have a responsibility to ensure that patients clearly understand the likely benefit of any treatment offered and the possible risk or cost to quality of life. This would allow patients, or their legally designated representative, to make informed decisions regarding their management. Refusal to undergo treatment is not the same as deliberately sanctioning death.

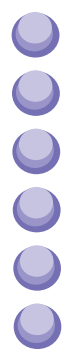
Full palliative care should be available to those with terminal illness. Optimal pain control and the overall comfort and dignity of the individual should be the goals, even though this could shorten life. The Salvation Army accepts that where brain death, as defined by the relevant authorities, has already occurred, the next of kin is justified in agreeing with medical advice to terminate life support systems.

IHQ October 1992

Tough Decisions

HIGHLIGHTS

- Salvationists ethics are a reflection of Christian conduct or standards of behaviour.
- These ethics are relevant to our lives.
- The Salvation Army has taken a stand on current social and moral issues.
- These Positional Statements help us to avoid being squeezed into the opinion of the world.



The ethical problem I discussed today was about _____

From your discussion on the Positional Statement, what do you understand as being the Army's belief about this issue?



What are two Bible references that support the Army's position on this issue?

1. _____

2. _____

Write out one of these references or explain in your own words what it means.

○ _____

○ _____

○ _____

○ _____

○ _____

○ _____

He came to give us life in all its fulness,
He came to make the blind to see,
He came to banish death and doubt and darkness,
He came to set his people free.
He liberating love imparted,
He taught men once again to smile;
He came to bind the broken hearted,
And God and man to reconcile.
He came to give us life in all its fulness,
He came to make the blind to see,
He came to banish death and doubt and darkness,
He came to set his people free.
(He came to set us free! last chorus only)

We wonder why Christ came into the world
A helpless, homeless child;
We wonder why he tolerated man,
The tainted and defiled.
We wonder why! We wonder why!
The Son of God as man came down;
What does this signify?

We wonder why Christ came into the world
And let men hurt him so;
We wonder why the Christ should have to die;
Does anybody know?
We wonder why! We wonder why!
The Son of God as man came down
What does this signify?

John Gowans

If we are not sure whether an issue is right or wrong – if we wonder why – what should be the base for our decisions?

○ _____

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You must live with people to know their problems
and live with God in order to solve them.

Organised crime in the US represents 10% of
national income.

1. Your group has been asked by the General of The Salvation Army to formulate 'Positional Statements' on the ethical issues of abortion and euthanasia (choose one or both depending on time).

Formulate a brief statement for other Salvationists to use as guidelines.

450 Australian school children start smoking every day.
Of them about 180 become addicted to smoking.

2. Write out at least one verse of Scripture, that you have looked at and state how it relates to one of the topics discussed.

*Prejudice is a great time saver.
You can form opinions without getting the facts.*

3. Choose one of the topics and evaluate fully The Salvation Army Positional Statement. After consideration of biblical references and discussion of each statement in detail, clarify **why** The Salvation Army has reached its various conclusions on that topic.

*Today's mighty oak tree is yesterday's
little nut that held its ground*

*Maurice Chevalier said that he preferred
old age to the alternative.*



COURAGE UNDER FIRE

AIM

To help the young people learn how to show 'courage under fire' by considering the example of other Christians.

OBJECTIVES

As a result of this session the young people will:

- ❖ have considered the problems some Christians face in living out their faith;
- ❖ become aware of the difference between easy discipleship (such as we Kiwis experience) and 'costly' witness as shown in the people we study today;
- ❖ be challenged to have 'courage under fire'.

INSIGHTS FOR THE LEADER

Many young people feel overwhelmed by the difficulties they face. While accepting that these difficulties are real, the young people can be encouraged by the example of Christians who have faced much harder situations. Many, like Lord and Bonhoeffer, have not only come through the difficulties but have also shown leadership and been a positive influence for good. Others, like the sports stars on the video, have taken a stand for God whilst under pressure from the public and their team mates to conform to worldly standards.

In the early days of Salvation Army history, leaders and soldiers alike fought for the rights of the downtrodden and spoke out against social evils. Are there no longer any evils or do we remain strangely quiet when other churches are raising their voices? Are there standards of living that we should speak up against?

Salvationists do not get involved in political arguments. Our aim is to work for God's kingdom. It is quite common to have people who vote differently working side by side as soldiers of The Salvation Army. So remember that we are not concerned in this session with arguing the rights and wrongs of particular political systems, but rather encouraging ourselves to face the difficulties in our own situation in choosing to stand for the right.

We too, can have 'courage under fire'.

GETTING STARTED

1. Put into a container pieces of paper each naming a country or place. (Possible places are 'the beach'; 'in a factory'; 'in a science lab'; 'at home'; 'China'; 'Hollywood'; 'Wellington'.) Each young person takes a piece of paper and considers being a Christian in the particular place. Questions might include:

SESSION 9

FROM THE BIBLE

Matthew 10:16 - 22, 37 - 39;
Acts 5:27 - 29, 33 - 35, 40 - 42;
Romans 13:1 - 7.

CHECKLIST

There are three suggested Getting Started activities. If you choose to do the first one, prepare the slips of paper as suggested.

There are three approaches in Going Deeper. Have two people ready to read or tell the stories of Bonhoeffer and Lord.

Preview the video.

The work sheet suggests the challenge of praying for a friend with the added proviso that this 'friend' be one who teases the young person for being a Christian.

VIDEO CLIP

The More Than Gold sports edition of the Jesus video has several testimonies from sporting personalities that you could use with this session. Preview the testimonies with the session objectives in mind to be clear how you will use the example of these athletes who show courage in difficult situations.

POINT

In this session along with the testimonies of some sports stars we are going to look at the example left for us by some men who found themselves in situations where the government was disregarding, and indeed disobeying, God's laws. We will hear about the difficult but courageous decisions they made as they showed 'Courage under fire'.

LEADER TIP

Encourage the young people to realise that they can pursue their life's dream and still be committed to serving Jesus.

'Is it easy or hard to be a Christian there? Why?'

'Should a Christian try to be there or avoid being there? Why?'

'How would you show your Christian faith there?'

Or

2. Discuss. Which time in history and/or which place in the world would be the hardest for Christian witness? (e.g. The early Christian Church; the Reformation; Russia under Stalin; World War II, China today.)

Or

3. Discuss. 'When and where do you find it hard to be a Christian?'

GOING DEEPER

1. Stories of Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Herbert Lord

Have two people prepared to read/tell the stories of Bonhoeffer and Lord as outlined here.

a. Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Leading up to and during World War II in Germany there was a group of pastors called the 'Confessing Church' who linked themselves together, determined to tell the truth about Hitler and his government. From their pulpits, and later from prison, they applied biblical truth to events in Germany and called on Christians to stand for the right. They even prayed for the defeat of their nation, believing that this was the only way for Germany to regain self-respect as a nation.

One who died for the truth was Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Dietrich was not a naturally outspoken man. He was timid and shy but he was absolutely convinced that Hitler was wrong and said so. At first he left Germany in protest and lived for two years in London. Then he realised that he ought to be in Germany.

It was no use speaking out against this national crime while he lived in safety. So, although he knew that he would almost certainly lose his life, he bravely went back to Germany and firmly declared his resistance to Hitler. Hitler was the German leader and the Bible says we should obey our leaders. But Bonhoeffer believed with Peter that 'we must obey God, not men' (Acts 5:29) when the leaders of our nation go against God's laws.

His involvement in smuggling 14 Jews to Switzerland was what led to his arrest and after two years in prison he was hanged on April 9, 1945 – just a few months before the war ended.

Even in prison he forgot his own fears as he helped other prisoners and wrote letters encouraging other Christians to stand firm. Bonhoeffer's writings still provide valuable insights for Christians seeking to live faithfully in a society which is against God.

b. Brigadier Herbert Lord

Brigadier Herbert Lord was The Salvation Army Officer in charge of the Army work in Singapore. When war broke out he was safely on holidays in Sydney. He could have considered that this was God's providential care but he insisted he would go back where he was needed. There he was captured and imprisoned. Conditions in Japanese prison-of-war camps were so dreadful that many of Lord's companions and even his own son died in camp.

He heroically endured physical and mental hardship and encouraged other Christians to hold firm to their faith.

Later, Herbert Lord was the Territorial Commander of Korea when the revolution broke out. Other western representatives took the plane to safety but he chose to stay in Seoul.

These three stories about Herbert Lord's actions under hardship give us some idea of the grace given to this brave man 'to stand for the hard right against the easy wrong'.

- i. The Korean guard appeared menacing as he stood before Herbert Lord with a gun in one hand and a book in the other.

'Do you believe there is a God?' enquired the Korean. The Commissioner understood the question perfectly, and firmly replied, 'Yes'.

'You are an intelligent, educated man and yet you really believe there is a God?'

'Yes,' came the unflinching reply again.

'And do you believe that this God answers prayer?'

'Yes.'

'Well, we'll prove it. I am going to stand behind you, and I want you to pray to your God and ask him to tell you in which hand I am holding this gun.'

'I refuse to offer such a prayer,' declared the Commissioner. 'God is not a magician.'

'And yet you believe He answers prayer?'

'Yes, and I am praying now.'

'For what?'

'That He will give me grace not to lose my temper with you, and that if you decide to use your gun that I may die like a Christian gentleman.'

The Korean guard was silent. Then he walked slowly away, leaving a greatly relieved man.

- ii. On the dreadful 'Death March' from Man-Po, Herbert Lord was one of the sixty civilians, who with 700 GI's were under the control of a terrible Korean Major. The men dubbed him 'The Tiger'. 'The Tiger' wanted to put Herbert Lord in charge of the whole contingent because of his fluent command of the Korean language.

Section commanders were finally appointed and told that they would be executed if any person fell out on the march. Thirteen were missing after the first day and the commanders had to appear before 'The Tiger'.

Then it was that Lord pleaded for their lives on his knees. The irate 'Tiger' pointed a revolver at his head and told him to be quiet. But the Commissioner continued to plead in the very face of what seemed immediate death. 'The Tiger,' apparently realising what the loss of his fluent interpreter would mean to him, eventually relented, and most of the men were let off.

- iii. Asked if he still felt that he had done the right thing in electing to stay with his people when the North Korean troops entered Seoul, Commissioner Lord said:

'Yes! There is no alternative to duty. Comrades of ours had been cut off from the international family of Salvationists for seven years during the war until links were re-established in 1946. I was where I was needed.'

2. Bible check

Matthew 10:16 - 22, 37 - 39; Acts 5:27 - 29, 33 - 35, 40 - 42.

Study these Bible passages and discuss:

- a. how you think Bonhoeffer or Herbert Lord could have used them as they dealt with persecution;
- b. how they can help you as you face difficult situations.

3. Video clips

Watch the interviews with a few of the sporting personalities who share with us the cost of their present day commitment to Christ.

What encouragement have you gained from their testimony?

TAKING IT HOME

It is never easy to be a Christian. When we live in a non-Christian society we will suffer. There will be difficulty in knowing what is right, when we must obey God rather than wrong laws or conflicting standards and there will be a need for strength to do what is right, despite persecution; but God can make us strong even in the hardest situation.

Try to memorise and bring to mind in hard times Jesus' words in John 16: 33: 'The world will make you suffer. But be brave! I have defeated the world.'

FOLLOW-THRU

Discuss with your young people the challenge put to them on the work sheet. Praying for peers who tease or humiliate us for being a Christian is not easy - but it's what Jesus expects.

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COURAGE UNDER FIRE

Study this hidden message.
Using the clue B = A can you read it?
More importantly – can you live it?



B U t j g z p v f o e v s f
 c v u j g z p v f o e v s f
 t v g g f s j o h f w f o x i f o
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 g p s j u l f u f s z z o

HIGHLIGHTS

- There are many people in the world who are actively persecuted by their government for holding and practising Christian beliefs.
- We should pray for these people.
- We should also pray for those who 'persecute' us.
- With God's help we can have courage under fire.
- There is a cost involved, but God is faithful to those who rely on Him.



2. Consider the Get Involved & Grow challenge 'Pray for a friend'. If such a friend teases you for being a Christian or tries to get you to take part in activities that you know are wrong, you could fulfil this task as you work through activity 3.



3. Is there someone in authority over you who makes it hard for you to act as a Christian? Write some code word on the bookmark for this person. (Perhaps initials or a nickname.) Add the names from other group member lists. Cut it off and place with your devotional material (in your Bible is a good place). Use it ever day for at least a week.



COURAGE UNDER FIRE
 I will make an effort
 to pray for the
 people listed here
 this week. I will ask
 God to bless them.
 I will ask Him to give
 those who feel
 persecuted strength
 to have
 courage under fire.



What do you think?

Are there any laws in New Zealand that conflict with standards of the Bible that we should speak up against?

Discuss with your group then write down how we can make a difference.



Write a short paragraph on the bravery displayed by either Bonhoeffer or Lord.



What encouragement did you gain from the sport star's testimony?

COURAGE UNDER FIRE



Read these three verses:
Matthew 10:22
Romans 13:1
Acts 5:29.

25 million died in Russia alone because of Nazism.

Which verse would you send as a special message to:

- A Christian in Russia _____
- The only Christian in a class at school _____
- A Christian in a Muslim country _____

What other message could you send them as well?

The promise that Jesus brings is not freedom from persecution, but the God-given grace to stand firm in the midst of suffering.

As Paster Nicanor Tamang's article 'We will die, but we will not deny' went to press he was arrested in Kathmandu.



Is there someone in authority over you who makes it hard for you to act as a Christian? Write some code word on the bookmark for this person (perhaps initials or a nickname). Add the names from other group member lists. Cut it off and place with your devotional material (in your Bible is a good place). Use it every day for at least a week.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer was hanged by the Nazis at Flossenbunrg on 9.4.45.



COURAGE UNDER FIRE
 I will make an effort
 to pray for the
 people listed here
 this week. I will ask
 God to bless them.
 I will ask Him to give
 to those who feel
 persecuted strength
 to have
 courage under fire.



Discuss with your group then write your findings here.

Are there any laws in New Zealand that conflict with standards of the Bible that we should speak up against?



**Consider the Get Involved and Grow challenge to pray for a friend.
If such a friend teases you for being a Christian or tries to get you involved in activities that you know are wrong, you could fulfil this task as you work through activity 2.
If you really pray for God's blessing on those who persecute you for your Christian faith, wonderful things can happen!**

More than one freedom fighter has become an authoritarian dictator oppressing the very people they 'freed'.

Those who take up the sword perish by the sword.



What encouragement did you gain from the sports star's testimony?

IT'S NOT FAIR!

AIM

Through a study of the prophet Amos to show the young people how religious insincerity can cause selfishness and social injustice.

OBJECTIVES

As a result of this session the young people will:

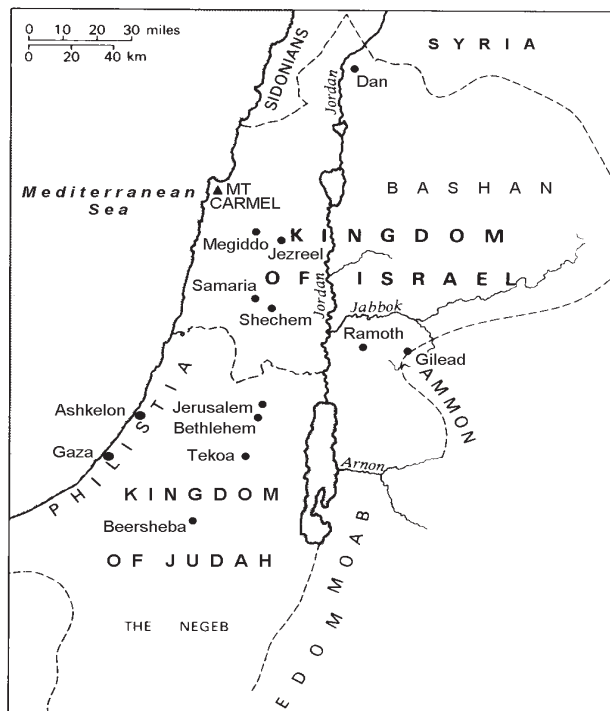
- ❖ be certain that God's absolute justice and righteousness is still relevant today;
- ❖ understand why God continually condemns self-indulgence and social injustice;
- ❖ be sure that God's purposes will be worked out and that God will carry out His judgement.

INSIGHTS FOR THE LEADER

This is the first of two studies in a series on the prophets. It will be best to use them sequentially so that reference to material in this session can be made in the following one.

Study the chart on the next page which explains the Israelite nation's development and become familiar with locations mentioned in the session from the map.

Read the nine chapters of the book of Amos through in one sitting.



SESSION 10

FROM THE BIBLE
The book of Amos.

CHECKLIST ✓

Be prepared for your Getting Started activity.

There are 4 suggested approaches to Going Deeper. Make sure you use approach 1. Keeping your young people in mind, choose the question you will deal with in this section.

Try to use the role play in approach 4. It will be useful and challenging for them. Allocate a time for it and keep to this.

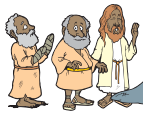
Remember to challenge the young people to attempt a challenge from Get Involved and Grow in Outreach/Service.

LEADER TIP

Read through the background information several times so it is clear in your mind before the lesson.



ABRAHAM –
called by God to be the father
of a special godly nation.



ABRAHAM'S FAMILY now headed by Jacob, his
grandson – whose name is changed to Israel –
moves to Egypt (where Joseph is) and becomes
a large tribe – the **ISRAELITES**



1290
BC

MOSES leads the Israelites out of **EGYPT**, back to **CANAAN**



Settled in Canaan under Joshua's leadership, the Israelites are led by a
series of prophet-judges, the last of whom is Samuel. The Israelites ask
Samuel to appoint a king so that they will be like the surrounding nations.



1040
BC

KINGDOM of ISRAEL
SAUL
↓
DAVID
Under him Israel becomes a
strong nation

KINGDOM OF JUDAH
(the Jews) Capital - Jerusalem

Defeated by
Babylon, Judah
becomes a
Persian province

to **BABYLON** as **CAPTIVES**
(Some flee to Egypt)

SOLOMON
Kingdom divides
925 BC

KINGDOM of ISRAEL
(Capital - Samaria)

Defeated by
Assyria Israel
becomes an
Assyrian state to
ASSYRIA

AMOS & HOSEA PREACH

539 - 333 BC
Under Persian rule

333 - 63 BC
Under Greek influence

Under Roman rule

NEHEMIAH
supervises rebuilding
of Jerusalem and many
exiled Jews return
home 445 BC

63 BC
Jerusalem captured
by Romans
Birth of **CHRIST**

586
BC
to
536
BC

721
BC



LEADER TIP: Photocopy this page and
use with Going Deeper I.

Amos' world

(The following extracts are adapted from *Life Change* series 'Amos', Nav Press, used by permission.)

After the Exodus from Egypt the Lord made a covenant with Israel. It was like a treaty between the lord of the manor and a subject. The people had agreed to serve and obey the Lord as God, and to accept the consequences of obedience and disobedience. The agreed consequences of obedience were blessings (Deuteronomy 4:32 - 40; 28:1 - 14), and the agreed consequences of disobedience were punishments (Deuteronomy 28:15 - 68).

Because the Lord was patiently training His people as a father trains his children, He did not simply let the consequences fall on each generation. Instead, He sent prophets to each generation to explain how He thought the people were living up to the covenant, and how He planned to respond.

When Israel was disobedient, the Lord sent prophets like Amos to warn that the agreed consequences of disobedience were going to occur unless the people repented.

Therefore the people could never accuse the Lord of injustice. They had agreed to the standards of conduct and to the consequences, and the Lord never acted without plenty of warning and second chances.

When Amos began warning Israel of the consequences of their disobedience to God, the nation was at the peak of prosperity. Within two decades the nation's strength had crumbled, and within four it was only a memory to those who survived in exile. To his own generation, Amos' words seemed absurd and were ignored, but the next generation saw too late their tragic accuracy.

Jeroboam

Israel was a prosperous nation under King David and his son King Solomon. But Solomon taxed the nation heavily and instituted forced labour to increase Israel's strength. When Solomon died (about 930 BC), chieftains of the ten northern tribes asked Solomon's appointed heir, his son Rehoboam, to lessen their burden. But Rehoboam refused, for he was inclined to model his kingship as a dictatorship rather than on David's style of royal servanthood. The northern chieftains chose to become a separate kingdom and a northerner named Jeroboam became Israel's king. God warned Rehoboam not to lead an army against the rebel north, and in the end Rehoboam was left king of the tribe of Judah, the dispersed tribe of Simeon, part of Benjamin, and some Levites, while Jeroboam ruled the ten northern tribes. **Rehoboam's kingdom was from then on called Judah, while Jeroboam's took the name Israel.** The division of the nation was God's punishment on Solomon, for Solomon had contracted dozens of political marriages with pagan princesses, and those wives had led the king to share their pagan practices of idolatry (1 Kings 11:1 - 12; 33).

The Lord promised Jeroboam that he would make Jeroboam's northern dynasty secure if he obeyed the Lord, but Jeroboam did not trust Him. The Law of Moses commanded Israelites to make pilgrimage to the Lord's chosen sanctuary three times a year (Deuteronomy 16:16). Jeroboam feared that if his people continued to make pilgrimage to Jerusalem, they would soon reunite with the south. So, Jeroboam set up shrines at Bethel and Dan, declaring that Israel was to worship the Lord there. A golden calf throne stood at each shrine. Pagans commonly mounted their idols on thrones shaped like calves (symbols of power and fertility), and Jeroboam

liked the idea of a calf-throne for the invisible Lord. Predictably, the Israelites soon forgot that the calves were only the thrones and regarded them as idols of the Lord (1 Kings 12:25 - 31).

Some 130 years later when King Jeroboam II ascended the throne in 793 BC, Assyria and Syria were at war with each other so they were no longer a threat to Israel. Israel became a strong nation in the region. Jeroboam recaptured all the conquered areas and now controlled the major trade routes between Egypt and Assyria so the nation began to make money through commerce. However a powerful few hoarded the profits and exploited their own fellow Israelites.

Rich oppressors

Before Jeroboam II, most Israelites had similar standards of living, but now Israel was seeing its first division of classes. The powerful people began to buy up the land of small farmers, to build large, luxurious homes, and to live like pagan aristocrats. Clever landlords, lawyers, and businessmen used the legal system to obtain property from less powerful and clever people. Vulnerable small farmers became landless and were forced to live as hired labourers in semi-poverty. People forgot that God's Law said a person had a personal responsibility for his neighbour. The successful people were positive that their wealth was due to the fact that God had chosen them, and they loved to celebrate the divine favour at their shrines.

Amos

Amos kept sheep in Tekoa (refer to the map on p.85), a few miles south of Jerusalem, until the Lord called him to prophesy toward the end of Jeroboam II's reign. Tekoa was a fairly important town in Judah, fortified for defence and in touch with the capital, Jerusalem. Amos was not a poor hired labourer, but the manager or owner of a small flock. He fed his sheep in part by cutting open and preparing the fruit of the sycamore fig tree (7:14). Thus, Amos was 'economically independent' and a respected man in his community, not an outcast engaged in a class struggle against the rich. His book shows that he was well informed about Israel's religious practices, the Law of Moses, historical events in Israel and surrounding nations, and social conditions in Israel. He was not trained as a professional prophet (7:14), but was a devout, informed citizen.

The Lord sent a man of Judah – Israel's arch rival, to deliver a message from Him to Israel. The message was that Israel was breaking the terms of the agreement (covenant) between the Lord and Israel, and that unless Israel repented, the results of rebellion would catch up with the people.

Amos delivered his message during perhaps just one or two years sometime between 760 and 753 BC. He probably returned to Tekoa to take up his shepherding again and to record his prophecies for future generations.

His mission largely failed, for Israel did not repent. When Jeroboam II died, factions began to tear Israel apart. A strong Assyrian king arose in 745 BC and Israel soon became a subject of Assyria.

Amos' message

Amos was a great preacher who knew how to draw crowds. His first sermon was like a superb geography lesson. He proclaimed God's judgement on each of Israel's neighbours in turn, for the atrocities they had committed. Each of his attacks on Israel's enemies must have drawn loud cheers from the crowds.

'God will punish Syria! ... the Philistines! ... the Phoenicians! ... Edom! ... Ammon! ... Moab! ... Judah!' Perhaps at the mention of Judah, the cheers

died away a bit. Who could be next? Amos had skilfully drawn a noose of nations around Israel. There was nowhere left for God's judgement to fall but on themselves. And sure enough, Israel was next. Amos struck home.

'The Lord said: 'I will punish Israel for countless crimes, and I won't change my mind. They sell honest people for money, and the needy are sold for the price of sandals. They smear the poor in the dirt and push aside those who are helpless.' (Amos 2:6 - 7, CEV)

This was followed by a history lesson. Amos reminded the people of all that God had done for them. He had brought them out of Egypt and given them the land. But they were trampling on all of that. Soon God would trample on them in judgement, unless they repented and returned to justice again. God wanted justice in the courts, justice in the market places.

Amos was the first of the prophets who had his preaching written down and collected into a book. His message has a timeless relevance. God demands social justice among all people. He will not accept the worship of those who oppress or neglect the poor and downtrodden.

A message to us

If the Lord had meant Amos' message only for a nation that would cease to exist in the next generation, He probably would not have led Amos to write it down. But the Lord meant it as a message for the Jews who survived Israel's destruction and for Christians in still later centuries. In Amos' prophecy we see important aspects of the changeless character of God, we see God's plan of salvation moving toward its goal, and we see the constant nature of humankind in need of deliverance from sin. The patience of God, and the awful consequences of rejecting His mercy and patience, are vivid. Even without the book's last four verses, Amos' words leave us seeing ourselves in the people he condemns and praying for someone to save us from the just consequences of disobedience. But 9:11 - 15 points towards the gospel – because people have proven unable to abandon sin, God Himself will provide a way for the covenant intimacy between humanity and God to be restored.

GETTING STARTED

1. Choose a competition game and without letting the young people know choose one person to be favoured throughout e.g. Every time they get out, let them back in etc. Ignore any protests the young people will make.

Or


2. **Discussion (Especially for seniors)**

What are some things that are unfair in our society today?

(Racism, homeless youth, oppression of small groups, people in debt with high interest rates, third world debt etc.)


Talk about what causes them and what effect they have on those who are the victims and the response of those who could do something to lessen such injustices.

Suggest ways to become involved in organisations which help the oppressed such as World Vision 40 Hour Famine and what we can do as a group.




POINT

God is the God of justice – He hates unfairness most of all and has said that He will eventually punish those who oppress others. This is what we are going to talk about in this session.



LEADER TIP

Your local council will have names of support groups and local organisations that meet the needs of your community.



POINT

God expects His people to be actively involved in helping the oppressed. He has promised that He will punish those who oppress others. God used Amos to declare this message.

GOING DEEPER



LEADER TIP

To bring the Bible reading alive you could play the dramatised recording of Amos. This is available from most Christian bookshops or you could borrow the CD/tape from someone who has the full set.

1. Read or listen to Amos 2:6 - 16

Highlights: V6 - 8 – The people of Israel were as evil as their neighbours: they were greedy, their values were twisted and their worship was corrupt.

V9 - 11 – God reminds the people of His mighty power and the great act of the rescue from Egypt upon which Israel could base its certainty of being God's people.

V12 – Points to those who are 'religious' without being fully committed. They disregarded God's word but continued with 'religious' activities.

V13 - 16 – The condemnation which must come because of arrogant complacency in response to God's gracious, generous and patient, loving care will be at the hands of the Assyrians. The people as in all times laughed when such threats did not occur immediately but God's word is fulfilled in His time.



LEADER TIP

BRIEFLY give the young people some background of Israel's history up to the time of Amos by using the notes and time line on page 86.

Then have the group **answer** at least **one** of the following questions:

- a. Morality must touch the practical details of the way we live and how we treat our neighbours, especially those less fortunate than ourselves. Failure to do this makes a lie of our Christianity.

In what ways should we change our attitudes and actions towards our neighbours, our workmates and members of our family so that what we say we are is true? Make a list. Be honest. Be specific. How does your list compare with what James says in James 1, verses 22, 27, 2:1, 3 - 4, 9, 15 - 16?

- b. The word 'worship' is a shortened form of the original word, 'worthship'. To worship, therefore, is to acknowledge something's or someone's worth.

The religious practices of the Israelites in Amos' day were not acceptable to God. Do you think our form of worship pleases God? How important is it that we are sincere?

- c. What injustices do you see in the world today? What is your attitude to them? Do you shrug your shoulders and forget; do you lie awake worrying; are you overwhelmed by it all? Who are the ones who are defenceless or powerless in your area? What is your attitude to them? (Think of the immigrant strangers, unemployed people, the old, single parent families, widows, children, etc.)

2. Discussion

- a. Read Amos 5:10 - 15. These strong words reflect God's strong feelings when weak people are forgotten or exploited.

Put these hard words into your own situation. Do you let injustice continue without comment or action? Do you take God seriously here?

Now read Amos 5:21 - 24. Why was God rejecting His people's worship? Would God say the same about your worship? What did God say was more important than their acts of worship? Do you try to stand up for truth and justice wherever you are?

We as the people of God are supposed to be on the attack against evil in all its forms. If **we** don't defend the defenceless, God certainly will, and will hold us accountable (Matthew 25:41 - 45).

- b. After reading Amos 6:1 - 8 discuss:
 What is Amos attacking? Why? In what way is his attack relevant to our society?
 Why are there special dangers for Christians who are wealthy?
 What are the dangers? How can they be overcome?

3. For seniors

Decide which questions are most relevant to your group and after brief discussion compile an answer to those chosen.

- a. Amos has been called a 'social reformer'. Looking back at the whole book, how do you think this is a good description of him?
- b. The challenge which Amos issued would certainly have had effects throughout different sections of Israelite society. Which sections? Is there any evidence that his challenge was accepted or rejected?
- c. What social questions today urgently need informed Christian comment? Do you think the Christian gospel has anything to do with social questions (like pollution, prostitution, pornography, poverty etc.) or is it only about personal salvation? Check Matthew 25:31 - 46 and Matthew 5:13 - 14.

4. Role play

Look at and act out the role play on the reverse side of the senior work sheet.

TAKING IT HOME

The worship of Israel had become mainly meaningless rites and ceremonies. There are still people who think that by regularly attending religious ceremonies they can make up for dishonesty, corruption and complacency. Injustices and lack of compassion will bring God's judgement because He requires people to live righteously. God wanted to bless the Israelites just as He wants to bless us, but failure to repent means that God must punish rather than bless. Amos speaks as God's messenger to us across the years.

The role plays or findings of discussions could be presented to the whole group. Have young people pray for those we have talked about who are suffering from social injustice today. Is there a way you can make a difference in your world?

FOLLOW-THRU

This session ties in with the Get Involved and Grow challenges in Reaching Out In Service where the young person is asked to give time to help those less fortunate than themselves. Challenge them to choose one that will require an effort on their part or think of a task you could do as a group, e.g. help with other appeals or help at a community welfare centre.

The answer for activity 4 on the junior worksheet is: 'Wanting more and more possessions is greed. It's thinking that material things are far more important than spiritual things. Greed makes people unfeeling about other people's needs. As long as they can get what they want, they don't care who gets hurt. God will supply all we need, not all we want.'



**FOR
SENIORS**



**LEADER
TIP**

You will need to photocopy the play from page 95 so that each young person has a copy.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Life Change, Nav Press.

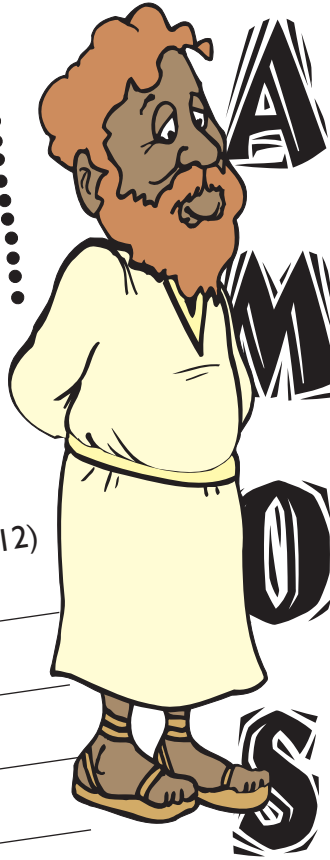
Bible Probe, Anzea Books, Scripture Union.

IT'S NOT FAIR!

1. Cross through the wrong statements

HIGHLIGHTS

- Amos taught us that God is the God of justice.
- God always warned people when they began to forget His laws.
- People have always rejected God's warnings and continued to please themselves.
- God expects His people to show justice and mercy to others.



was a shepherd.
OR
was a lawyer.

lived in Tekoa.
OR
lived in Syria.

was sent by God to warn Israel to stop sinning.
OR
was sent by God to warn Nineveh to stop sinning.

warned the poor to stop complaining and work harder.
OR
warned the wealthy that God saw how much they spent on themselves.

warned the people that God wanted bigger and better sacrifices to be offered to Him.
OR

warned the people that God would not accept expensive sacrifices while they were merciless to the poor.

told the people that God would never let any harm come to them.
OR

told the people that if they continued to disobey God He would punish them.

2. Make a list of the wrongs that Amos preached about. (Read Amos 2:6 - 8; 3:10; 4:1; 5:10 - 12)

3. Although Amos had to warn the people of God's anger, he also preached that God was ready to accept the people back. Read the references and write out the verse you like best. Amos 5:4 or Amos 5:14 or Amos 5:23 - 24.

4

twan

laitamre

Wanting more and more possessions is _____.

It's thinking that _____ things are far more important than _____ things.

thur

Greed makes people unfeeling about other people's _____.

As long as they can get what they _____, they don't care who gets _____.

God will _____ all we need, not all we want.

sne

drege

pusp



5

a. Do you think TV commercials are in any way responsible for people's desire to own more things? _____ Why? _____

b. Write out what Jesus said about greed in Luke 12:15.

Vertical lines for writing the answer to question b.

IT'S NOT FAIR!



Amos said God used a plumbline to see how way-off the people had become.

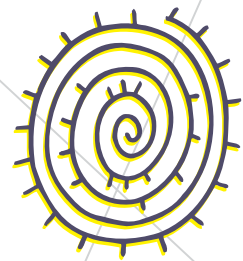
1 Amos spoke out against the social injustices of his time. Make a list of them.
(Look in Amos 2:6 - 8; 3:10, 4:1; 5:10 - 12; 8:5 - 6.)

Handwriting practice lines for listing social injustices.

Jesus said that the things considered of great value by human are worth nothing in God's sight.

Underline those that you feel still go on in today's world.

Is it harder to feel your need for God when you are well off and prospering?

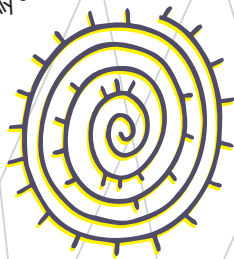


Amos lived in a time of great prosperity.

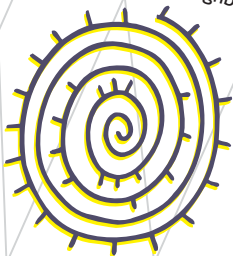
2 Some people say that God is love, so He will never punish. Some say that because God is love, He warns before He punishes. Which of these do you think Amos was teaching?

Handwriting practice lines for answering the question about Amos's teaching.

There are millions of people in the world today who have only one meal per day.



It is a Christian's duty to care for his weaker, poorer neighbours.



When Marie Antoinette was told the poor people had no bread to eat, she said, 'Let them eat cake.'

ROLE PLAY



Role Play

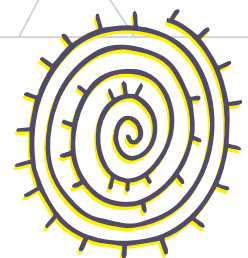
Create a Salvationist family – Dad, Mum, 2 older teenage boys, a teenage girl. They live in a neighbourhood of similar families, and the girl and youngest boy attend the Christian school on the other side of town.

They are well known as Salvationists because the neighbours see them leave regularly to attend the corps in which they are very involved – over an hour's drive away.

Set up scenes in which:

- a. A neighbour whose wife has been rushed to hospital comes seeking help with small children.
 - b. The mother of a teenage daughter on the verge of becoming involved with the 'wrong' group asks the girl in the family to take her daughter to some of the Salvation Army activities.
 - c. A waterpipe bursts in the garden of a widow next door just as father and sons are leaving for the Sunday morning outreach.
- i. First have the family respond negatively in each situation because they are completely involved at the corps and have no spare time. eg. would be late or miss out on a practice or other engagement and the people at the corps wouldn't like it especially if we brought along a kid who is a bad example.
 - ii. Have a group of neighbours expressing their opinions about the insincerity of the family's religion.
 - iii. Then discuss with your group:
 - a. how a Christian family must react in such situations.
 - b. how a Christian family can make an impact in their neighbourhood.
 - c. how your own family expresses Christianity.

Having considered all of these ideas look at the challenges on your Get Involved and Grow sheet under 'Reaching out in service' and ask God to help you carry out one that you could not attempt 'on your own'.



SESSION 11

FORGIVE AND FORGET

FROM THE BIBLE

The book of Hosea.



CHECKLIST

For the first suggestion for Getting Started you need four slips of paper, one pencil for each young person and a bowl or box for the answers.

If you choose the second starter you will need a *Ceremonies* book or some copies of the wedding vows for the young people to read. (The corps officer can help you with this.)

There are only two approaches for Going Deeper. The first is an introduction giving the young people a picture of Hosea's actions in his own life. The second is a Bible check on points being discussed and suggests that the work sheet be used in conjunction with this and answers be written at the end of each point as specified.

This will naturally mean that you need to allocate more time to the 'lesson' segment..



LEADER TIP

You may find it helpful to refer to the timeline from the previous session on Amos.



LEADER TIP

Read through the background information several times so it is clear in your mind before the lesson.

AIM

To show the young people the nature of God's forgiveness and faithfulness especially as it was taught through the prophet Hosea.

OBJECTIVES

As a result of this session the young people will be able to:

- ❖ understand that God can only accept sincere repentance;
- ❖ accept the promise of God's forgiveness and grace when we return to Him after failure;
- ❖ experience a relationship with a loving, faithful God without whom there is no hope.

INSIGHTS FOR THE LEADER

This is the second session on the prophets. Try to use it sequentially so that the young people will still have a picture in their minds of Amos' ministry.

Summary of events in Hosea's life

He was:

1. a northerner (from Israel) speaking to his own people;
2. under a northern king in troubled times;
3. an educated townsman;
4. a man with a broken marriage;
5. able to think of God as – A GOD OF MERCY.

Hosea lived at about the same time as the prophet Amos. His message was mainly for the northern kingdom, but he also had things to say to Judah. God's message to him came by way of bitter experience – as with several of the prophets. He married a woman called Gomer, who was unfaithful to him. Hosea saw in his broken marriage a picture of the broken relationship between Israel and God. He spoke about the pain that Israel's unfaithfulness was causing God.

Yet Hosea was commanded to buy his former wife back from her life of prostitution, and to love her again. In this incredible act of love he symbolised God's faithfulness to his own people. He would not completely destroy them – there would be judgement, but beyond that lay the hope of restoration and a new relationship of love and faithfulness.

Hosea shows us a side of God's character that many people wrongly think is missing from the Old Testament – His loving tenderness, His desire to forgive, and His longing for an intimate relationship with His people.

His message is complementary to; not in contrast to, that of Amos.

Background

In 745 BC Tiglath-Pileser III, King of Assyria turned his attention westward. The danger facing Israel was even more real now than when Amos had preached to them and the last 25 years of the northern kingdom were disastrous. Six kings reigned in 20 years, four of them gaining the throne by assassinating their predecessors. Just as Amos had warned, rejection of God and adoption of idolatrous practices caused a moral and political landslide.

Hosea was commanded to marry and warned that his wife would be unfaithful (chapter 1, verse 2) so that he could learn and demonstrate how loving God is to His unfaithful people. Think of it this way – after his marriage to Gomer (verse 3), Hosea found she was unfaithful to him (chapter 2, verses 2 to 5). Hosea saw that the tragedy of his own married life mirrored the tragedy of God's relationship with the Israelites. So he gave his children symbolic names, Jezreel (judgement), Unloved, Not my people; each a word picture of his growing shame and despair at the increasingly unhappy relationship between God and His people Israel.

There is a complex relationship between Hosea's private life and his public ministry as a prophet of God. At one time the picture of his home is more distinct; at another time, it is the picture of the nation. Just as Hosea was heartbroken by the lack of harmony in his own marriage, so, to him, it was a scandal that the Jewish nation should be separated into two antagonistic kingdoms. Since 'love looks for a way of being constructive' (1 Corinthians 13, verse 4), so Hosea looked beyond the immediate present to a time when unity would be restored.

Gomer committed adultery. In Hosea's time, this meant not only the end of a marriage and the loss of the possessions and services that husbands provided, but being paraded naked through the city (chapter 2, verses 1 to 5 and verse 10).

The Israelites were committing spiritual unfaithfulness or adultery by worshipping false gods. Hosea and other people faithful to God pointed out that the results of this national adultery would be just as devastating and shameful as the results of adultery within marriage. It would not do the Israelites any good to pursue foreign idols. God will block their path with hardship and trouble until, as a nation, they stand naked and hungry before their shrines (chapter 2, verses 6 to 10).

A time will come when it will be impossible to have any religious festivals (chapter 2, verses 11 and 12) because there will be nothing to eat and drink.

Because God is faithful, He will bring His people back from exile. There will be a new beginning, very like the excitement of the journey from Egypt to the Promised Land. God's blessing, will bring warmth and joy, and trouble will not cause discouragement (v.15). God's people will be bound to Him so firmly that they will forget all about the heathen god, Baal. This harmony between God and His people will affect not only the world of nature but also the events of history (chapter 2, verse 18). In this new relationship of unreserved commitment, God will be able to show fully the depth of His constant love and loyalty to His people and they will know He is utterly reliable and good.

Hosea and Gomer's marriage had collapsed; divorce was the obvious course. But, as Hosea realised that God still loved the Israelites despite their unfaithfulness and that He was still permanently committed to them by His covenant, so he, Hosea, was to take his wife back because this was

what God would do with the Israelites.

Although, legally, Hosea could have had Gomer put to death, and although he would probably have been happier and found life easier without her, he purchased her from the man who had her and she came home. She came not as a wife but as a servant, so that she might learn that loyalty to vows and obligations is a true way of loving.

Similarly the Israelites had sinned and, for their own good, God would allow them to be taken captive to a foreign country. Here, deprived of their obscene pagan religion, the Israelites might return and be faithful to the one true God.

Israel (like Gomer) wanted to go its own way. The nation had broken God's covenant without ever thinking that as a consequence it would destroy itself.

Priests and prophets had failed in their duty to teach the people the way of God (chapter 4, verse 6). They only served God for gain (verses 8 and 9) and were glad when the people sinned because that meant more to eat from the sin offerings!

To the Lord's protests that He will wait until Israel confesses its guilt and turns to Him (5:15), Israel responds with something that looks like repentance (6:1 - 3) – the right colour but, like make-up, not even skin deep. Real repentance comes from a soul deeply sorry for the committed sin. Israel shows no true sorrow. God wants loyalty to His covenant: but they offered animal sacrifice, spectacular but empty of faith, obedience and understanding. How well Hosea, as a betrayed husband, understood God's passion for loyalty! (v.6)

The prophet tells with horror that he reads no compassion in the eyes of God, only plagues and destructions in the lower world. The Israelites could not believe that God would carry out such harsh judgements on His chosen people. Things could never get as bad as the picture Hosea painted. But their prosperity was not a sign of God's blessing and it would quickly end. Samaria would be totally destroyed so that even the unborn would die.

The Assyrians took Samaria in 721 B.C.

GETTING STARTED

I. What's God like?

(Have no more than 6 in a group to play this game.)

Give the young people the following instructions:

When you think of God, what images flash across your mind? Images or pictures help to explain God so that we understand His attributes better. I'm going to give you four slips of paper, one for each round we play in this game. As I say a word I want you to be specific in describing that word in the way you see that it relates to God.

(In round 1 the word is a colour.)

ROUND 1: What colour comes to mind when you think of God? And why? (You could say *purple* because He is a King.) Write a colour on one of your slips of paper and place the paper in the bowl in the centre of your group.

Then, one at a time, I'll ask one of you to draw a slip of paper from

the bowl, read it, and let everyone try to guess why this colour was chosen.

(In round 2 the word is an animal.)

ROUND 2: What animal comes the closest to portraying God for you? And why? (e.g. A *lion*, because He is all powerful and bold.)

Write the name of the animal on the second slip of paper and place in the bowl. Continue as before drawing out slips of paper, read ... and have everyone guess who the author is, etc.

(In round 3 we think of a song.)

ROUND 3: What song illustrates your thought about God?

(In round 4 we think of a car.)

ROUND 4: What car comes to mind when you think of God? (e.g. *Rolls Royce*, because God is reliable.)

Or

2. Play a CD of a current song about the true meaning of love. (Just ask one of your young people for the latest hits!)

Then ask them the following questions:

What is the difference between being in love and loving? How is it shown?

Look up the vows made in a Christian marriage service. Is it possible to keep these without true love?

GOING DEEPER

1. **Can you get the picture?**

Suppose your corps had a young, unmarried officer and one Sunday morning he stood up and said, 'The Lord has told me to marry a woman who will be unfaithful to me. He also told me we are to have three children, and that I am to name them Judgement, Unloved, and Not my people.'

Can you imagine the reaction of the congregation? Wouldn't everyone be sure he had gone mad? People wouldn't know whether to sit quietly through the rest of the service or call a meeting to consider what should be done about the poor fellow.


But suppose the officer then said, 'Just a minute. Before you call the psychiatrist, let me tell you something. You think I'm out of my mind, but that is a picture of God's relationship with you. He has loved you, but you haven't been faithful to Him. Now He wants you to know that He is going to judge you without mercy, and divorce you so that you will no longer be His people.'

This would certainly make you stop and think! Especially if you then saw it all occur before your eyes!

This is how Hosea got his point across to the people of Israel.

2. **What was Hosea's message?**


- a. Hosea married. (Read Hosea 1:3 - 9 and complete questions 1 and 2.)
- b. Gomer said it was her lovers who gave her the luxuries she felt were her right (2:5) but what did Hosea say about this?



POINT


It is interesting to hear the different images we each have of God. In the story of Hosea we see God as the judge and ruler of the world.

He is ready to forgive freely those who turn back to Him in sincerity. This is the message given to us by the prophet Hosea.



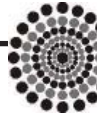
VIDEO CLIP

It would be helpful to have a video of a recent wedding and show the section on the wedding vows.



POINT

Have you ever considered how much God wants us to be His faithful, loving followers? In this session we see a man speaking out when his own personal suffering pointed to how God feels when His people desert Him for other loves.



LEADER TIP

The second side of the work sheet can be used in conjunction with this approach and should be handed out to be filled in.

(Read Hosea 2:8 and complete question 3. Israel also refused to acknowledge that God provided for them and loved them.)

- c. Verse 7 tells us how she would be compelled to realise she was better off at home. Compare this with the story of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15:15 - 17. (Question 4 and 5.)
- d. Israel had begun to worship other gods way back in Moses' time, and such worship had continued through the centuries.

In the time of Amos the king of Israel had set up empty thrones at which the people could gather to worship God so that they did not travel to Jerusalem. These shrines soon became idols to be worshipped and by Hosea's time such idolatry was officially approved by the state.

Such worship was faithlessness to God – or spiritual adultery.

Because they forgot God (Hosea 2, verses 9 to 13), the Israelites were to be stripped of every comfort.

- e. Yet, after such threats, God said He, as a deserted husband, was prepared to win back Israel's love. (Read Hosea 2:14 - 20 and answer question 6.)
- f. God instructed Hosea to find Gomer and buy her back. (Read Hosea 3:1 - 4. Complete question 7.)
- g. Many people say that a God of love will not punish. The Bible does not teach this. What it says is that **God warns us when we stray and gives us every chance to return to Him.**

'Punishment need not contradict love.' Do you agree with this statement?

Explain how the right balance between justice and mercy can be reached. Use this story as an example:

A tradesman in a certain town found a trusted worker had been systematically stealing from his warehouse. He let him go to prison, but met him on his release, giving him his job back. The man found that his full wages had been paid to his wife all the time he had been in prison.

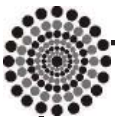
- h. Read Hosea 6:1 - 6. Why does the Good News Bible label this passage 'The People's Insincere Repentance'?

What is absent from their statement that you would expect to hear from people who are truly sorry? See Hosea 7, verse 14. How important does this seem to you? (Answer question 8.)

- i. A personal response made in sincerity is an essential part of our acceptance by God. There is always a danger that people raised in Christian homes will assume that they are accepted by God although they have not made a personal, life-changing commitment to Him. Salvation is an individual matter, and genuine faith produces righteous conduct and character. God's acceptance of us does not come because our parents are Christians, or because we follow Christian practices. He accepts sinners who are repentant and truly sorry for all their past failures. He sends the Holy Spirit to overcome evil in our lives.

- j. **God's redemption**

Though God must punish people who reject Him, it is with sorrow. Read Hosea 11:8. The people who were beyond repentance would be destroyed, God said, but the nation Israel would rise



NOTE

Justice should be tempered by mercy; mercy need to be strengthened by justice.

again to be a future blessing to the world, as God had promised Abraham. (Read 11:10, 11. Answer question 9.)

TAKING IT HOME

Hosea had some painful things to say to Israel, but he also offered hope. God would bring peace and good harvests to the nation once again.

God cannot be fooled by a show of being sorry put on simply because we are a bit worried about the consequences of wrong or disobedient actions. Nor does He want worship that is half-hearted. He wants us to know Him and to be His faithful people. He knows whether we are sincere and so deserving of His forgiveness or whether we are faithless – behaving like spiritual adulterers.

Our part, yours and mine, is to understand that without God, people have no hope and must accept His judgement. He wants to save all people and Heaven is glad when one of us turns back to Him (Luke 15:7).

FOLLOW-THRU

Challenge your group to take on the Get Involved and Grow in Worship task of memorising Scripture. Suitable passages would be:

Hosea 6:4 - 6 and 14:1 - 2

or Hosea 14:4 - 9

or 1 Corinthians 13:4 - 7.

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Bible Probe, Anzea Books, Scripture Union.

FORGIVE AND FORGET

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

Use these words in the correct places in this story of Hosea. Find them in the wonderword as you go.

The unused letters in the wonderword will fit into the boxes below to complete the story.

- Baal loyalty
- eat pain
- faithful people
- forgiveness prophet
- Gomer repent
- God sin
- Hosea sincere
- love true

The _____, Hosea lived in the Northern Kingdom of Israel. His wife, _____ proved to be unfaithful and left him for wealthy lovers who eventually sold her into slavery.

As _____ felt the _____ of this broken marriage, he began to realise how _____ felt about the actions of His chosen _____, Israel. They were not _____ to Him. Although they had made a covenant with God that He would be their one, true God they had constantly broken it and given their _____ to gods like _____. Such disloyal, faithless actions were really spiritual adultery as they had ceased to _____ their _____ God. Hosea warned that there would soon be nothing to _____ or drink at these pagan shrines as God punished the people for their _____.

'If you _____ in a _____ way God will offer you His complete _____,' Hosea told them.

But the people rejected God's wonderful offer, He was prepared to

□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

and He still makes this wonderful offer to us.

1. What was Hosea's wife called? (Hosea 1:3) _____

2. What did the three children's names mean?

3. Gomer believed her lovers showered her with luxurious gifts (2:5). But what does Hosea 2:8 say about God and Israel?

4. Does her comment in v.7 remind you of anyone? (See Luke 15:15 - 17.)

5. Is this typical of people who take but do not give? _____

6. God said he was prepared to win back the nation's love by gently courting her all over again. Write out the verse in Hosea 2:14 - 20 that gives you the clearest picture of this happening.

7. What attributes of love as described in 1 Corinthians 13:4 - 7 would Hosea have to show as he took his faithless wife back? (Hosea 3:1 - 4)

8. Hosea 7:14 explains how God knew the people's repentance was not sincere. How did He describe it? _____

9. What assurance do we have that God will accept us back when we return to Him? (1 John 1:9)

HIGHLIGHTS

- Because of Hosea's own broken marriage he realised how God felt about the nation.
- Leaving God to worship something else is spiritual adultery.
- God promises to forgive when we are truly sorry and return to Him.
- God is a loving, faithful God true to His word.
- True love forgives.

FORGIVE AND FORGET

Read this story of Hosea:

The prophet, Hosea, lived in the Northern Kingdom of Israel. His wife, Gomer proved to be unfaithful and left him for wealthy lovers who eventually sold her into slavery.

As Hosea felt the pain of this broken marriage, he began to realise how God felt about the actions of His chosen people Israel. They were not faithful to Him. Although they had made a covenant with God that He would be their one, true God, they had constantly broken it and given their loyalty to gods like Baal. Such disloyal, faithless actions were really spiritual adultery as they had ceased to love their true God. Hosea warned that there would soon be nothing to eat or drink at these pagan shrines as God punished the people for their sin.

'If you repent in a sincere way, God will offer you His complete forgiveness', Hosea told them.

Prophets taught mankind to know God.

It was St. Augustine who first called the prophets major or minor because of the lengths of their books.

God would rather have our constant love than sacrifices!

Prophets are not the opposite of loss.

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

I don't think the minor prophets worked in mines, but there's something about them I dig.

You should be able to find 16 of the words from this story in this wonderword. (We have underlined 8 of them for you.)

Circle all of them.

The letters left over should then tell you what God is prepared to do when we come to Him seeking forgiveness. Write them here.

Only 4% of babies are born on the day predicted by their doctor.

Hosea called his children Judgement, Unloved and Not my people.

1. What was Hosea's wife called? (Hosea 1:3) _____

2. What did the three children's names mean?

3. Gomer believed her lovers showered her with luxurious gifts (2:5). But what does Hosea 2:8 say about God and Israel? _____

4. Does her comment in v.7 remind you of anyone? (See Luke 15:15 - 17.)

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6. God said he was prepared to win back the nation's love by gently courting her all over again. Write out the verse in Hosea 2:14 - 20 that gives you the clearest picture of this happening.

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8. Hosea 7:14 explains how God knew the people's repentance was not sincere. How did He describe it? _____

9. What assurance do we have that God will accept us back when we return to Him? (1 John 1:9) _____

SESSION 12

TELLING EVERYBODY

FROM THE BIBLE

Acts 1:8; 1 John 1:3; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Acts 4:1 - 20
John 9:17 - 25, 30



CHECKLIST

This is mainly a practical session looking at ways to be an effective witness and naturally including God in our conversations.

There are two Getting Started activities. Don't spend too long on the one you choose. If you choose to do the first starter, you may feel you need to write the suggested questions up where they can be seen.

Try to use all of the Going Deeper approaches if you can. Be ready to write down the young people's responses in Going Deeper 3. Follow-up work in later sessions is important.

AIM

To encourage the young people to share their faith and provide them with the skills to do so.

OBJECTIVES

As a result of this session the young people will be able to see that:

- ❖ their conversation reveals what they truly believe;
- ❖ there are times in their everyday conversation when they can witness;
- ❖ they can speak about their Christian experience without embarrassment;
- ❖ understand what it means to give a testimony and realise the value of testifying.

INSIGHTS FOR THE LEADER

The majority of people find it difficult to share their testimony and young people in particular can become very embarrassed even at the suggestion they should give their testimony to fellow Christians. It is hoped that this session will not only give them some practical help but demonstrate that in their daily experience, they can testify very powerfully without realising it.

Try to avoid using witnessing jargon in your presentation of this session. Rather encourage your young people to share their faith naturally in everyday conversation.

To be able to do this, help your young people develop an awareness of people around them – their needs and hopes. It's natural to give advice to people and it's helpful too. It's a way of caring for them. Of course that advice must be really needed. Nobody welcomes know-it-alls, interferers or do-gooders.

When dealing with individuals, Jesus started where the people themselves were. He looked for the real need and for ways of meeting that need. Then He spoke openly and honestly to them.

When it comes to talking about our Christian faith, we sometimes instinctively hold back from revealing what we really think. We often have a genuine concern not to spoil our relationships with our friends. At other times our silence could be due to feelings we have about ourselves.

God wants us to let our faith show in public. Impress upon the young people that we all find it easy to speak naturally about things that are important to us. The more our love for God grows, the more naturally



LEADER TIP

Youth Alpha has a good section you could use as supplementary material if you wish. See the section on 'Why and how we should tell others.'

we will include Him in our conversations. Sometimes we may have to admit that we don't know an answer to a query. But that's O.K. We can count on God's help as we try to let our Christianity show.

But remember – as the disciples witnessed: 'We speak what we do know' applies to each one of us. God has no grandchildren – we must have a first hand knowledge of Him and what He is doing for us before we can tell others about it.

GETTING STARTED

1. For juniors

We hear testimonies all the time. Secular people are constantly engaged in some form of testimony or other. Name all the types of advertisements that you can think of (TV, newspaper ads; entertainment ads; radio; bill boards).

Discuss a few ads. How convincing are they? Would you purchase the product? Why? etc.

Find as many similarities as possible between advertising material goods and giving one's testimony. (Both are a form of recommendation.)

What do we find quite easy to recommend to others? (Favourite brand products; TV programs; books, etc.) Talk about your favourite TV show, etc.

Or

For seniors

Divide into pairs. Take turns to find out from your partner how God has become real to him or her over the years. Not just only dramatic events but also those less spectacular times when God has had something to teach them. Allow each person only 4 to 5 minutes to describe his/her growth as a Christian. Warn them beforehand that they will be asked to re-tell their partner's story to the group.

Come back together (in groups of no more than 8) and give each person time to re-tell their partner's story. Anyone in the group may stop them if they use words that people without a Christian background might not understand and ask for an explanation. Allow each person no more than two minutes.

2. Have the young people relate stories of their own significant life experiences such as their first day at school, their first day at secondary school, moving house, the day a brother/sister was born and so on. Set a time limit of a minute so that just as they are getting talking, you cut them off.

After the young people have shared part of their experiences with the group, discuss the reasons why they find talking about Jesus more difficult than talking about themselves.

GOING DEEPER

1. What biblical base is there for testifying?

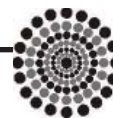
Use several of these references, choosing different young people to read the verses out.

- Acts 1:8 (Jesus said we will be His witnesses and will be empowered to do this by the Holy Spirit.)

LEADER TIP

For extra reading:
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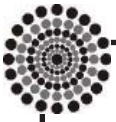


POINT

If you believe in something, you want to tell others why you are enthusiastic about it. It seems harder to speak naturally about Christ because it's not fashionable to talk about your beliefs. This session gives good reasons for sharing your faith as well as practical help and ideas.

POINT

We find it easy to talk about the things that really excite us. We all want to let others know that we love Jesus. Doing this confidently requires practice and effort on our part. This is what we want to think about in this session.



LEADER TIP

Acts 4:1 - 20. This would need to be told in summary rather than 20 verses being read out.

- 1 John 1:3 (Our witness or testimony will bring others into the fellowship.)
- 2 Corinthians 5:17 - 21 (We testify how God has changed us so that we are now His friends.)
- Acts 4:1 - 20 (Peter testifies to the Council about Jesus and declares he cannot stop speaking about what he has seen and heard.)
- John 9:17; 24 - 25; 30 (The blind man declared – ‘One thing I do know: I was blind, and now I see.’)

Acts 1 reminds us that as Jesus was returning to Heaven He was counting on His followers to spread the word and He does the same today. It's not always easy – but with His power it can be done.

2. **Don't be a phoney**

Witnessing involves ALL WE ARE AND ALL WE DO. WHAT YOU ARE IS MOST IMPORTANT.

‘It's what I am that communicates more about Christianity than anything else’. (Dick Innes, I hate witnessing.)

Read and discuss this verse:

‘What you are speaks so loud
that the world can't hear what you say.
They're looking at your walk,
Not listening to your talk.
They're judging by your actions every day.’

Stress that our lives must be in harmony with what we say, or we might as well not give a testimony.

Discuss: Because of this (our lives must be in harmony with what we say) some people opt out by saying, ‘Well, my life isn't all it should be, so I won't say anything.’ Others say, ‘I'll just let my life speak’ and never actually speak out about anything.

Is this what God expects us to do?

Non-Christians need to detect the genuineness of our Christian experience. Then they will be attracted by our words about Jesus Christ. Non-Christians are looking for something real. They see enough phonies in the world – they distrust society. They need something or someone who is real and can be trusted.

3. **Guidelines for a witness**

Use activity 1 on the worksheet, ‘Meet Kev and Terry’. Terry just happened to ask Kev how he became a Christian. Ask the young people what Kev's reply did for Terry. What would they have said?

Have the young people suggest ideas of how we can talk about God and write them up. Add any of the following if they are not already in the list.

- a. Speak about Christ – not yourself.
- b. Be honest – tell it how it is – don't give the impression that being a Christian is always easy.
- c. Avoid jargon and clichés i.e. ‘religious talk’ that non-church-goers will not understand.
- d. Be positive and never criticise anyone else or the church.
- e. Be natural and sincere.
- f. Be audible and clear.
- g. Be specific – that is, get to the point of your story.
- h. Never preach at anyone.

- i. Use eye contact.
- j. Usually three minutes is sufficient time with a maximum of five minutes.
- k. Relate it to your listeners – be contemporary. (What is happening now is more important than what happened five years ago.)

4. **A basic outline for a testimony**

Discuss: If we're asked to give our testimony, should we think and plan what we want to say, or just allow it to be spontaneous trusting God to give us the words to say?

What should we try to include in a testimony?

- a. **YOUR LIFE BEFORE KNOWING CHRIST**
 - Briefly describe your life – that is, whether you live in a Christian or non-Christian home; whether you have always known about God, etc.
- b. **HOW YOU CAME TO KNOW CHRIST**
 - Where you were when you were saved (converted).
 - How God spoke or dealt with you.
 - Anything specific about your encounter with Christ.
 - Be sure to tell people Christ saved you – it is not anything you did – you only trusted Jesus to save you.
- c. **LIFE AFTER YOU RECEIVED CHRIST**
 - Tell about changes in your life – inward and outward.
 - Tell how Christ helps you in daily living.
 - Tell about the assurance of eternal life that you have.

Finish with a positive statement regarding your Christian life and/or challenge to any unsaved young people.

Have the young people spend some time writing down/developing their testimonies, using the guidelines above. They can use the pages on their worksheet to do this.

For seniors only: Before the seniors work on their testimony, go through with them section 2 on their worksheet. This will give them some help in answering questions about their faith.

TAKING IT HOME

A testimony is really a Christian communicating effectively a personal experience of God. We can do this in our everyday conversations with people but we need to be prepared. Not only by having our testimony prepared as we have done today but in recognising the opportunities that come our way. When we want to be effective witnesses for God, we can ask Him at the beginning of each day to lead us to someone with whom we can share our faith that day.

Having prayed this prayer, don't be surprised at the chances to speak that God will give you. It does not mean that we have to speak to everyone who comes along, but we can be sure that God will send someone our way if we are truly sincere about wanting to share our faith.

You will learn to be wise in knowing when to share, just how much to share at one time, and with whom to share. The Lord will help you with understanding if you ask Him for it. Remember - say a bit and if the person wants to know more, they'll ask a question.

Never forget that you do the witnessing, but God does the saving.

FOLLOW-THRU

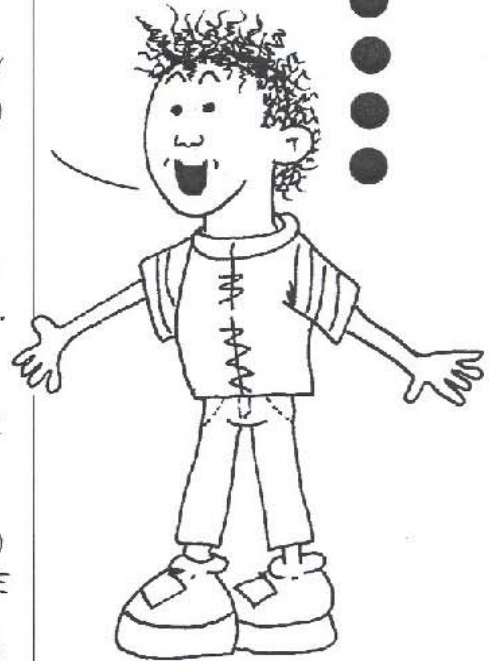
If the young people have not completed the preparation of their testimony, encourage them to take it home to finish.

This session naturally ties into the challenge in Get Involved and Grow in Worship to tell others what God has done in your life. Use the young people to do this in a devotional time in youth group; in meetings on Sunday; or in your own sessions. Make sure they all have a chance to speak.

Telling Everybody



... WOW ... AND
 THEN AT EXACTLY
 9.30 ON THE FRIDAY
 NIGHT THEY STARTED
 SINGING 'WHEN THE
 SAINTS COME
 MARCHING IN' ...
 AND EVERYONE WAS
 REALLY WRAPPED ...
 AND THE SPEAKER
 SAID AND THEN
 AT 10.30 AND I
 GOT DOWN ON MY
 KNEES FELT
 WONDERFUL ... AND
 TINGLES UP MY SPINE
 INCREDIBLE ...
 FANTASTIC FEELING
 ... ETCETC



1. When you are asked to share your faith, what do you say?
 What excites you about knowing Jesus Christ?

Some things that God has done for me
 that I could talk about

HIGHLIGHTS

- Witnessing involves ALL I am and ALL I do.
- A testimony is communicating what I know of Jesus and my relationship with Him.
- Preparing a testimony can help me take a good look at what I believe.
- I can share my faith in my everyday conversation.

2.

Using this basic outline for a testimony, compose your own testimony.

YOUR LIFE BEFORE KNOWING CHRIST

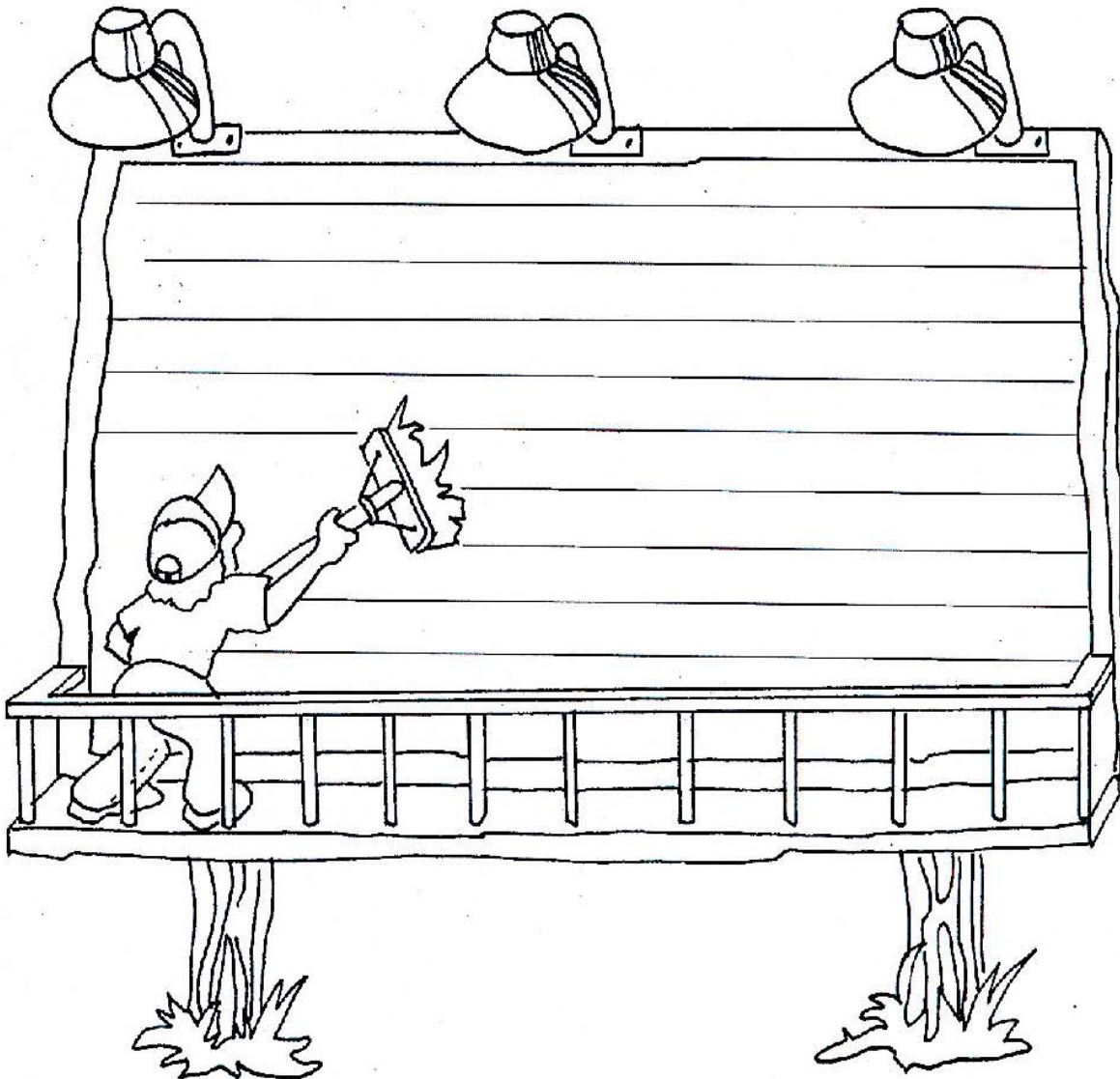
Briefly describe your life – that is, whether you lived in a Christian or non-Christian home; whether you have always known about God, and so on.

HOW YOU CAME TO KNOW CHRIST

- ☛ Where you were when you were saved.
- ☛ How God spoke or dealt with you.
- ☛ Anything specific about your encounter with Christ.
- ☛ Be sure to tell people that Christ saved you – it is not anything you did – you only trusted Jesus to save you.

LIFE AFTER YOU RECEIVED CHRIST

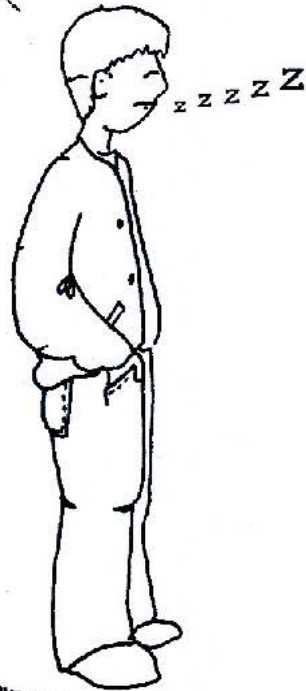
- ☛ Tell about changes in your life – inward and outward.
- ☛ Tell how Christ helps you in daily living.
- ☛ Tell about the assurance of eternal life that you have.



Telling Everybody

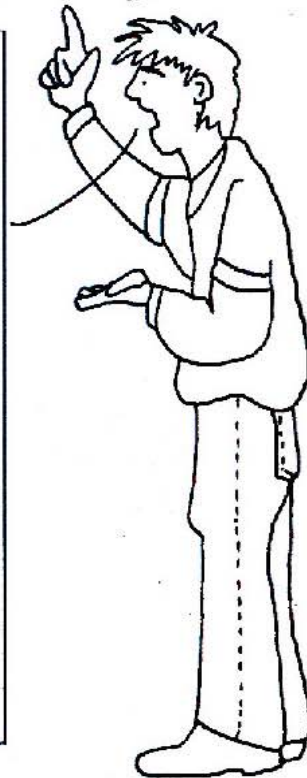
People will be put off by forced mentions of Christianity, so we must learn to be natural.

Evangelism is simply one beggar telling another where he can find bread.



An average kiss uses 37 kilojoules.

... WOW ... AND THEN
 AT EXACTLY 9.30 ON
 THE FRIDAY NIGHT THEY
 STARTED SINGING 'WHEN
 THE SAINTS COME
 MARCHING IN' ... AND
 EVERYONE WAS REALLY
 WRAPPED ... AND THE
 SPEAKER SAID AND
 THEN
 AT 10.30 AND I GOT
 DOWN ON MY KNEES
 FELT WONDERFUL ...
 AND TINGLES UP MY
 SPINE INCREDIBLE
 ... FANTASTIC FEELING
 ... ETCETC



↑ **When you are asked to share your faith, what do you say?**
 • What excites you about knowing Jesus Christ? _____

 Why would you like your friends to become Christians? _____

We ought to obey God rather than man.

Jeremiah 29:11
 Matthew 6:26
 Isaiah 41:10

I can't hear what you're saying
 because your actions are so
 loud.

1 Corinthians 15:58
 Romans 15:13
 John 10:10
 Matthew 5:11

It's important to know some Scripture verses to help encourage others or to show them that God does love them. Write the verse you could use if you were talking with somebody who felt:

- (a) life has no purpose _____
- (b) bored _____
- (c) lonely _____
- (d) depressed _____
- (e) unloved _____
- (f) frightened _____

2. Using this basic outline for a testimony, compose your own testimony.

YOUR LIFE BEFORE KNOWING CHRIST

Briefly describe your life – that is, whether you lived in a Christian or non-Christian home; whether you have always known about God, and so on.

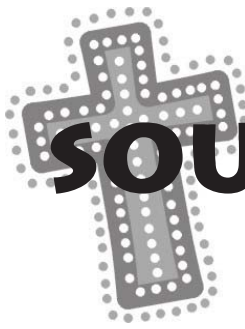
HOW YOU CAME TO KNOW CHRIST

- ☞ Where you were when you were saved.
- ☞ How God spoke or dealt with you.
- ☞ Anything specific about your encounter with Christ.
- ☞ Be sure to tell people that Christ saved you – it is not anything you did – you only trusted Jesus to save you.

LIFE AFTER YOU RECEIVED CHRIST

- ☞ Tell about changes in your life – inward and outward.
- ☞ Tell how Christ helps you in daily living.
- ☞ Tell about the assurance of eternal life that you have.

A large graphic of a film strip on the left side of a lined writing area. The film strip is black with white sprocket holes and has the words "Telling Everybody" written on it in a white, cursive font. The writing area consists of horizontal lines on a white background.



SOUL FOOD

SESSION 13

AIM

To help the young people understand Jesus' claims that He was the bread and water of life.

OBJECTIVES

As a result of this session the young people will have a better understanding of:

- ❖ what Jesus meant by 'I am the bread of life';
- ❖ what Jesus meant by 'I am the water of life';
- ❖ why these claims angered some of the Jews;
- ❖ the implications of these claims on their own lives.

INSIGHTS FOR THE LEADER

Background – bread of life

In one sense the 'bread of life' is one of the simplest titles of Jesus. This story has roots which go a long way back. Bread and food were synonymous words for the Jews.

- a. Any mention of 'bread from heaven' would immediately turn the thoughts of a Jew to the manna which God gave them in their wilderness journeying (Exodus 16:1 - 36). That story was deeply imprinted on the Jewish memory. In Nehemiah, the manna is called bread from heaven (Nehemiah 9:15).

It is called by the same name in the Psalms (Psalms 105:40). It is also called grain of heaven and the food of angels (Psalms 78:24, 25). To the Jew there was something mysteriously divine about the manna, and for **Jesus to claim to be the bread from heaven was in itself a claim to be divine.**

- b. The manna had other connections in Jewish thought. It was part of Jewish Messianic belief that, when the Messiah came, He would once again feed His people with the heavenly manna. It was believed that in Solomon's temple there had been placed in the ark, with the tablets of the ten commandments, the rod that budded and a golden pot of the manna. It was said that, when the temple was destroyed, Jeremiah had hidden away the pot of manna, and that, when the Messiah came, He would produce it again, and the faithful would eat of it.

This belief appears in the New Testament itself, when in Revelation 2:17 it is promised to the faithful that they will be given the hidden manna to eat.

For Jesus to say that He was the bread from heaven was to say

FROM THE BIBLE

John 6:25 - 35, 47 - 51; 7:37 - 39.

CHECKLIST ✓

Paper will be needed for the first Getting Started activity if you decide to list replies.

You will need a selection of various breads if you use starter 3.

There are two suggested teaching approaches for Going Deeper. One discusses the biblical images of bread and water. You will need Bibles, pens and the work sheet. Seniors will need access to a concordance for activity 4 on the work sheet.

If you are going to use the suggested video clip you will need to hire *Castaway* and view it beforehand.

that He was the Messiah, and that with Him the Messianic age had begun. **To the Jews that claim was clear, and it was precisely that claim that aroused their anger.**

But there is a still greater claim here. There is in the passage the stressing of the fact that the giver of the manna was not Moses but God (John 6:32). It was a standard part of Jewish belief that the manna was given because of Moses, and that, therefore, with his death it ceased. Jesus denied this, and insisted that the giver of the manna was no human person, but God. If then Jesus went on to insist that it is He who gives, and is, the living bread, then this is a claim to be nothing less than divine. **He is claiming in some sense to be God, or at least to be doing what only God can do.**

- c. The qualities of the manna were even more wonderful. The manna was said to be angels' food. It was said to meet every taste and every age. It varied in itself according to the need and wish and condition of the eater. It satisfied the need of everyone who ate it. **Here then is the claim of Jesus that, whatever the need of any person, He can satisfy it.**
- d. Bread is the staff of life, that which enables life to go on. The bread of life is the bread which gives life, and Jesus claims that that life is a life which can defeat even death. It is Jesus' claim that **He is able to give life in this world and life in the world to come.** (John 6:49 - 50)

Water of life

Hunger and thirst are the two main discomforts suffered by people. Thirst is the more serious and lack of water leads to serious breakdowns in the body much more quickly than lack of food.

Man's desire for God has been often described as a 'thirst'. Perhaps the classic example is the opening of Psalm 42: 'As a deer longs for a stream of cool water, so I long for you, O God. I thirst for you, the living God.'

One of the main terrors of the wanderings of the Children of Israel in the wilderness was the shortage of water. We read how that at Rephidim there was no water there to drink. 'Give us water to drink,' they demanded of Moses. The bringing of the water into the Temple by the priests on the occasion of the Feast of the Tabernacles was to commemorate the water brought from the rock on that particular occasion (see Exodus 17:1 - 7).

The story in John 7:37 - 39 from the life of Jesus marks a turning point. For the first time the chief priests and Pharisees, who together formed the official Jewish 'Court of Law', tried to take official action against Him. They sent officers – probably from the Temple Guard – to capture Jesus. Those sent to make the arrest evidently thought they would wait for a favourable opportunity, for Jesus was very popular with the crowds that filled the Temple area for the Feast of Tabernacles. While they waited, they listened to Jesus speaking.

The Feast was drawing to its close. On each of the seven days water had been drawn from the pool of Siloam, which flowed from beneath the rocky mountain on which the Temple stood. The water from this living stream was carried in a golden pitcher by a procession of priests, accompanied by music. On the last day of the Feast, the eighth day, this practice was discontinued – there was no water. It was then that Jesus stood up and exclaimed: "Whoever is thirsty should come to me, and whoever believes in me should drink. As the scripture says, 'Streams of

life-giving water will pour out from his heart.' ” (John 7:37 - 38, GNB)

Jesus meant that He could offer satisfaction to all whose thirst could not be quenched by Jewish ritual. He comes to all believers with refreshment of heart and spirit, and, what is more, helps them to carry that refreshment to others in need.

The words of Jesus created quite a stir among His hearers. Some said He was a prophet, and others that He was the Messiah. But the leaders of the people, afraid of Jesus' power and influence, ridiculed such ideas.

Christians of every age have thought of Jesus as the 'Water of Life'. They have found that their thirsting after God and truth has been satisfied when they have, by faith, received Him into their hearts and lives.

The gospel writer goes on to explain (v.39) that Jesus was referring to the Holy Spirit. The Spirit-filled life would have the effect of a life-giving river upon a barren land.

How disappointing it is when this does not happen, when people turn to those from whom the life and truth of the gospel might be expected, only to remain unhelped and unbled.

GETTING STARTED

1. What am I?

What 'I am' could you use to describe yourself, and why? Have some fun with it, e.g. 'I am a cuddly bear' (affectionate) or 'I am a mosquito' (irritating).

Perhaps you could suggest some titles for each other . . . But be kind!! Make a list if you wish.

2. Can you suggest some 'I am's' Jesus might have used of Himself if He'd been saying them in the twenty first century. e.g. 'I am energy' or 'I am communication'.

3. Taste and see!

You may like to prepare a plate of various breads and biscuits for your young people to taste and identify. e.g., wholemeal bread, rye biscuits, rice wafers, cheezels.

Discuss the importance of the various cereals and how basic they are as part of the diet of all people.

GOING DEEPER

1. Discussion on the use of bread and water

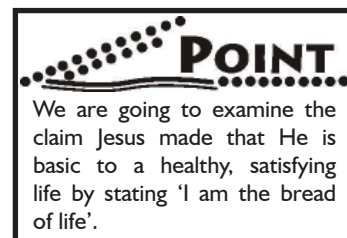
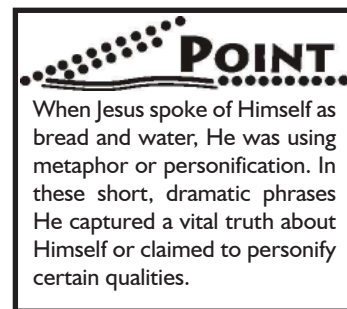
Bread and water – what do you think of when these words are mentioned?

- ❖ Pretty boring diet.
- ❖ Food for prisoners.
- ❖ The basis for all food.

If you were isolated, what would you need to sustain life? Water and bread would keep you going for a long time until help arrives.

a. Bread

- i. Today we tend to take bread for granted, and see it as a supplement to meals. But in various forms it is more important than we probably realise. We use it in sandwiches, hot dogs,



toast, crumpets, pizza; and of course 'Big Macs'. Imagine them without the bread bun!

Not too long ago (in the early 1900s) many children used to eat more bread than anything else.

Similarly people in biblical times virtually lived on bread.

Bread was a basic necessity of life in biblical times. In fact the word 'bread' was often used when it was 'food' being discussed.

ii. **Bible search**

Bread features prominently in the Bible. It is seen as one of the basic necessities of life. Also it is a spiritual metaphor:

Bread – as a basic food stuff.

Genesis 14:18; Exodus 16:8; 1 Kings 17:5 - 6; Matthew 4:3; Mark 6:8.

Bread – as basic spiritual food.

1 Corinthians 5:8; John 6:30 - 35 and 47 - 51.

iii. **Brainstorm**

Why did Jesus say 'I am the bread of life'?

How is He basic to our spiritual growth?

How can we feed on His teaching?

What promise does Jesus make in John 6:51?

b. **Water**

i. How important do you consider water is to our world? Consider how man is creating deserts and polluting waterways in the greedy quest for wealth.

ii. Water featured significantly in the lives of Bible people. Theirs was a 'dry thirsty land' and even in New Zealand we can relate to how they felt. We measure the quality and value of land by the availability of water. Even in the big cities we are 'water conscious' and often have water rationing in summer. Little wonder that water features in the Bible as a necessity of life as well as a symbol of spiritual blessing. Cleansing, refreshment, forgiveness, eternal life, and the Holy Spirit Himself are referred to in terms of 'water'.

Bible search on water's value

Genesis 18:4; Genesis 26:19 - 20; Exodus 29:4; Psalms 42:1 - 2; Amos 8:11; Matthew 10:42; John 4:14; Revelation 22:1.

iii. Look at the Old Testament incidents that Jesus was referring to in these two 'I am's':

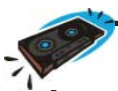
Bread – Exodus 16:4, 8 – the 'manna' in the wilderness – John 6:48 - 51.

Water – Exodus 17:1 - 7 – Moses provided water in the wilderness – John 7:37.

The Feast of Tabernacles (or booths) included a ceremony in which the priests brought water into the temple as a reminder of the events of the wilderness at Rephidim.

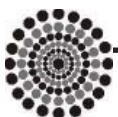
Ask the young people this question: Against this Old Testament background, how was Jesus making a daring and dramatic claim in these 'I am's'?

Their answer may be along these lines: He was claiming to be more than the bread and water provided in the wilderness – therefore He was claiming equality with God.



VIDEO CLIP

A segment of the video *Castaway* with Tom Hanks can be shown where he sips rain water collected from the leaf.



LEADER TIP

Note: Activity 1 on the senior work sheet and activity 5 on the junior work sheet can be used in connection with this search. (Again note the metaphorical and literal uses of 'water'.

2. **Something to think about**

The most obvious illustration of failure to give to others what Christ has freely bestowed, is the Dead Sea, which receives the water of the Jordan but has no outlet. The Dead Sea is a lake about 80 kilometres long and over 360 metres deep at its northern end. It has no outlet at the southern end and is full of salts and minerals. No fish can live in it, no person can sink in it and no plants can grow on its banks.

And all because it has no outlet! We cannot but regard it as a warning parable. To remain alive we must give out.

TAKING IT HOME

'I am the bread of life', Jesus said. Like bread, Jesus satisfies hunger. Bread satisfies physical hunger, Jesus satisfies spiritual hunger. If we drink of the Water of Life, then our spiritual thirst will be quenched. The challenge to us is to have a hunger and thirst for Jesus as a basic need of our living.

FOLLOW-THRU

Some of your young people might like to accept the worship challenge to choose songs and choruses based on the 'bread and water' theme. If they take the trouble to do this, try to use them in a worship segment.

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The Book of Life, Bible Encyclopedia, Zondervan.

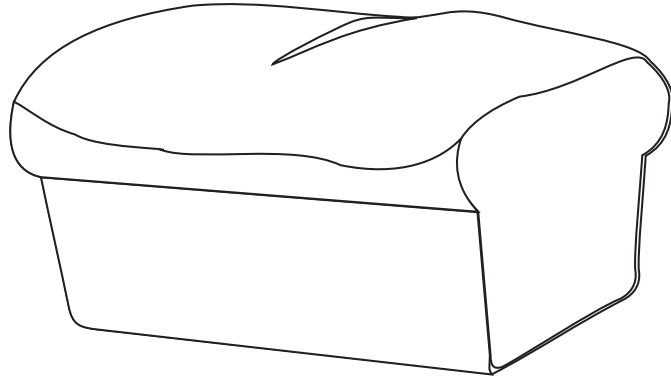
SOUL FOOD



1.

Bread still plays an important role in our lives.

In the loaf of bread list as many foods as you can that require bread in some form e.g. hot dogs, pizza etc.



2.

Life would be rather dull without these foods.

In one or two sentences write how you feel life would be without the One who said, 'I am the bread of life'.

3.

Find the following words in the word puzzle.

- Bread
- Life
- Water
- Food
- Bible
- John
- Lord
- Bun

D	R	O	L	M	P
K	B	J	I	R	S
N	I	R	F	E	F
H	B	H	E	T	O
O	L	U	D	A	O
J	E	C	N	W	D

4.

Look up the following references and then indicate how water is being used.

Genesis 18:4 _____

Genesis 26:19 - 20 _____

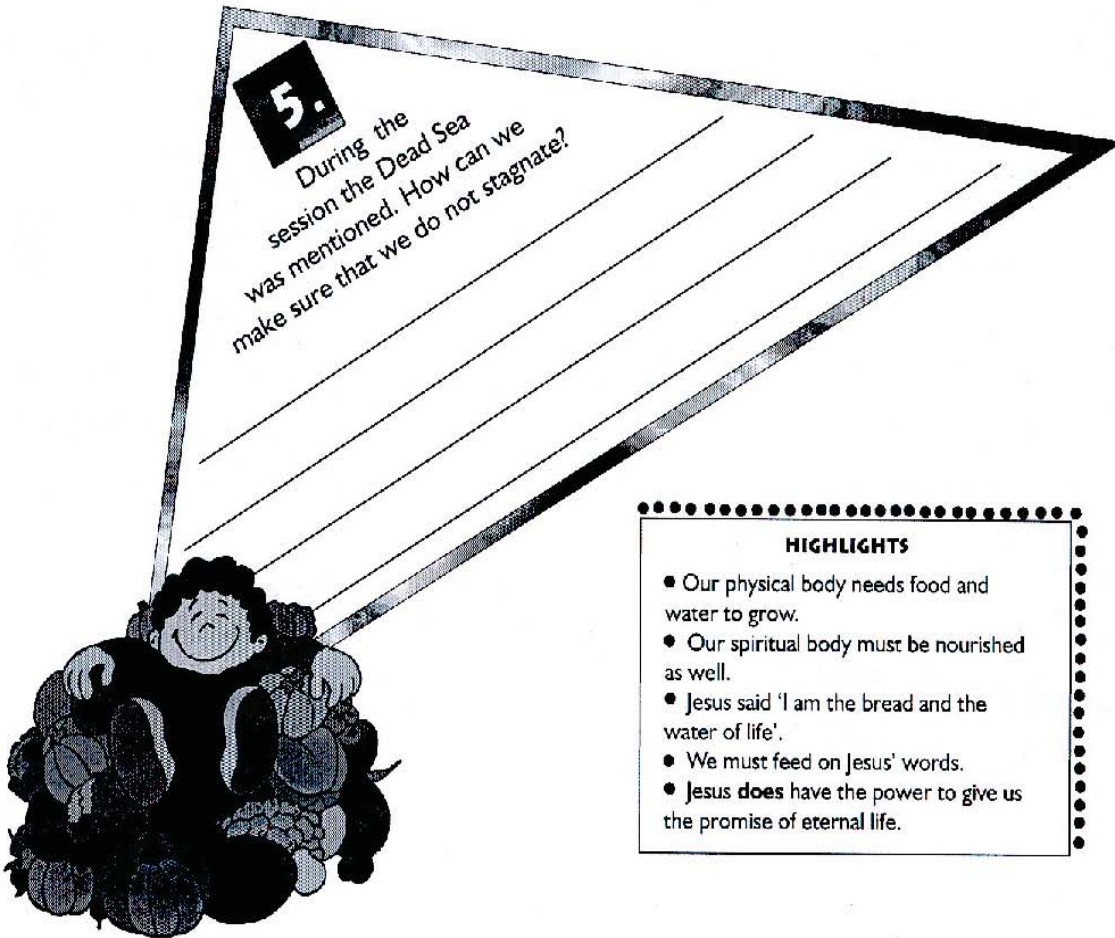
Exodus 29:4 _____

Psalms 42:1 - 2 _____

Matthew 10:42 _____

John 4:14 _____

Revelation 22:1 _____



5. During the session the Dead Sea was mentioned. How can we make sure that we do not stagnate?

HIGHLIGHTS

- Our physical body needs food and water to grow.
- Our spiritual body must be nourished as well.
- Jesus said 'I am the bread and the water of life'.
- We must feed on Jesus' words.
- Jesus **does** have the power to give us the promise of eternal life.

SOUL FOOD

1.

Water featured significantly in the lives of Bible people. There's a 'dry thirsty land' and even in Australia we can relate to how they felt. We measure the quality and value of land by the availability of water. Even in the big cities we are 'water conscious' and often have water rationing in summer. Little wonder that water features in the Bible as a necessity of life as well as a symbol of spiritual blessing. Cleansing, refreshment, forgiveness, eternal life, and the Holy Spirit Himself are referred to in terms of 'water'.

Look up the following references and then write out one of them. Choose one that is either more significant than the others for you or the one that God has used today to speak to you.

The human body is made up of 66% water.

Genesis 18:4
Psalms 42:1 - 2
Matthew 10:42

Genesis 26:19 - 20

John 4:14

Exodus 29:4
Amos 8:11
Revelation 22:1

The world has been at peace for only 8% of the last 3,500 years of recorded history.

Ravens brought bread and meat to Elijah to eat.

Unless man stops polluting the water ways our water supply will be seriously affected in a few years!

The average Australian family eats 5 loaves of bread per week.

2.

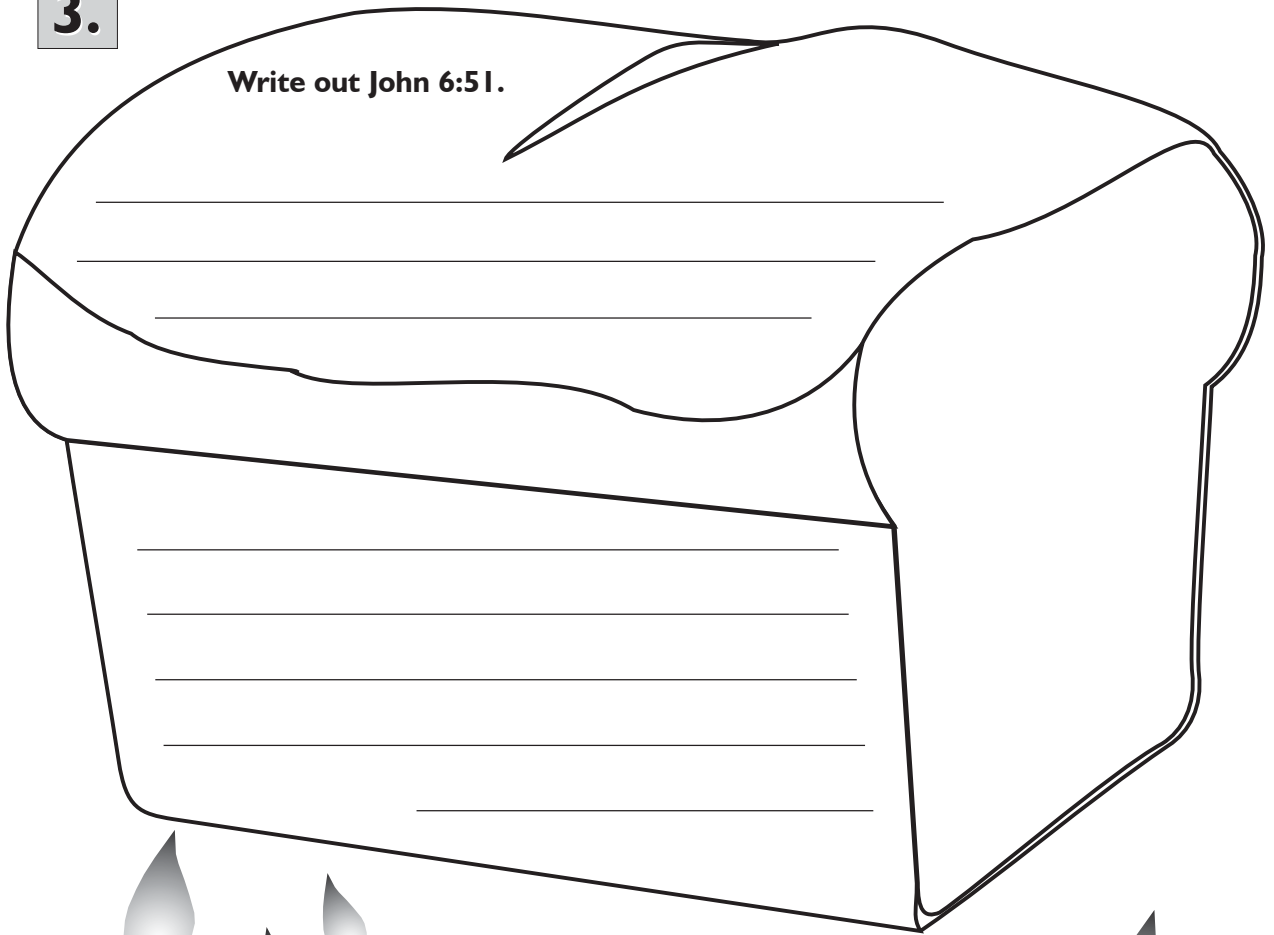
During the session the Dead Sea was mentioned. How can we make sure that we do not stagnate?

Rice, corn, wheat and barley are the four basic grains of the world.

You will see that bread features prominently in the Bible and is seen as a basic necessity of life in biblical times.

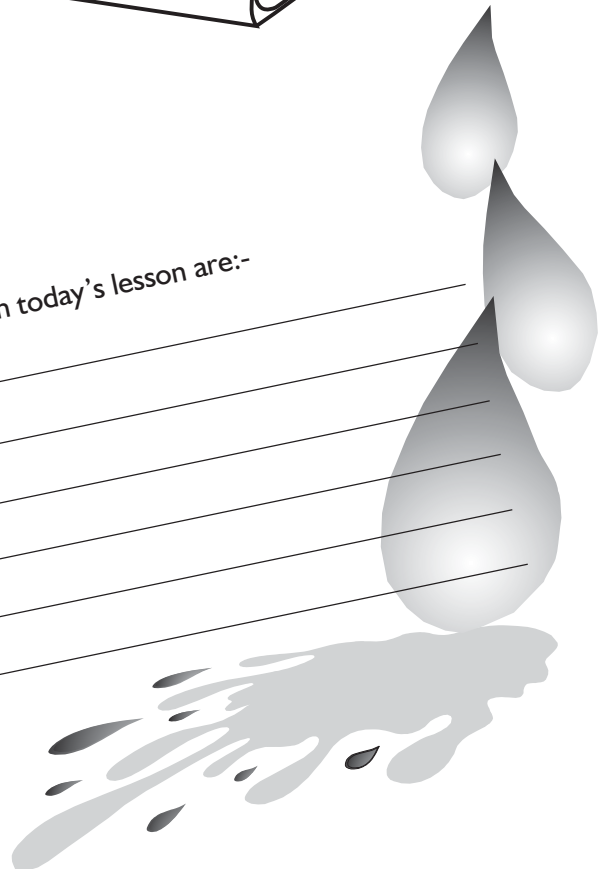
3.

Write out John 6:51.



4.

Some important things I have learned from today's lesson are:-



SESSION 14

LIGHTING THE WAY

FROM THE BIBLE

John 1:4 - 9; 8:12; 9:5; 12:46; 14:6

AIM

To help the young people understand Jesus' claims to be the light and the way.

OBJECTIVE

As a result of this session the young people will better understand that:

- ❖ Jesus made unique claims about Himself as presented in John's gospel;
- ❖ Jesus is the light;
- ❖ Jesus is the way;
- ❖ having Jesus as our light and way leads us to victorious living.



CHECKLIST

Select which Getting Started activity you will use and prepare what you will need. The visuals of the candles and prism could also be referred to in the teaching material.

There are two suggested Going Deeper approaches. Allocate your time so that you cover both.

INSIGHTS FOR THE LEADER

Background

1. Jesus the light

Repeatedly in the fourth gospel Jesus speaks of Himself, and is spoken of, as the light. 'I am the light of the world', Jesus said, 'whoever follows me will have the light of life and will never walk in darkness' (John 8:12, GNB). 'While I am in the world, I am the light for the world' (9:5, GNB). 'I have come into the world as light, so that everyone who believes in me should not remain in the darkness' (12:46, GNB).

Repeatedly in the prologue to the gospel, Jesus is thought of in terms of light. 'The Word was the source of life, and this life brought light to mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has never put it out. God sent his messenger, a man named John, who came to tell people about the light, so that all should hear the message and believe. He himself was not the light; he came to tell about the light. This was the real light – the light that comes into the world and shines on all mankind.' (1:4 - 9, GNB).

To describe Jesus in terms of light is to speak in a religious language which is universal. It may well be true to say that light was the first thing which men ever worshipped, for in the most primitive of all religions the sun is often the first of all the gods. For all people the light is something to love and the darkness is something to fear.

☒ Jesus had come to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles or Shelters (John 7:2, 10). Four great candelabra, each with four great golden bowls, were prepared. When evening came the people flocked to the Court of the Women until it was crowded to capacity. Then, when the darkness had come down, four high-born youths of priestly lineage, at a given signal, lit the great candelabra, and suddenly the darkness was



LEADER TIP

The following material is marked with asterisks (*) or (**) because it is to be used during the session.

pierced with such a light that it was said to illuminate every street and court and square in the city of Jerusalem. It was in that very court at that very time that Jesus claimed to be the light of the world.

Jesus could not possibly have chosen a more dramatic place and a more dramatic moment to make His great claim that He was the light of the world. It was a tremendous claim, for it involved the claim that He was the Messiah, the claim that in Him the glory of God's light had come to earth, the claim that in Him the glory and the splendour of God's light was piercing the shadows and the darkness of earth.


Light is the most revealing thing in the world. Jesus is the great revealer of men and things as they are. That is why those whose deeds are evil fear the light and hate Jesus (John 3:19 - 21).☒

In John's gospel the term 'light' refers to the revelation of God's love in Christ and the penetration of that love into lives darkened by sin, and so Christ refers to Himself as 'the light of the world'.

2. Jesus the way

☼☼ 'Jesus said: 'I am the way'. The great law-giver had laid it down that people must not turn to the right or to the left, but must walk in the way which the Lord their God had commanded them. Moses feared that the people would reject the way which he had taught them (Deuteronomy 31:29). Through Isaiah God told His people: 'Here is the road. Follow it' (Isaiah 30:21). The promise was of a highway called 'The Road Of Holiness' which nothing and no one unclean could travel, and which was so clear that not even a fool could miss it (Isaiah 35:8).

But the claim of Jesus goes further than any of these sayings. Jesus did not say: 'I show you the way'. He did not even say: 'I open the way for you.' He said: 'I am the way'. (John 14:6) For example, we may supply a person with a map which gives a route and with a careful description of it. But even with the most careful instructions and even with the best of maps a person may still get lost. Best of all is to say to the person: 'I know the way, come with me, and I myself will take you there'. Then the last possibility of losing the way is gone. For that person we then become the way. Even so Jesus did not only tell us the way; He did not only give instruction about the way; He is the way by whom no man can fail to find his way into the presence of God.' ☒☒



LEADER TIP
Note that the GNB translates the word as road or highway. The NIV uses 'way'.

GETTING STARTED

1. Play the 'wordless instruction' game. Ask young people if they realise how often we use symbols to give people a message.

Draw onto board or chart two symbols. e.g.:




or



etc.

Ask the young people to 'read' what they are saying. The young person with the correct response then draws another symbol e.g. flags, football team emblems, chemical (H₂O, etc), road signs, this way



POINT
All around us we see signs and symbols indicating ideas or communicating messages to us. Jesus used symbols to help us understand Him better. In this session we will consider how He said He was the light and the way.

up, fragile, nuclear free zone, poison, inflammable, etc. Don't forget about Christian and Salvation Army symbols, e.g. cross, fish, dove, flame of Holy Spirit, 'S' with cross through it, crest, flag, etc.

All these symbols speak to us without any words.

Or

2. In this session we are going to consider two dramatic symbols Jesus used to describe Himself. They are found in John 8:12 and John 14:6. Have the young people read them several times and then close their Bibles and recite them.

If time allows, you can have them on a board and rub out words or parts of words after each time the verse is read, until finally they are 'reading' from a blank board.

Or

3. (This would be more effective at night.)
Give one young person or leader a large candle. The rest are to have small ones. They are to form a circle or line and the person with the large candle comes along and lights all the small candles.

Or

4. Have a prism or large necklace or brooch to reflect light and demonstrate it.

Light features in the Scriptures as a symbol of God and His love. The bright, white light passing through a prism reveals its seven coloured components – the 'spectrum' – i.e. 'the full range' of something. Note the rainbow-like colours coming through the prism.

POINT

Explain that the large candle represents Jesus – 'The Light of the World'. This candle gives of itself to give light to all the other candles and yet its light is still the same, the flame does not grow smaller, it is still the same size and strength.

POINT

The reflected light reminds us that when Jesus is our light, it will be seen coming through us.

GOING DEEPER

1. a. Explain the background

Use the background material marked with ✨ in Insights for the Leader to explain why Jesus used this metaphor about Himself.

b. How is Christ the light?

Ask the young people to help make a list of the effects of light. Write up their ideas.

The list could be like this:

- Light shows up dirt/faults.
- Light helps in detailed work – jeweller, surgeon, scientist.
- Light helps plants grow.
- Light is energy.
- Light shines through glass.
- Light shows the way.
- Light dispels darkness.

Discuss if this is what Jesus does.

c. Statements about the light

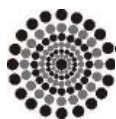
Give each young person in your group one or more of these verses to find, ready to read and to match with the statements on the work sheets:

Psalms 43:3; Revelation 21:23; John 3:20; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 1 John 1:7; Psalm 27:1; John 1:5.

(Extra verses for seniors:

2 Corinthians 4:6; Isaiah 2:5; Ephesians 5:8.)

- The Lord is my light and my salvation.
- We need to ask for God's light and truth.



LEADER TIP

Note that this is activity 1 on the junior work sheet and activity 2 on the senior work sheet.

Ask the young people to glance at the statements and decide which one matches best the verse/s they read. The young people could then take it in turn to read out their verse to the group and say which statement they think it matches. If the group agrees, then have the young people write the reference beside the statement.

- When the Lord comes, His light will expose the hidden motives behind our actions.
- People doing evil things hate the light because it allows others to see their evil deeds.
- Jesus, the Lamb of God, will be the only light needed in heaven.
- Living in the light brings fellowship.
- Darkness can never put the light out.

Extra statements for seniors

- We understand more about God’s glory by looking at Jesus.
- Becoming a Christian is like moving out of the darkness into light.
- We should try to walk in the light which God gives us.

2. How is Jesus the way?

a. Introduction to the metaphor

Roads

What are the values of a good road? – clear, safe, smooth, fast, etc. A good road takes you safely and surely to a destination. It opens up country and makes previously difficult areas easily accessible. If Jesus called Himself ‘the way’ (the road), how is that true – in what way is He a road?

- b. Use the background material marked with ☒ in Insights for the Leader here.

c. How do people try to get to heaven?

Ask the young people to think of methods people use. e.g.,

- through keeping the Law;
- through dying in a ‘holy’ war;
- through doing good works;
- through being very busy in the Church/Corps;
- relying on their parent’s goodness;
- by treating others the way we want to be treated ourselves;
- by inflicting punishment on their bodies.

But Jesus said: ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one goes to the Father except by me.’ (John 14:6, GNB)

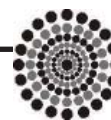
Jesus wasn’t saying that we need not keep the Law or help others – these are natural flow-ons when we accept God’s offer of salvation through Jesus’ sacrificial death. (Ephesians 2:8 - 10)

Reading instructions or following a map in unknown territory is much harder than having someone beside us directing us. This is exactly what Jesus did by coming to earth. The Bible shows us the way, but Jesus is the Way. By looking at His life we can find out what God expects of us.

d. Bible search on ‘The way’

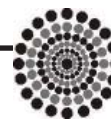
Read these seven verses then match with the following statements.

- Jeremiah 6:16; Proverbs 14:12; Matthew 7:13; Psalm 139:24; Isaiah 30:21; Hebrews 10:19 - 20; John 14:6.
- God will guide me in the everlasting way.
- Be careful! What you think is the right road, may lead to death.
- If you wander off the road, God will warn you to come back on to it.
- If you walk the best road, you will live in peace.



LEADER TIP

Have the young people repeat John 14:6 together.



LEADER TIP

This is activity 5 on the senior work sheet.

- The road to hell is easy and many travel on it.
- Jesus is the only way to reach the Father.
- By giving His own body, Jesus opened the way for us to come to God.

TAKING IT HOME

Jesus said, 'Follow me – I am the way, and you will have direction anywhere in God's universe. Follow me and you have the ultimate in truth.'

Even though the light of Christ has shone down through the centuries bringing light to every believer, His light remains unchanged and is still as bright. If lifted up in the midst of a darkened world His light still draws men to Himself.

The early Christians were often called followers of 'The Way' (see Acts 9:2). Do people know from my behaviour that I am His follower? Do I seek to have His light shine in all my activities – or am I sometimes slow to accept His leading? When Jesus lights the way and I tread it obediently, I will live a victorious life.

FOLLOW-THRU

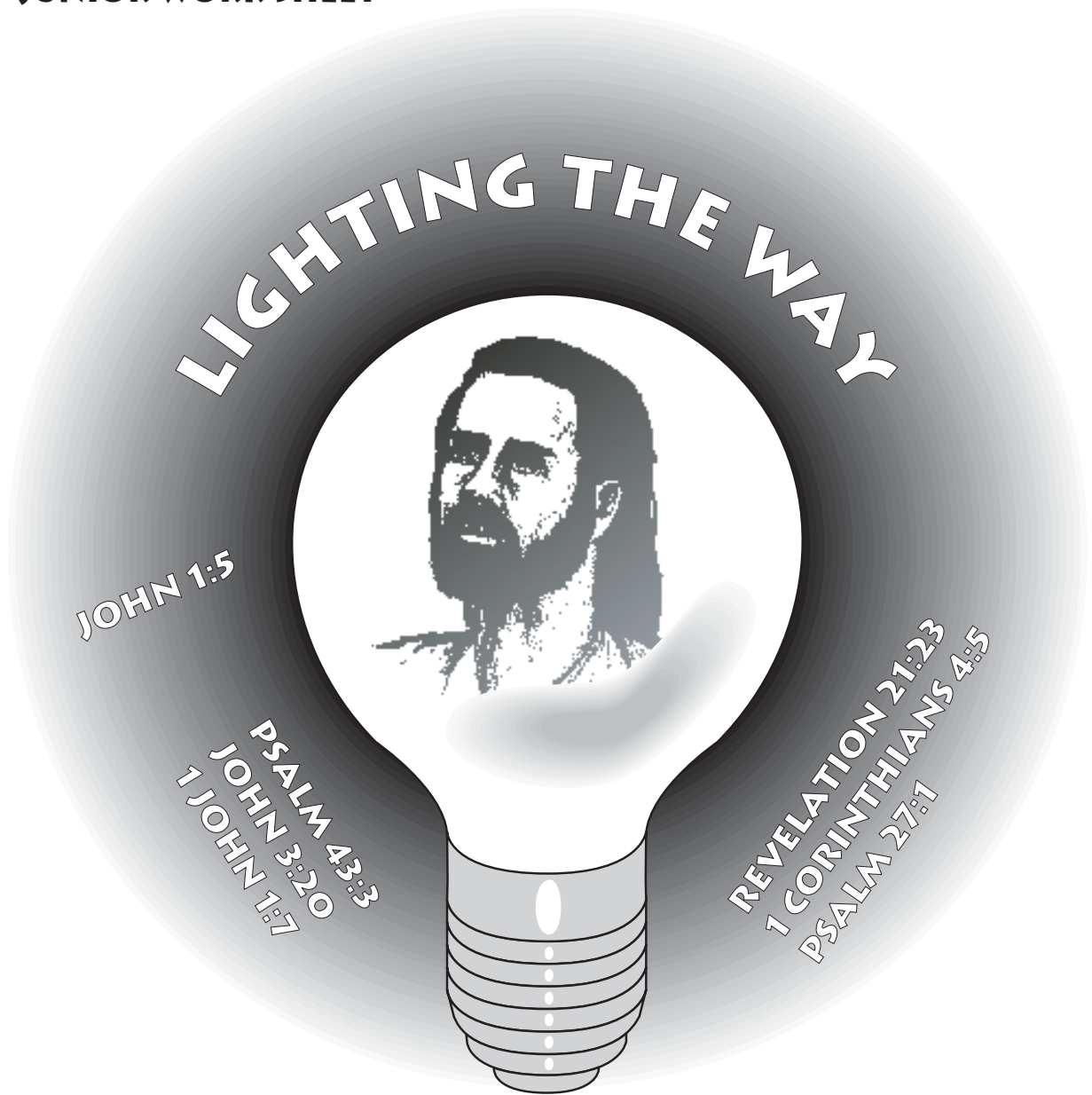
Encourage the young people to look at the Get Involved and Grow strand and choose a challenge from the Reaching Out In Service section that would show they wanted to show the light of God to others. e.g., Do an unexpected favour for someone or share a Christian video / book with a friend.

REFERENCES

CAMPBELL MORGAN, Dr G., *The Gospel According to John*, Marshall Morgan and Scott Ltd., London.

BARCLAY, W., *Jesus as They Saw Him*, SCM Press, London.

TAYLOR, J., *The Go-Between God*, SCM Press.



1. Match the references around Jesus the Light to the following statements.

The Lord is my light and my salvation.

Jesus, the Lamb of God, will be the only light needed in heaven.

We need to ask for God's light and truth.

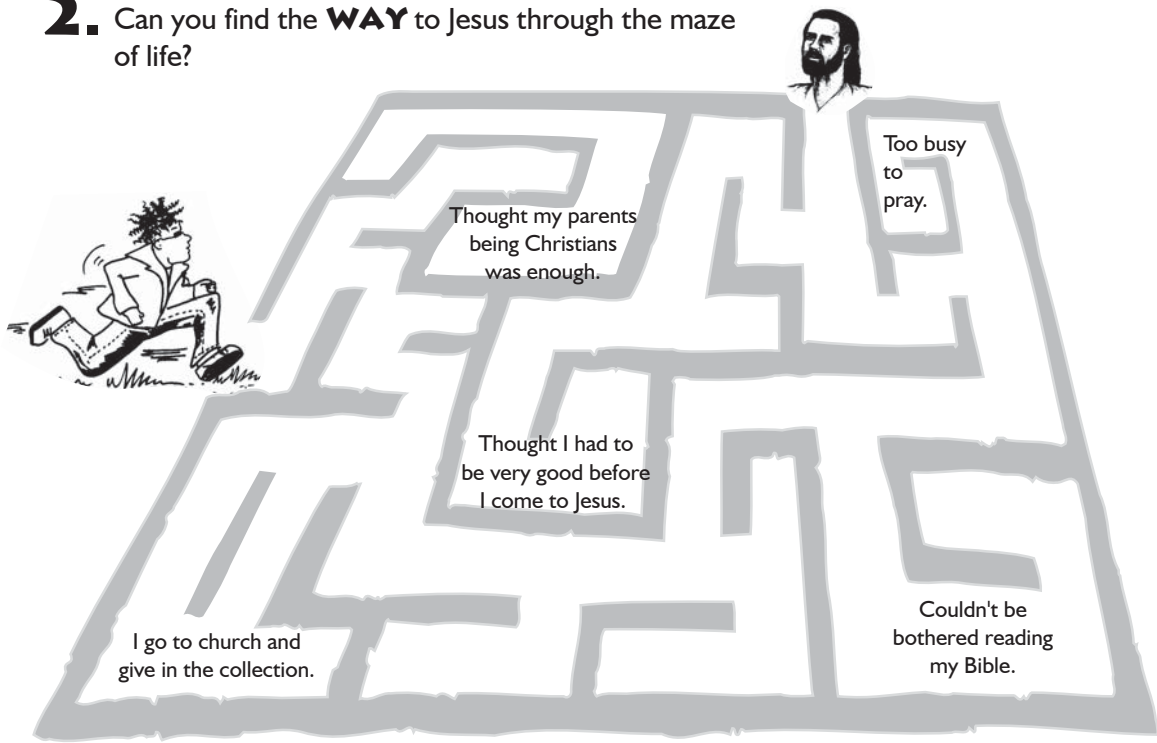
Living in the light brings fellowship.

When the Lord comes, His light will expose the motives for our actions.

People doing evil hate the light because it allows others to see their evil deeds.

The light shines in the darkness.

2. Can you find the **WAY** to Jesus through the maze of life?



3. A friend asks you what Jesus meant when He said, 'I am the way.' How would you reply?



HIGHLIGHTS

- Jesus claimed to be the Light of the World.
- Jesus said He was the true, living Way to God.
- Allowing Jesus to light up our way makes all the difference to our lives.
- Jesus can help us to be a light for Him.

1. Write out a Scripture verse that speaks of a) Jesus as **THE WAY** and b) Jesus as **THE LIGHT**.

The Jews believed that the door of heaven opened when God sent help to his people.

The first Christians were called people of 'The Way'.

Which of these verses do you like personally and why?

2. Bible search
What do the following Scripture references say about Jesus and light.

Some lighthouses and beacons simply reflect the light sent out by other lighthouses.

Only a thief or a robber tries to enter by a wrong entry.

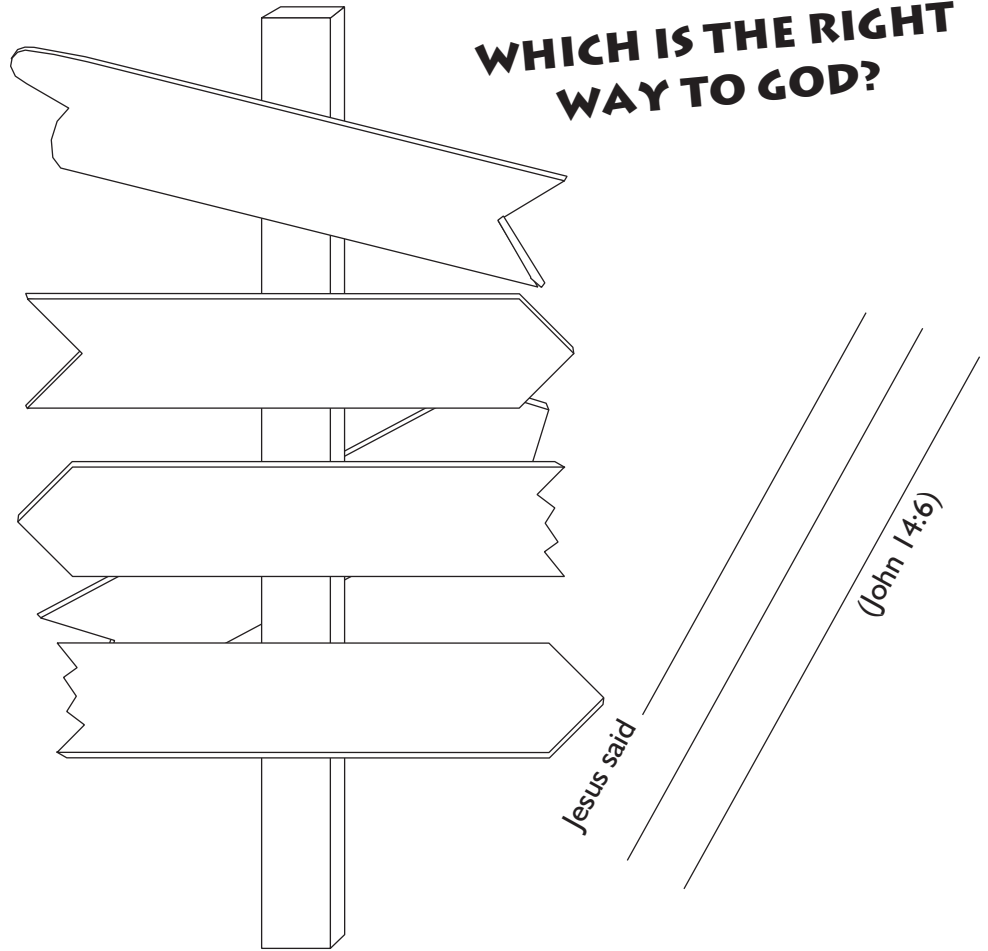
Psalm 27:1 _____	I John 1:7 _____
_____	_____
Psalm 43:3 _____	John 1:5 _____
_____	_____
I Corinthians 4:5 _____	2 Corinthians 4:6 _____
_____	_____
John 3:20 _____	Ephesians 5:8 _____
_____	_____
Revelation 21:23 _____	Isaiah 2:5 _____
_____	_____

You share your birthday with at least 9 million others.



WHICH IS THE RIGHT WAY TO GOD?

On the signposts write the different ways people think they can travel to find God. Put the one you think is the right way at the top.



4.

A friend asks you what Jesus meant when He said, 'I am the way.' How would you reply?

5. JESUS THE WAY

Read these seven verses and match them to the statements.

Jeremiah 6:16
Isaiah 30:21

Proverbs 14:12
Hebrews 10:19 - 20

Matthew 7:13
John 14:6

Psalms 139:24

- ➡ God will guide me in the everlasting way.
- ➡ Be careful! What you think is the right road, may lead to death.
- ➡ If you wander off the road, God will warn you to come back on to it.
- ➡ If you walk the best road, you will live in peace.
- ➡ The road to hell is easy and many travel on it.
- ➡ Jesus is the only way to reach the Father.
- ➡ By giving His own body, Jesus opened the way for us to come to God!

PREACH IT BROTHER!

AIM

Through a brief study of Paul's first missionary journey to Asia Minor to show the young people that living for God can be challenging, adventurous and fulfilling.

OBJECTIVES

Through this study the young people will realise that:

- ❖ Paul was an ardent Christian missionary;
- ❖ Paul faced many dangers on his journeys;
- ❖ Paul never lost his vision of the need to spread the good news;
- ❖ all Christians are called to spread the good news of salvation;
- ❖ we can depend on God to fit us for the task He sets before us.

INSIGHTS FOR THE LEADER

This session follows on from the two sessions in Unit 1 on Paul's early life, his conversion and his fitting by God for the task ahead of him.

Quick reference to these previous sessions may be helpful.

This session is then followed by session 16 – 'Paul The Freedom Fighter'.

Paul's journey shows his determination and faithfulness to his call. Certainly nobody could have blamed Paul if he had given up after he had been stoned and left for dead. We can all share in his feelings of disappointment when the going got too tough for John Mark and he left the group.

Travelling was on foot and always hazardous – because the terrain was rough and there was always a risk from the bandits.

On top of this it is thought that Paul contracted a serious illness (see Galatians 4:13).

As he travelled from town to town Paul's initial contact was with the Jewish synagogue, where he would not only be able to preach about Jesus to the Jews, but, where he would also meet God-fearing Gentiles who would be most receptive to the message.

Lystra was south west of Iconium. It had been made into a Roman colony in 6 B.C. as a defence against warlike tribes.

The lame man in the story in Acts 14 responded to Paul's preaching by believing that he could be healed. When Paul recognised his faith, he commanded the man to stand up.

It was natural that the bystanders would be affected by seeing this miracle. They decided that Barnabas and Paul must be gods who had come to visit them and must be honoured.

SESSION 15

FROM THE BIBLE

Acts chapters 13 and 14.

VIDEO CLIP

The book of Acts is available on video. It is produced by Visual International.



CHECKLIST



If you choose the first Getting Started activity make sure you have some travel brochures on the Greek Islands.

Study the map on page 135 of Paul's first journey so that you are familiar with the route he took and the distance involved.

Be familiar with the events that took place in the various towns.

Watch the allocation of time or you could end up still only discussing what happened in the first few towns.

Use the map throughout the session as suggested.

Have a young person or leader prepared to tell the story of Lystra.

Challenge the young people to look for another task that they could do from the Get Involved and Grow challenges.

DEFINITION

A Gentile: any person who was not a Jew.

Paul was associated with Hermes because he was the chief speaker and Hermes was the messenger of the gods. The role of Zeus, the principal chief god was given to Barnabas.

There was a legend that Zeus and Hermes had once visited this region. It was preserved in a Latin poem by Ovid, who gave the gods their Roman names, Mercury and Jupiter. (These names are used in the Authorised Version as they were seen to be interchangeable.) In the legend the local people failed to honour the gods. Only an aged couple had entertained them and they had been unaware of the identity of their guests. Such behaviour had brought destruction to the town.

As the people looked at the healed man, they talked excitedly in their local dialect, which Paul did not understand. They had no wish to repeat the same mistake by ignoring these gods. So the priest of the local temple made quick arrangements to offer a sacrifice to the visitors as a mark of honour.

Paul and Barnabas were greatly distressed and ran into the middle of the crowd shouting for them to stop. They explained that they were only men who had come to tell them about the true God. It was He who had made heaven and earth and He who sent the rain and harvests year by year.

This short speech differs from the sermon delivered to the Jews and God-fearers in the synagogues, who already knew about God and were waiting for the Messiah. With a pagan audience it was necessary to start with the proclamation of the true God.

The experience of Paul and Barnabas at Lystra highlighted the considerable problems in communicating the Good News in a pagan culture.

Through all the hardships, Paul's life-changing encounter with Christ never left him.

Try to pass on to the young people the challenge of Paul's dedication to the task to which he was called.

GETTING STARTED

1. Have travel brochures of the Greek Islands to look at together. Explain that when it comes to romantic, scenic holiday destinations in the world, the Greek Islands come near the top. For so many people their ultimate holiday dream would be a cruise around the Greek Islands.

Compare some of the holiday destinations with the map of Paul's first missionary trip. Check out the name changes and where nearby tourist places now exist on the tourist maps.

Or

2. **Hangman (Especially for juniors)**

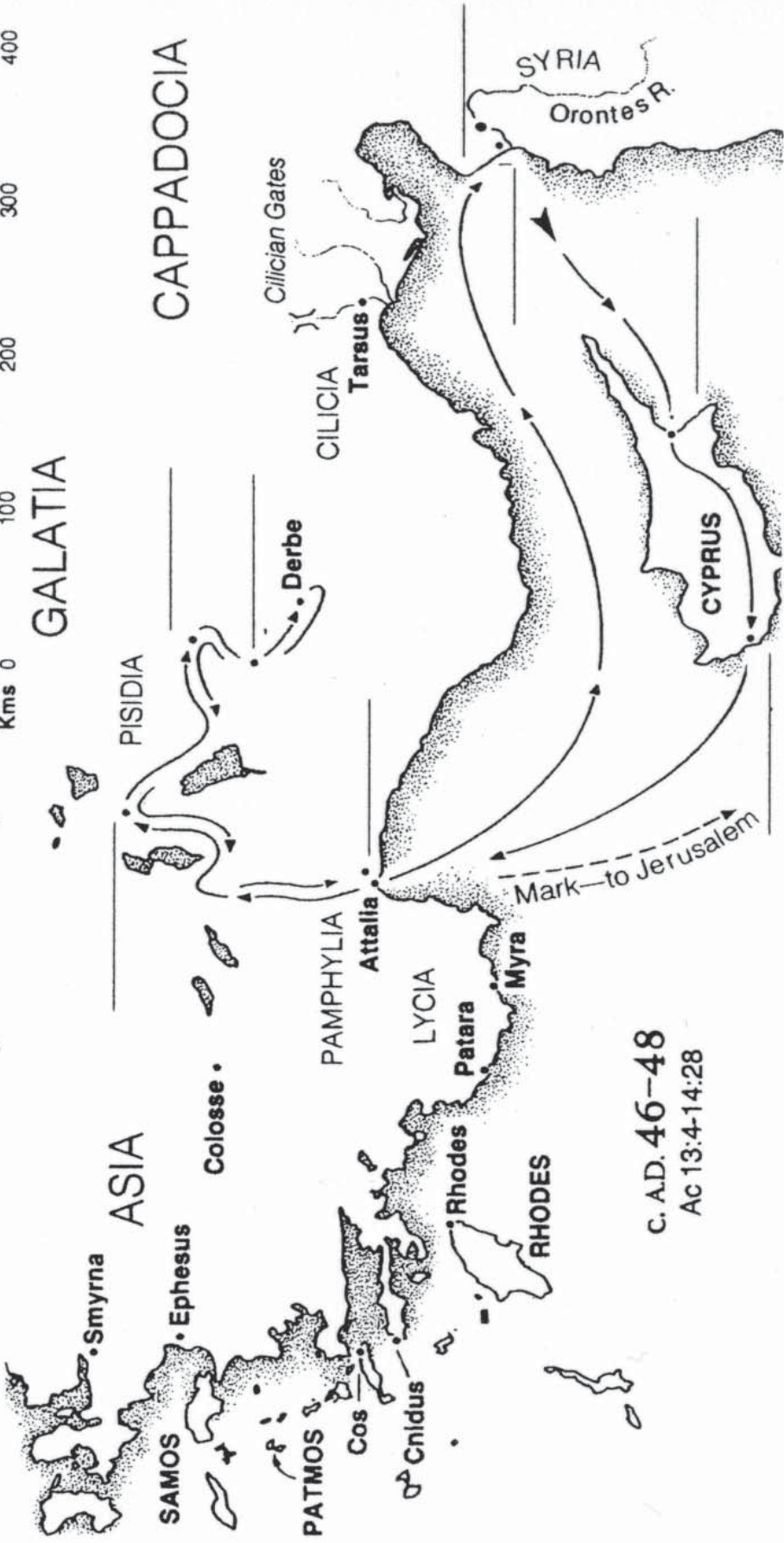
Play Hangman with the young people using some of the places Paul visited during his first missionary journey, e.g., _ _ _ _ _ (Antioch).

Do a couple of words then get the young people to find them on the map.

POINT

These places may seem far away and only pretty holiday places to us but they have a very special place in the history of the Christian Church. They were the places visited on the very first missionary journey. In this session we will look at what happened at these places on these history making visits.

Paul's First Missionary Journey



c. A.D. 46-48
Ac 13:4-14:28

GOING DEEPER



LEADER TIP

Ways to trace Paul's journey on the map:

1. Copy the map onto an overhead transparency. Use cut out figures of a boat or Paul to trace the journey as you follow the Bible references.
2. Enlarge the map to A3 size to sit on a table and use a model/toy boat to follow Paul's journey.
3. Have the young people trace the journey on their own map, filling in the names of the places visited as they are mentioned.

Tracing the journey and the events that took place in the various towns

Paul, following his conversion had spent well over ten years working in local centres and come to strongly believe that 'We are all one in Christ Jesus.' All of this was preparing Paul, a very strictly trained Jew, to preach to the Gentiles when the time was right. (The Jews believed they were God's people and the rest of the world – the Gentiles – were not important to Him.)

- a. Read Acts 13:1 - 3 – The call.
Set apart by the Church at Antioch in Syria, Paul with Barnabas and John Mark set out on the first missionary journey.

(Locate Antioch in Syria on map. Mark in Seleucia where they boarded the ship and highlight the journey to Cyprus.)

- b. **Cyprus:** Birthplace of Barnabas was the first port of call. Read Acts 13:4 - 12. (Fill in the name of the port.)

Discussion for seniors

What thoughts may have been going on in Barnabas' mind as they travelled to the place where he was born for their first preaching stop?

- Would he wonder if he would be ridiculed?
- Would they be looking to see if he practised what he preached?
- Do you ever feel nervous about attending an open-air outreach close to your home, or being with an Army group where your school friends may see you?
- Read Philippians 1:20 and consider how it fits into such feelings.

All young people could briefly discuss why Elymas the magician tried to oppose the preaching of God's word.

- c. From Paphos in Cyprus they sailed to Asia Minor and went from Perga to Antioch in Pisidia. (Mark these places and highlight the route on the map.)

Perga – Asia: Acts 13:13 - 15. At this early stage of the journey, John Mark deserts the group returning to Jerusalem (Acts 13:13). It would also appear that Paul contracted a serious illness which was one of the reasons for his making his way to Antioch in Pisidia (Galatians 4:13 and Acts 13:14).

Antioch in Pisidia was some 150 kms north of Perga, a Roman city situated in a commanding position overlooking a wide area of what is now Central Turkey.

Acts 13:14 tells us that Paul, the Jew, used the strategy of making initial contact with the Jewish synagogue in the city. There he would most likely meet the kind of Gentile 'God-fearers' who would be most receptive to the gospel message.

Acts 13:16 - 41 is probably too long to read during this session. Explain how important it was for Paul to link Jesus into the promises God had made to the Jewish people so that they would accept him as the 'One they had been waiting for'. This sermon is therefore a pattern of his preaching on the missionary journeys

especially in the Jewish synagogues and is recorded as an example of how Paul preached.

The sermon can be divided as follows:

1. A summary of Israel's history (Acts 13:16 - 23).
 2. The testimony of John the Baptist (Acts 13:24 - 25).
 3. The crucifixion of Jesus (Acts 13:26 - 29).
 4. The triumph and resurrection of Jesus (Acts 13:30 - 37).
 5. The offer of forgiveness through Jesus (Acts 13:38 - 39).
 6. A warning (Acts 13:40 - 41).
- d. How did the people of Antioch react to Paul's sermon? Read Acts 13:42.

Paul and Barnabas spoke to the crowd who followed them out of the synagogue and 'encouraged them to keep on living in the grace of God.' (Acts 13:43)

Acts 13:44 - 51 shows us how easy it is for a few jealous people to use their power to sway a crowd. Nearly everyone in the town came to hear the word of the Lord but, because of these jealous leaders inciting the crowd, the apostles were hassled and insulted.

What did Paul tell the Jews in verses 46 and 47?

How did the Gentiles respond to this? (verse 48)

- e. **Iconium** (Continue to highlight the route of the journey throughout the session.)

A repeat of Antioch. Iconium was 120 km south east of Antioch. Read Acts 14:1 - 5.

- f. **Lystra** was 45 km south west and here a most dramatic incident took place. (Mark on the map.)

Have another leader or older group member prepared to tell the story as it is set out in Acts 14:8 - 18.

Lystra was a pagan city, but the citizens were anxious to do what they saw was right. There were many stories of towns that had been visited by gods who had been ignored. Such towns had been destroyed and the people of Lystra did not want this to happen to them. Yet, such a magnificent welcome quickly changed. Read Acts 14:19 - 20.

- g. **Derbe** was approximately 50 kms south east of Lystra. Read Acts 14:21. (Mark it on the map.)

- h. Then Paul and Barnabas retraced their steps with courage and determination to encourage and consolidate the young converts in the Christian faith at each of these centres. Remember that the journey was slow and dangerous. Paul was not really well, he was disappointed when John Mark left him. His life had been severely threatened by the Jews living in the Roman province of Galatia.

Acts 14:26 - 28 tells us how the journey ended back in Antioch. The people of the church praised God for opening up the way for Gentiles to believe.

There was no whingeing about the hardships – these were far outweighed by the fact that people had been won for God.

TAKING IT HOME

For Paul, the mission field was travelling to non-Jewish towns. For us, our mission field may be our school friends, our sports team, our town.

Why be a missionary? God calls all who follow Him to witness until everyone in the world has heard the good news.

God says to us, as He said to Paul, 'I choose you and appoint you. . .' to special work that we describe as missionary work.

If he is speaking to you, what will you do **now** to be ready?

Ask the young people to accept this challenge and to select a task from the Training for Leadership segment that they will commence and follow through.

Pray that we each one will listen for God's direction and be prepared to obey it.

FOLLOW-THRU

Why not work out now with your group how they could each become more involved in outreach / evangelism activities in your corps?

FURTHER READING

BRUCE, F.F., Paul, *Apostle of the Free Spirit*, especially chapters 16 - 19.

DRANE, John, Paul, *A Lion Handbook*, Albatross Books, 1982.

MARSHALL, I. Howard, *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, Acts*.

Video presentation of Paul's journeys *Discovering Paul* by Gordon Moyes. Distributed by Wesley Film Productions.

Preach **i** Brother

HIGHLIGHTS

- The Christian message spread because of the faithful work by men like Paul and Barnabas.
- Preaching the word involved Paul and Barnabas in many exciting, dangerous adventures.
- At all times the missionary looks for opportunities to preach the good news.
- We must all accept the call to spread this news.
- God fits everyone for the task He calls them to do.

Write a letter

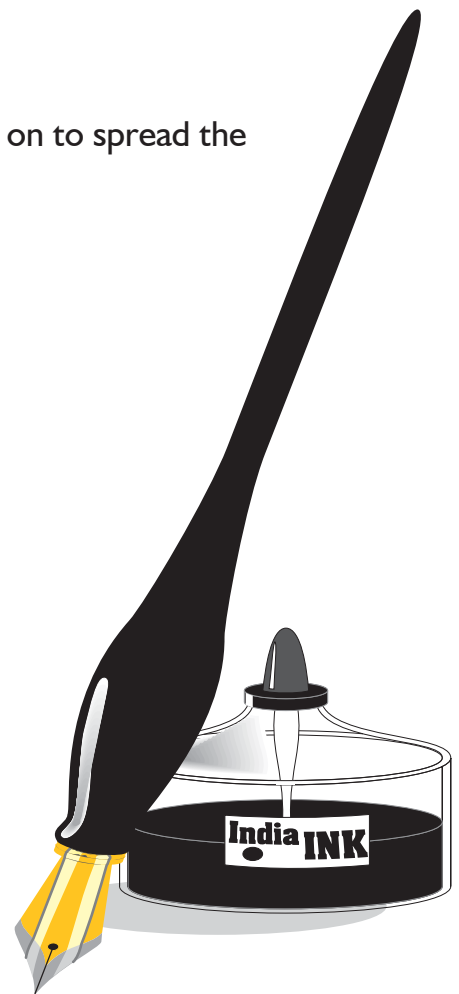
Many exciting things happened to Paul and Barnabas on this first missionary journey. Here is a list of some of them.

- The conversion of the governor despite the magician's opposition. (Acts 13:6 - 12)
- Preaching in Antioch, Pisidia. (Acts 13:14 - 51)
- Persecution in Iconium. (Acts 14:1 - 5)
- Thought to be gods! (Acts 14:8 - 20)

Choose one and pretend you are Paul writing to your friends back in Antioch about what happened.

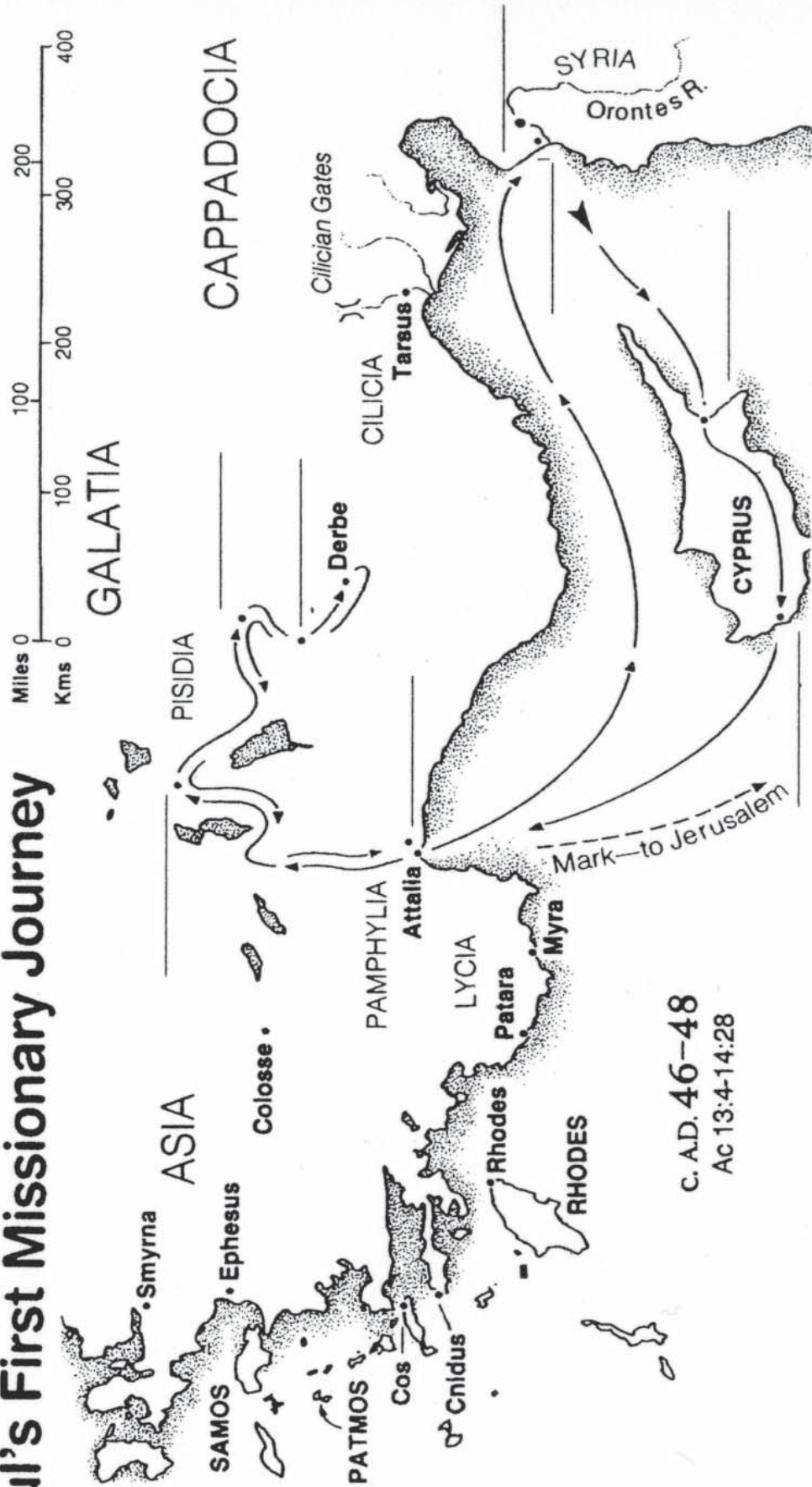
My dear fellow believers,

Today has been another eventful day as we push on to spread the good news about Jesus. We are now at ...



Use this map to fill in the names of the towns Paul and Barnabas visited on their first missionary journey. Follow the route they travelled.

Paul's First Missionary Journey



C. AD. 46-48
Ac 13:4-14:28

Preach it Brother



Diary of a missionary journey

Entry 1 From _____ in Syria
 B _____ and I travelled to
 the sea port, _____ and
 boarded a ship for _____.
 (Acts 13:1 and 4)

Entry 2
 At Salamis we _____ the
 word of _____ in the
 _____ helped by
 _____ (Acts 13:5)

Entry 3 Felt most pleased that the
 _____ of the island
 asked us to _____ with him
 about our message.
 But a sorceror named _____,
 tried to keep him from believing. I had
 to deal with him through the Holy Spirit
 for he was the _____ of all that
 is _____. He was wickedly trying to
 turn the Lord's _____ into
 _____ (Acts 13:7 - 11).
 However, we can praise God for the
 _____ believed. (v.12).

Jupiter (Zeus) was thought to be
 the most important god. He was said
 to speak through thunder and lightning.

Consider what happened at
Antioch in Pisidia or at **Lystra**
 and write the entry for that day.

Nearly every known Christian congregation started by a
 meeting in someone's house.

Discuss with your group why
 Paul's sermon in Antioch
 (see Acts 13:17 - 41) was so
 different to what he said in Lystra
 (see Acts 14:15 - 18).

Mercury was regarded as a guide
 of living and the dead and
 patron of commerce, literature
 and youth.

It was while he was on Cyprus that Saul adopted the
 Roman version of his name - Paul.

SESSION 16

FROM THE BIBLE

The book of Galatians.

PAUL THE FREEDOM FIGHTER

AIM

To lead the young people to find Paul's answer to the basic question, 'What makes a person a Christian?' with its emphasis on freedom in the Spirit.

OBJECTIVES

To help the young people realise that:

- ❖ the gospel brings freedom;
- ❖ the gospel positively provides an answer to the question 'What makes a person a Christian?';
- ❖ Christianity is not a set of rules and regulations;
- ❖ Christianity gives us a love for God and others.

INSIGHTS FOR THE LEADER

Paul did not simply write letters to feel good about himself or to impress his friends. Nor did he write them for everyone to read. Paul was not aware when he wrote his letters that they would eventually become Holy Scripture. He certainly had no idea that some 2000 years later we would be carefully studying his correspondence.

Paul's letters were actually written for particular congregations (small house churches) who had particular needs and problems. Because the letters are Paul's response to what was taking place with new Christians, it is necessary to understand the context and situation in which the letters were written. In this instance we will look at the letter to the Galatians. Paul adopts the letter writing conventions of his time. Leander E. Keck in his *Paul and his letters*, identifies three major elements in general Greek/Roman correspondence which are also evident in Paul's correspondence:

1. An introductory statement.
 - a. Name of sender, recipient.
 - b. Greetings.
2. Body of the letter containing the subject matter to be communicated. Paul often had two major sections in the body of his letters.
 - a. Doctrinal – what we believe.
 - b. Ethical – how we should behave.
3. Conclusion.
 - a. Final greetings.
 - b. Closing prayer.



CHECKLIST

It is essential to read the book of Galatians and the background material before you try to teach this session.

There are three suggestions for Getting Started. If you use the first one, you will need pictures of Salvationists. You will need to write up ideas for the second starter. For the third suggested starter bring good and bad fruit and prepare the labels.

All the teaching approaches should be used in this study of the book of Galatians. However, highlight those points you see as most useful to your group.

It is important to leave sufficient time for the completion of the work sheet which reinforces what the young people have studied in this session.

The whole of Galatians needs to be read in one sitting in order to feel the heat of the argument, the deeply distressed but semi-humorous approach to the 'foolish Galatians' (Galatians 3:1); the rough, almost crude rebuke of the agitators, the pro-circumcision men – 'let them go on and castrate themselves' (Galatians 5:12, GNB).

This is Paul at his most controversial, the shepherd defending his sheep against the wolves, no matter what the cost might be to himself.

Why study Galatians or for that matter any of Paul's letters?

Paul's letters are spiritual dynamite, impossible to handle without explosions. What the Army and the Church needs is to experience once again the dynamite of the Holy Spirit and the subsequent liberty, freedom and mission of the new life in the spirit of Christ.

GETTING STARTED

1. Show a picture of a group of Salvationists (use pictures from Army publications). Then ask the young people:

How did they become members of The Salvation Army?

Did they pay?

Did they do some outstanding work?

Were they interviewed by the General?

No. They would have signed the Corps Cadet Promise and/or the Senior Soldier's Articles of War. They may live in any one of 109 countries, and speak any one of 175 languages, but their membership in The Salvation Army is based on the simple declaration: 'I am saved.'

'We are a salvation people. This is our speciality – getting saved and keeping saved, and then getting somebody else saved.' (From the Year Book 2005, p.32.)

Or

2. Tell the young people that they are going to write a quick letter and talk about the following situations. Then divide your group up so that one letter at least is being written for each example. Only allow a few minutes for the actual writing.


- You are on holidays with a friend's family. Write a letter to your parents about what you have been doing.
- Write to a friend telling him/her about a party you recently attended.
- You have been asked by your parents to write a letter to your principal explaining that your father would be prepared to visit the school to speak on his recent hot-air ballooning experience.

Now read out the different styles of letter, commenting on the differences and similarities as you read them.


- The letter to the principal should have been more formal than the letter to the friend.
- Some letters might have a greeting and/or a standard ending.
- Some letters may have asked for help or given advice and so on.

Or

3. Have two trays, one with good fruit/vegetables, the other with rotten fruit/vegetables. Discuss with the young people how they think a Christian should behave. Refer to Galatians 5:22 and ask them to tell you what the fruits of the Spirit are. Write these down on pre-made labels and attach to the good fruit. Talk about things that would show you were not living up to the Christian standard. Have the



The apostle Paul wrote to the converts in Galatia with the message that salvation is for everyone regardless of country or language. This same message applies to us today whether we are new Christians or not – Paul wrote: 'you are all one in Christ Jesus.'



In this session we are going to look at the letter the apostle Paul wrote to the new Christians in Galatia. This was the area that he visited on his first missionary journey so he would feel very strongly about these 'children in Christ' – (his children, see Galatians 4:19). What then would you expect his letter to be like? List ideas: e.g. formal; informal, giving advice; giving encouragement, asking for help, motivating etc.

POINT

In this session we will discover that Christianity is not a set of rules and regulations but a way of life that affects how we live.



LEADER TIP

Remind the young people from previous sessions how Paul and Barnabas, despite fierce opposition, had won many converts as they preached in the various towns of Galatia.

Use the map from session 15.

DEFINITION

Judaizers were Jews who had accepted Christianity but found it difficult to believe that God would accept non-Jews into His 'special' family through their faith in Christ rather than through how well they kept His rules.

young people read out Paul's list in Galatians 5:20 - 21 and attach the premade labels to the rotten fruit. Continue to discuss which tray they would eat fruit from if they had a choice. Draw parallels to fruit of the Spirit in their lives as Christians.

GOING DEEPER

1. Who were the Galatians?

Refer to the map used in session 15 pointing out the towns of Antioch in Pisidia, Lystra, Iconium and Derbe.

The converts to the Christian faith, both Jews and Gentiles, were the people Paul was addressing when he wrote this letter. Ask the young people why Paul would feel responsible for these people. What methods could he use to help them grow as Christians?

2. Set the scene for the letter

'As the good news about Jesus began to be preached and welcomed among people who were not Jews, the question arose as to whether a person must obey the Law of Moses in order to be a true Christian. Paul had argued that this was not necessary – that in fact, the only sound basis for life in Christ was faith, by which all are put right with God. But among the churches of Galatia, a Roman province in Asia Minor, there had come people who opposed Paul and claimed that one must also observe the Law of Moses in order to be right with God.' (From the Good News Bible, Introduction to Galatians: used with permission.)

It is possible that Paul wrote this letter about AD 48 making it one of the earliest writings of Paul and of the New Testament.

Discuss – 'Why all the fuss about what makes a person a Christian?'

Was it so important?

When we look at what was happening, we see a typical reaction of human beings. Those people who had turned from the Jewish faith – or added to that faith that Jesus was the promised Messiah and Saviour – could not let go of all the extra rules and customs of their old faith. They wanted to convert the Gentiles to Judaism rather than to Christianity and this was probably done with the best of intentions, at first.

So it was with a great deal of sadness and concern that Paul heard that this was happening. The Judaizers were determined to uphold Jewish customs and rites. Such people had appeared in South Galatia and were teaching and persuading Paul's converts, many of whom were Gentiles, that circumcision and observance of the Law of Moses were essential to becoming a Christian. This teaching was in sharp contrast to Paul's gospel.

Possibly the converts remarked, 'But Paul said ...' and the old problem of jealousy amongst leaders crept in.

So, not only were the Judaizers teaching 'another gospel', but they were casting doubt on Paul's apostleship. Such a serious situation brought an immediate response from Paul in what we know as the letter to the Galatians.

It's important to remember this background so that we understand Paul's writings better.

3. Examine the contents

This could be looked at in the young people's own Bibles if they have a Good News Bible, or enlarge this to put up for the group to read.

'Paul's Letter to the Galatians' was written in order to bring back to true faith and practice those people who were being misled by this false teaching. Paul begins by defending his right to be called an apostle of Jesus Christ. He insists that his call to be an apostle came from God, not from any human authority, and that his mission was especially to the non-Jews. Then he develops the argument that it is by faith alone that people are put right with God. In the concluding chapters Paul shows that Christian conduct flows naturally from the love that results from faith in Christ.'

Outline of Contents

Introduction 1:1 - 10

Paul's authority as a apostle 1:11 - 2:21

The gospel of God's grace 3:1 - 4:31

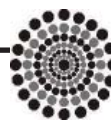
Christian freedom and responsibility 5:1 - 6:10

Conclusion 6:11 - 18

(From *The Good News Bible, Introduction to Galatians*, used with permission.)

LEADER TIP

A similar introduction appears in other translations.



4. What are the major themes of the letter?

(Themes which are still vitally relevant for us today.)

- a. What makes a person a Christian? Is it circumcision, the keeping of the Law, good works or is it faith in Christ?
- b. Salvation is by faith in Christ alone. It's no wonder Galatians has been called the Epistle of Christian Freedom.
- c. **For seniors**

Discuss this statement: "Paul was a 'Freedom Fighter'".

Paul was determined to preach God's plan of salvation in all of its wonderful simplicity. Read this next statement several times and ask the young people to think of examples of how we try to add to salvation. 'Whenever special or extra conditions are introduced to qualify 'faith', there is circumcision.' e.g. Are Salvationists guilty of leaving out of the fellowship (as though they are not really saved) those Christians who do not join various sections? For example: Can I be saved and not play in the band or timbrels or wear uniform because I am serving God in other ways?

Does my participation in any service depend on what God is asking me to do?

Opposition to Paul's gospel is very real and active whenever and wherever people try to impose upon others the rites and rituals they themselves have enjoyed and even felt have made them better Christians.

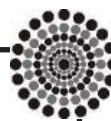
Such pressure to conform may be applied with the highest of motives but what is seen as necessary must be backed up by what God says through His word and His prompting in our hearts.

5. Bible search on Paul the 'Freedom Fighter'

Read and discuss each of these verses.

- a. Galatians 5:1
'Freedom is what we have – Christ has set us free! Stand, then, as

FOR SENIORS





LEADER TIP

The verses quoted here are from the GNB. Check the verses in the Bible translation your group members use.

free people and do not allow yourselves to become slaves again.'

Bring out the point that Paul is saying you have been freed from the (chains, slavery) bondage of sin so why become bound by anything else?

b. Galatians 5:6

'For when we are in union with Christ Jesus, neither circumcision nor the lack of it makes any difference at all; what matters is faith that works through love'

What is this saying about our interaction with others?

c. Galatians 5:13

'As for you, my brothers, you were called to be free. But do not let this freedom become an excuse for letting your physical desires control you. Instead, let love make you serve one another.'

How would you use this verse to answer people who say that 'Christians are free to **do as they like**'?

d. Galatians 6:15

'It does not matter at all whether or not one is circumcised; what does matter is being a new creature.'

What changes to make us a new creature – our outward appearance or our inward desires?

The person set free by the Holy Spirit in Christ will demonstrate his new life in Christ Jesus by the fruit of the Spirit.

It is in Galatians that Paul gives us the wonderful verses that show the difference between the human nature and the Spirit filled nature. Read together Galatians 5:19 - 26.

Verse 26 is especially for members of the Church to keep in mind. Yet today, as in those days, such wrong attitudes can stunt the growth of the Church. List the nine fruits of Christian behaviour and character.

Never forget that this describes the Christ-like behaviour of the person who has been made free in Christ.



LEADER TIP

If you haven't used the third Getting Started activity about the fruit of the Spirit, you could use it here.

TAKING IT HOME

The young people should be encouraged by this session to understand the truth that Christianity is not to be seen as a set of rules and regulations but a way of life involving loving service to God and a caring concern for others.

FOLLOW-THRU

This may be a good session to encourage the young people to pursue a task in the Training for Leadership segment. e.g. Assist a local officer for a month or assist with the setting up or packing up in any section.

Working with a leader who has an untiring love for others and whose life shows the fruit of the spirit could be of help to the young people as they consider the truths they have learned in this session.

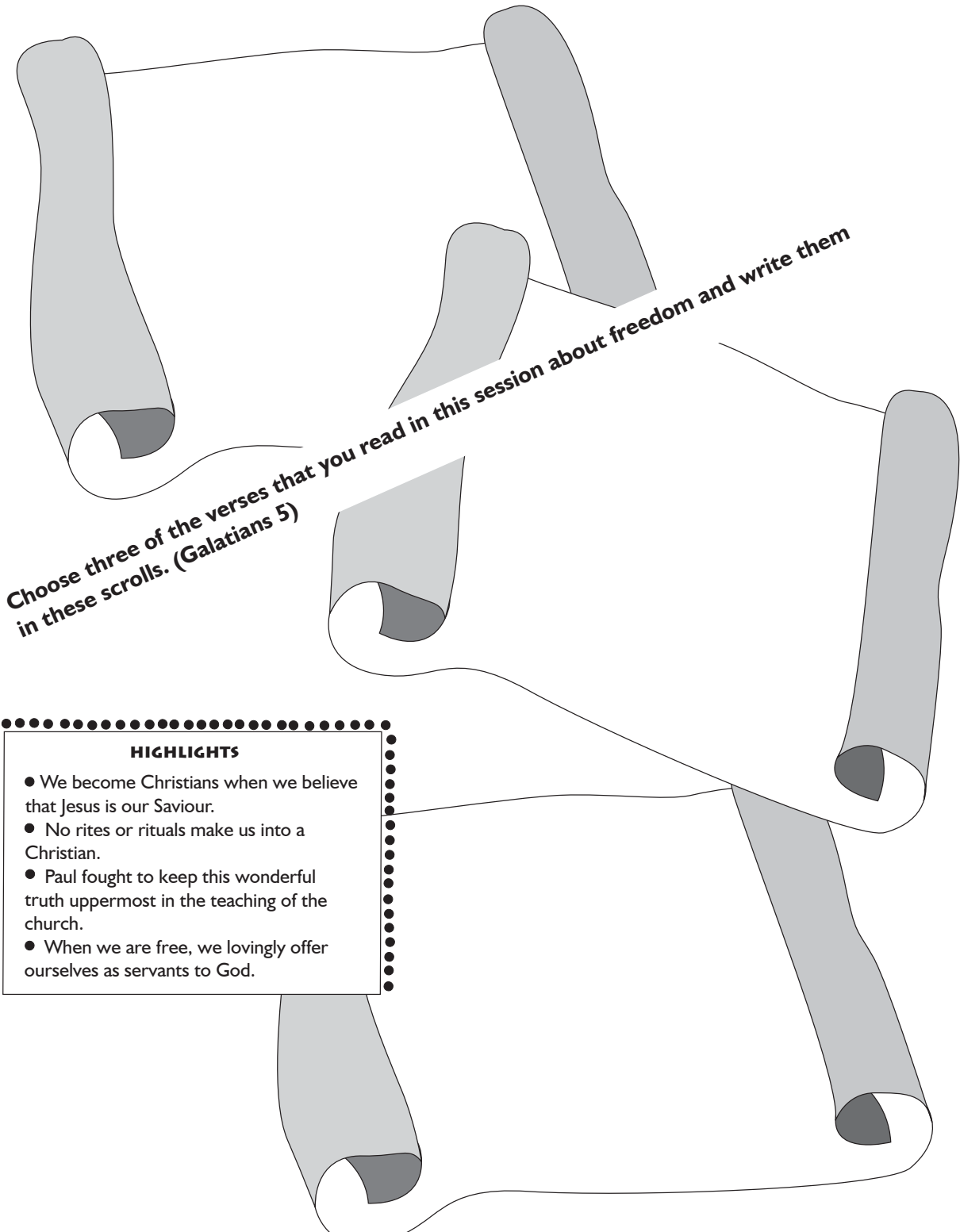
REFERENCES

DRANE, John, *Paul*, A Lion Handbook, Albatross Books, 1982.

BRUCE, F.F., *Paul: Apostle of the Free Spirit*, Paternoster Press, Bookhouse, 1985, Chapters 17 - 19.

FREEDOM FIGHTER

I. The Book of Galatians was written by _____
because _____



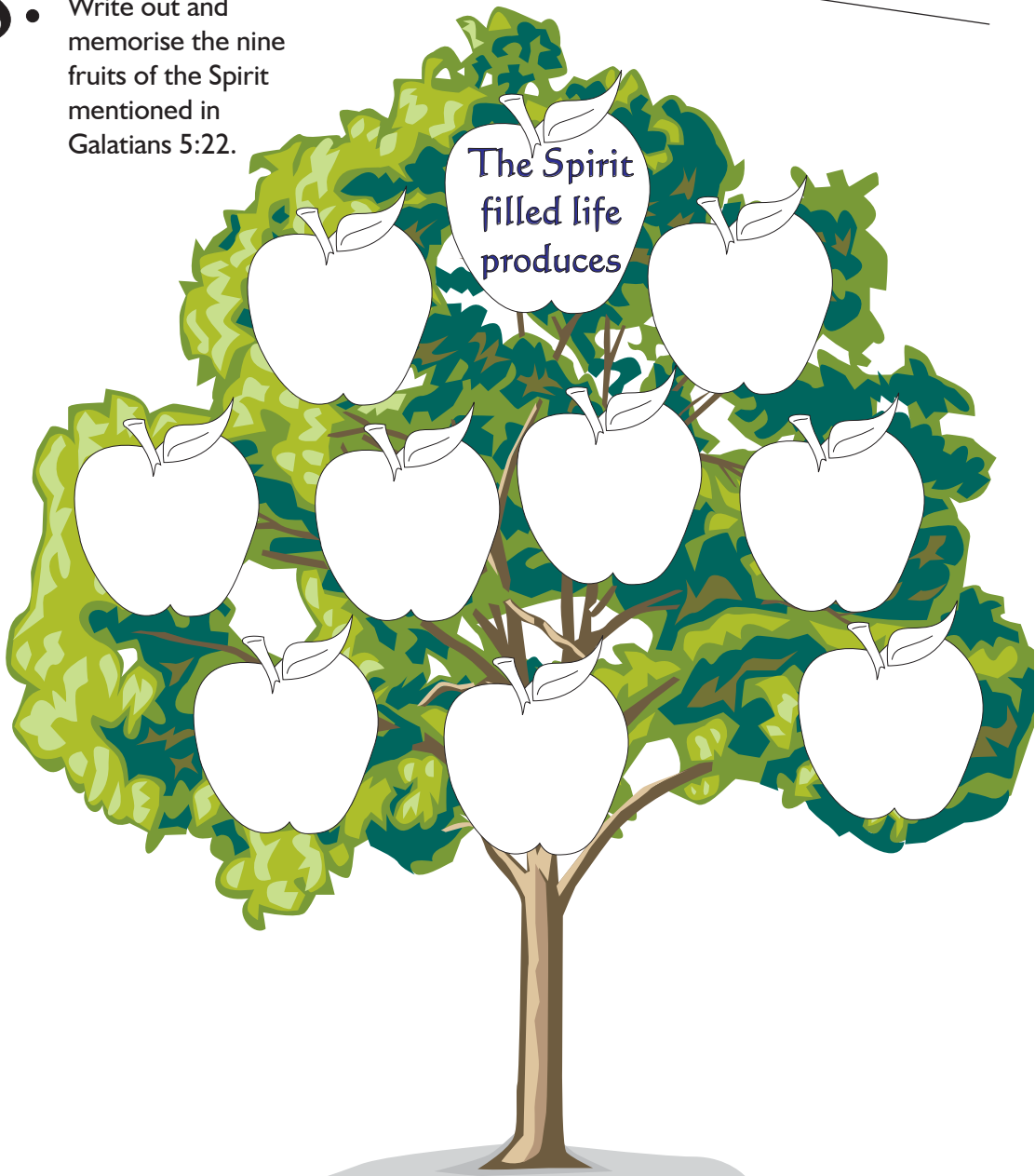
HIGHLIGHTS

- We become Christians when we believe that Jesus is our Saviour.
- No rites or rituals make us into a Christian.
- Paul fought to keep this wonderful truth uppermost in the teaching of the church.
- When we are free, we lovingly offer ourselves as servants to God.

2. Using verses from Galatians, write out a response to people who say: 'Christians are people who aren't allowed to do anything. Don't do this ... Don't do that ... is all they talk about.'

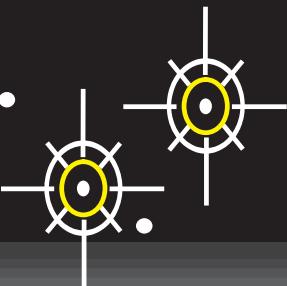
OR 'Christians are free. They can do whatever they like because they are saved by faith not by works.'

3. Write out and memorise the nine fruits of the Spirit mentioned in Galatians 5:22.





Paul — The Freedom Fighter



I. You have read many verses in this session from Galatians 5 about the freedom Christians have in Christ Jesus. Read them again and choose the two that were most helpful to you to write down here. Add why they helped you.

Galatians 5: __ _____

It was a great shock to the Jews to realise that God included Gentiles in His plan of salvation.

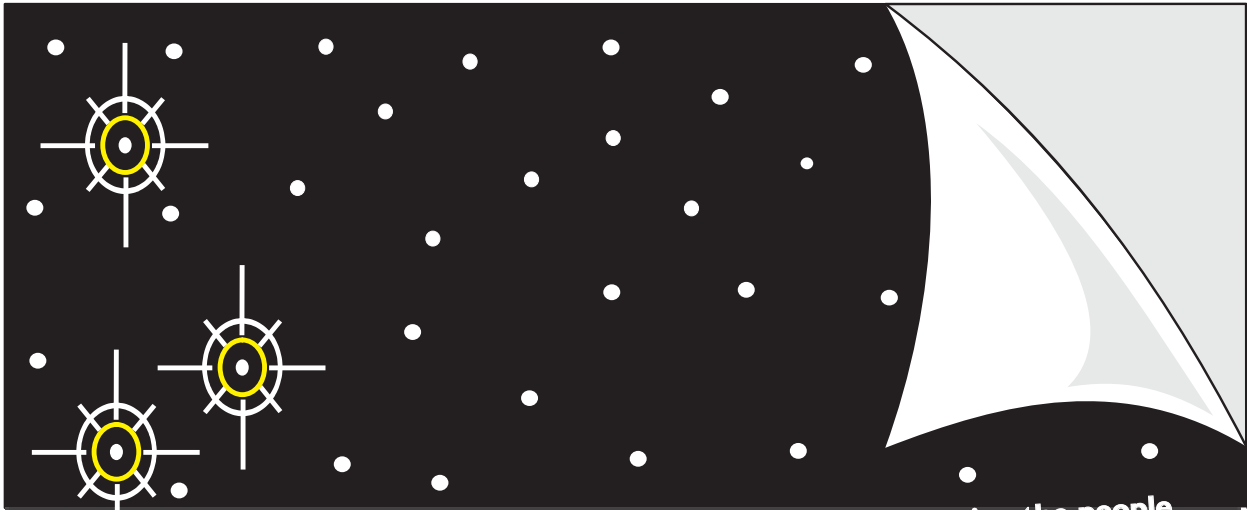
Galatians 5: __ _____

Paul attended an important council in Jerusalem in 49 AD where principles of universal salvation were set down.

When man tries to slow the free flow of the Holy Spirit he is left to his own devices.

2. Galatians is the 'Epistle of Christian Freedom'. What does this mean?

The Holy Spirit uses members of the living church to bring seekers to salvation.



3. The Jewish preachers who had come to Galatia were urging the people to be circumcised to fulfil the conditions of the law. Paul was adamant that this was not necessary to salvation.

Discuss: Do special or extra conditions that are introduced to qualify faith, pose a problem or danger to the Army today?

Write your findings here _____

4. 'Live as free people; do not, however use your freedom to cover up any evil, but live as God's slaves.' (1 Peter 2:16) How can a free man be a slave? _____

5. Draw up a list of the fruit of the Spirit and then make each fruit a personal prayer topic for the next nine days.
e.g. love – Turn my irritation about _____
into understanding and love.



BEATING PEER PRESSURE

SESSION 17

AIM

To encourage the young people to deal productively with peer pressure.

OBJECTIVES

As a result of this session the young people will:

- ❖ accept that peer groups are important;
- ❖ want to develop peer relationships that are a positive influence;
- ❖ be able to better recognise negative peer pressure;
- ❖ know how to deal with such pressure.

INSIGHTS FOR THE LEADER

'Peer pressure affects all teenagers in some way. And it isn't all bad. Peer pressure causes us to behave according to standards set by a group. These standards may be good, poor, or self-destructive.

We tend to think of peer pressure only as a negative force for children and teenagers. But many young people have been challenged to excel in schoolwork or in sports because of healthy competition. Often a young person learns the value of money when he must save his allowance to buy something that 'everyone' has.

Peer pressure is not a problem experienced just by teenagers. As adults, we call it 'keeping up with the Joneses.' We are still conforming to standards set by someone else. But maturity allows us to be less influenced by others.

Being accepted by others – our family, classmates, or co-workers – helps us develop positive self-images. That, in turn, gives us the character to withstand temporary failure, rejection, or loneliness. Being part of a group provides affirmation. And when the group has healthy standards, the peer pressure is a positive force.'

(From *Parents and Teenagers*, Victor Books, p.629.)

Read Romans 12:2 – It's OK to change our minds. This verse tells us that God can give us a complete change of mind.

Instead of having an overwhelming desire to conform, we can be transformed into becoming the people God wants us to be. Our young people may not be so overwhelmed by the need to conform and do as everyone else does if they are secure in our love and know that they are not rejected.

FROM THE BIBLE

Romans 12:2; Matthew 5:11 - 12, 28; 6:19 - 21; Ephesians 5:3 - 5; Proverbs 21:6; Revelation 21:27; Colossians 3:8.

CHECKLIST ✓

If you decide to use the first Getting Started activity, brief those who will role-play the 'undecided' voters.

For Getting Started 2 you will need to hand out paper and pens or pencils to each group member.

The first approach in Going Deeper can be done just by using activity 1 on the work sheet – or by writing up the ideas with the young people then choosing the ten they feel most applicable to their lives to write on their work sheet.

There are four Going Deeper approaches. Use 1, 3 and 4 if you feel you will not have time for all of them.

Be familiar with the 10 ideas for beating peer pressure to be discussed in Going Deeper 3 so that you can discuss them thoroughly. (They are listed on the back of the work sheet.)

GETTING STARTED

1. Role play

'I don't make up my mind until . . .'

Have one or two young people or leaders briefed beforehand for this activity. As you ask for the young people to show their approval or non-approval, these people will very obviously not vote until they check how everyone else has voted. They will then join the majority vote, or say they have no viewpoint if the votes are spread.

Explain that as each issue is introduced, you want the young people to show their reaction by using one of five modes:

- hands up means approve;
- waving the raised hand means strongly approve;
- folded arms is neutral;
- a thumbs down gesture means disapprove;
- thumbs down with a stirring action means strongly disapprove.

The leader introduces each with the words, 'How many of you believe ... and gives time for all to vote.

How many of you believe that:

- a. Kids should be allowed to watch what they like on TV?
- b. Homework should be restricted by law to less than 1 hour per night?
- c. Christianity still has a significant contribution to make to mankind?
- d. Certain types of people should be banned from soccer/football matches?
- e. Our nation's immigration policy is racist and should be changed?
- f. There should be more young people elected to local councils?
- g. Young people have a good time at *TRIBE* meetings?

(Adapted from *RAP Groups* by Keith Pearson, JBCE p.16.)

Now let's be honest

How many of you were worried about whether you were giving the RIGHT answer?

How many of you were worried that your vote would be different to everyone else's? Some young people will no doubt comment that those 'role-playing' certainly were, and you can point out that they had been primed to do this.

What do we call the feelings we get when we are anxious to appear to think or act as everyone else does? Pressure to conform – and if it's

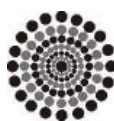
Or

2. Do a familiarity quiz under pressure by giving instructions but not allowing quite enough time for each task to be completed. Keep the quiz moving by building up pressure in each task.

Give each young person a sheet of paper and ask them to quickly draw up five columns.

Ask them to write as a heading in each column the name of five different persons in your group. Now call out a category and they write under each person's name the correct response:

- birthdate
- favourite colour
- favourite food
- hero.



LEADER TIP

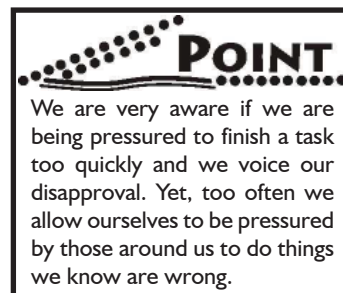
Avoid arguments on the issues – this is not the point of the exercise.

POINT

In this session we want to consider how this pressure can affect our lives and spoil our Christian growth if we only have pressure that is negative rather than supportive.

This exercise works best under the pressure of a time limit, and if only one task is given at a time.

GOING DEEPER



1. Who influences me?

Have the young people make a list (on work sheet or board) of the influences on their lives. For example, TV, parents, friends, teachers, sports stars, rock stars, fashion etc. Encourage them to think widely when making up the list.

Discuss: How does each of these influence us? How can each one be both a positive and negative influence?

A positive influence makes us try harder to be better – a negative influence makes us want to give up trying or feel so humiliated that we change our attitude and even do something we know is wrong.

2. The power of negative influences

Have the young people recall from news stories examples of people who have acted wrongly because of negative influences.

Discuss these examples and encourage the young people to add others. For example, people who have overspent on credit cards or mobile phone accounts in order to 'keep up', kids who have joined in wrong activities rather than be left out.

3. How do I avoid negative influences?

The best way to avoid negative influences is to know where you stand before you are influenced. Some stands are easy – for example what is your attitude to 'murder'? (We have a clear guideline for this in the Ten Commandments.)

Discuss: What are some stands that are less clear? For example, is it OK to exceed the speed limit? Should single Christians of the opposite sex share a house? (For younger group members consider such matters as smoking, wagging school, homework attitudes.)

Is peer pressure easier to withstand when I know what God says about certain issues? If I'm His follower, then friends will expect me to stand for the right even though they may pressure me to give in.

God's stand is truth. So it is the right one. But it is hard to live God's stand when everyone else is doing the opposite.

Bible search: The Bible gives us God's stand on issues that the world sees are acceptable. Complete activity 2 on either worksheet by looking up the Bible references. Read what the Bible says about the topic and finish the sentence in your own words. Then write down what our peers who reflect the world's view might say.

One of the things we must do as we grow up is make up our minds on a lot of issues. We should be prepared to learn about them – but most of all we should know what God has said about them.

4. Ten ideas on beating peer pressure

Have you ever taken a stand for the right when pressure was really 'on' to choose to do wrong? Did any others change their mind once you made this stand? Do you find it easier to stand for the right once somebody else has done so?

We need to know how to cope with such pressure and what we can do about it.

Turn over the work sheet and read the ten ideas on beating peer pressure. Which ones do you identify with?

TAKING IT HOME

All of us want to have friends. Sometimes we give in to their pressure because we are afraid we will lose their friendship. But there are times we know we must stand for the right.

Take and use these points to help you beat peer pressure. Remember, everyone goes through this battle. Talk to your discipleship partner and to God about your failures and your need for positive help to beat the pressure that urges you to conform.

FOLLOW-THRU

The challenge 'Be an encourager' in Reaching Out in Service naturally follows this session. Ask the young people to think of a person they have seen stand up for the right against peer pressure and to write them an encouraging letter.

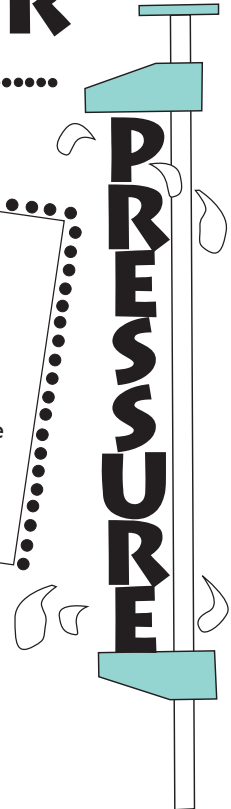
BEATING PEER



HIGHLIGHTS

- Having friends is important to everybody.
- Allowing these friends to convince us to do something we didn't want to do is 'peer pressure'.
- It's good to have friends who influence us for good.
- We can withstand peer pressure when we really believe our principles are right.

It was peer pressure that made Peter deny Jesus.



If a sheep falls into a hole all the ones following it will do the same.

1. What influences me?

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

2. The references will show you what the Bible says.
Young people should be able to fill in what their peers say.

<i>The Bible Says</i>	<i>Our Peers Might Say</i>
(Proverbs 21:6) Dishonesty is _____	_____
(Revelation 21:27) Lying will _____	_____
(Colossians 3:8) Hateful feelings are _____	_____
(Matthew 6:19 - 21) Working to become rich is _____	_____
(Matthew 5:11 - 12) Being picked on for being a Christian is _____	_____
(Matthew 5:28) Lust is _____	_____
(Ephesians 5:3) Dirty jokes are _____	_____
(Ephesians 5:4) Swearing is _____	_____
(Ephesians 5:5) Greed is _____	_____

Elijah stood as one man for God against 450 prophets of Baal.

3.

Highlight the points that you know you need to use more to be a winner in this area.



be to stand on your own feet in a crowd.
Just what do you believe? Get your own opinions. Think about things and decide what you believe about life. Then work at sticking at it.

Where is the pressure coming from? When you feel like you are being pressured to conform, look for where the pressure is coming from. Is it a friend, the group, the boss? Once you pinpoint the source you can decide more easily what to do about it.

Say what you think. Let them know. Don't just blindly agree with the rubbish – ask why, and tell them your ideas.

I did it again! I knew it was dumb. I knew it was wrong. And I went and did it again. Just because everybody else ... So here are ten ideas to help you be yourself.

Be honest. Admit that you are pressured (or often) influenced and to yourself. And to God. And to somebody who would understand.

Admitting that it's a problem is a good way to recognise the pressure and to begin to do something about it.

How are you doing spiritually? Don't skip this bit. The way you are doing in your spiritual life is a good way to see how much you are influenced by others.

The better your relationship with God – the stronger you'll be.

If all else fails ... run. If you know that you are not going to beat the pressure, keep away from the situation. You can always build your strength and try again later.

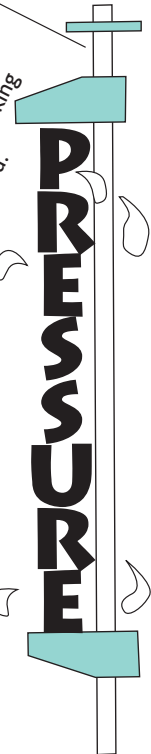
Peer pressure is a real battle – for everyone. It's not easy to beat and to stand up for yourself, but it's worth the try. So don't give in, be yourself.

Be real. Once you say what you think – live it. Be consistent in your ideas and actions. Be reasonable. Be honest. **Get some good pressure.** Get with some people who have the same beliefs and standards as you. Develop some positive pressure to be firm and honest about your ideas.

Don't give up. Hang in there. Figure out what your stand is, and why, and then stick to it ... particularly on those things you know you are easily tempted by. And do it before the temptation comes along – be ready.

Be an influence. It's amazing how many people are just waiting for one person to stand up in the crowd. Be the leader – even though it is scary. Others are looking forward to the chance to join you.

PEER



(Used by permission The Son.)



If one person in an audience turns around to look at something, a great proportion of those around him do the same.



TOUGH DECISIONS

SESSION 18

PART 2 – CONTRACEPTION AND IN VITRO FERTILISATION

AIM

To help the young people understand The Salvation Army attitude to contraception and in vitro fertilisation.

OBJECTIVES

As a result of this session, the young people will be able to:

- ❖ have a clear understanding of the meaning (and definition) of one of the above topics;
- ❖ develop a balanced view of these topics after consideration of Christian principles, biblical references and The Salvation Army Positional Statements and Guidelines for Salvationists;
- ❖ practically use this knowledge if they personally experience or encounter other people facing these topics in a real life situation in society;
- ❖ confidently take part in discussion or debate with others, and comment on The Salvation Army viewpoint on these topics if necessary.

INSIGHTS FOR THE LEADER

Introduction

This session, like session 8 ('Tough Decisions Part 1 – Abortion and Euthanasia'), deals with problems in daily life situations – at least in the realm of daily television and reading material of the young people! This increases the need for the leader to be fully prepared or to call on a member of the medical profession to speak on the topics. Remember the importance of keeping the session focused on the aim. It is easy for discussions to go off on a 'tangent' especially if the young people start sharing related stories.

Leaders will need to be sensitive to the variation of sexual education and knowledge within the age groups of the young people. Some simple explanations may need to be given but avoid turning the session into a sex education program.

Be perceptive to the fact that unfortunately, a few young people may have had personal experiences of some of the topics, particularly the use of contraception. Try to allow and encourage your young people to be open and honest with some of their possible misunderstandings of the topics and the conflicting views of their peers.

FROM THE BIBLE

Family planning

Genesis 1:28; Genesis 33:5.

In vitro fertilisation

Although the Bible has nothing directly to say on IVF, there is still much of relevance in its pages, as far as the issue of IVF is concerned.

* Woman's overwhelming desire for children – Genesis 30:1.

* Natural creative activity of God 'in the womb' – Job 10:8 - 12.

* Response to infertility – firstly prayer – Luke 1:13 and Romans 8:28.

* Providing for immediate relatives – relevant to donors in AID and surrogate mothers in IVF – 1 Timothy 5:8.



CHECKLIST

This is the second session in this unit on 'Tough Decisions' (see session 8). If you have a very young group, you may well decide that these issues are not relevant and so more time could be spent on the starter and how we deal with tough decisions. At the same time, be aware of how often these topics are discussed at school or on TV and that it is important for the Christian viewpoint to be presented.

Be thoroughly prepared on the chosen topic(s) and read the whole session carefully. You may prefer to invite a guest to come and deal with the topics.

Have sufficient copies of the Guidelines for Salvationists on page 163 ready for each young person to use during the lesson.

Select your teaching approach and read the background notes and be prepared. Summary of Going Deeper ideas:

The first one is for juniors and uses the work sheet.

Approach 2 uses part 1 of the senior work sheet.

Approach 3 has extra background material in the session.

Approach 4 suggests inviting some guests to make up a forum.

Check on the Get Involved and Grow challenges and encourage the young people to continue working on these.



WEBQUEST

The Positional Statements and Guidelines for Salvationists are on the Army's websites.

Before the session, study will need to be made of biblical references, definitions and Salvation Army Positional Statements and Guidelines for Salvationists. (Refer to Going Deeper: 'Bible search'.) Be supportive of The Salvation Army Positional Statements and Guidelines for Salvationists and the fact that 'Salvationist Ethics' are 'Christian Ethics' based on the person of Jesus Christ and His teaching, and consistently show 'Strong Doctrine tempered with Strong Mercy'. Not all Christians are agreed on the right answers to ethical problems and not even all Salvationists share one common view on them, but by and large the stances taken by the Army are conservative. Therefore, avoid imposing one's own viewpoint on these topics. Instead, reinforce biblical references and Salvation Army Positional Statements.

BACKGROUND

These background notes are for your own information when preparing the material you will use. Include the information under 'Where the Army stands' on page 163 .

Family planning

Contraception is a deliberate attempt to stop nature taking its course in the processes of birth. Overall it is God's prerogative to plan families, not man's. Some people argue that Christians should accept and enjoy the blessings of a large family. After creation God commanded Adam to 'be fruitful and have many children' (Genesis 1:28) and after the flood, Noah was given the same command in Genesis 9:1. However, God's command to multiply was part of man's larger task to manage the world responsibly.

Today we live in an over-populated world where in some places, every new birth is a threat to another child's life. Contraception then can be seen as a God-given tool for managing the world's resources, rather than a man-made threat to God's supremacy. We know God intends man to use his skills to control and shape the pattern of nature. (e.g. vaccination to prevent infant mortality.) Many people consider that it is their Christian responsibility to limit the size of their family in today's over-populated world.

Christians need to avoid selfish reasons for planning a family e.g. to protect their career prospects or to preserve their standard of living.

Family planning removes the fear of having an unwanted pregnancy and allows more freedom in marriage, and less tensions which would spill over to affect the children adversely.

IVF (In vitro fertilisation)

Sometimes we become so obsessed with the need to avoid unwanted babies, we forget about the thousands of couples who badly want children, but cannot. (Refer to Genesis 30:1.) One in seven Australian couples are childless in a society geared around families. There are emotional, social and spiritual dimensions to this problem, and our churches need to be places of support and healing for these people.

For most Christian couples, infertility involves not just a deep and ongoing grieving process, but also a crisis of faith. The possibilities for childless couples are very limited. Adoption is no longer an option for many couples, as the demand exceeds the supply and overseas adoptions are extremely expensive. Issues concerning childlessness are present in the New Testament. (Refer to Luke 1:7.) Prayer was the appropriate first response to such a situation. (Refer to Luke 1:13.)

IVF may give an infertile married couple the baby they rightly want. This should bring joyful thanksgiving to God.

With IVF the husband and wife are working to create a child, with the added help of the doctor.

Every new scientific discovery or technical development brings its abuses, as well as its blessings but abuse of anything should not obscure its value. IVF itself, like money, is neutral. It depends on those who use it whether it is made to serve good or bad ends.

Artificial insemination or IVF using donated material by a third party (i.e. donated egg or sperm or embryo, or surrogate motherhood), raises more moral problems and practical problems than it solves. Most Christians would draw the line at this point in their search for children. If the route to adoption is blocked, they will look to God to fill the childless gap in their lives in His own way, and accept His will, confident that those who approach life with such an attitude never come off second best. (Refer to Romans 8:28.)

EXTRA BACKGROUND FOR SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

What are some reasons why a Christian married couple may find it necessary to limit the number of children they have?

Possible answers:

More common and obvious:

- **health** problems of either parent or existing children. (This may include an inherited condition that has become evident in the family and could be passed on to future children.)
- **financial** difficulties whereby an extra child could cause a financial burden and hardship for the rest of the family.
- planning the **size of the family** with contraception makes a small, personal contribution towards easing a world crisis caused by the population explosion.

Others:

A married couple may express love for their family by a chosen method of birth control to space their children for the maximum benefit of all.

- It is the right of children to be wanted and voluntary childbearing safeguards the well being of the family and society.
- An extra pregnancy may be unacceptable and create tension. It is far better to prevent a pregnancy than even to consider abortion as an option.

What are some moral, social and legal problems with IVF/AID with donated material other than husband and wife?

Moral

- When artificial techniques are used to control the normal processes of conception, then moral issues are raised by Christians who believe that all control over life and death belongs to God alone.
- Future developments of birth control techniques are particularly frightening e.g. genetic engineering, cloning, selective breeding. This is like playing God. Do we want the future of the human race shaped in the lab?

DEFINITION

AID stands for artificial insemination by donor.

- In IVF with donor egg or AID, the attitude of the donor is suspect as it is usually only for money and is therefore morally questionable.
- Some unmarried mothers and same sex couples may request AID or surrogacy and this is morally unacceptable for Christians.

Social

- A system of registration and control of donors is necessary to prevent overuse of one donor.
- The intrusion of a third party (the donor) can cause serious disruption of the marriage later. The baby is truly the wife's but not truly the husband's (or vice versa for IVF). This can cause a marriage imbalance and aggravate the relationship of the parents.
- As artificial donors in AID and IVF increase, so will the misuse increase. Therefore clear guidelines need to be worked out by governments.

Legal

- As the donor is anonymous, who is the legal mother or father of the child – the one who does the parenting or the one who does the raising?
- Whose name is entered on the birth certificate? Is the child illegitimate?
- The main difficulty resulting from legal systems not designed to cope with births via donated material, is that of falsification of records. It is a deceit upon the child and upon society.

GETTING STARTED

The man, the boy and the donkey

Read this story (an adapted Aesop's fable) to your group:

A farmer and his son were travelling to the market to sell their donkey. They had not gone far when they met some women coming from the town.

'Look at that!' said one of the women, as they came near. 'Have you ever seen such foolish people? Walking along the hard road when they could be riding on the back of the donkey!' The farmer heard what they were saying and quietly told his son to get up on the donkey's back and they continued on their way.

Soon they passed a group of elderly men sitting by the roadside. 'You see what I mean,' said one of them as the farmer and his son passed by. 'This younger generation has no respect for old people these days. When I was young, you would never dare ride while your father had to walk.' The farmer quietly asked his son to get off the donkey and he took his place.

They had not gone very far when they met a husband and wife. 'Look at that mean old man,' they both cried out. 'How can you ride while your son has to walk? The poor little boy can hardly keep up with you.' The farmer quietly lifted the son onto the donkey and together they rode towards the market.

As they reached the market they met a shopkeeper who said, 'Tell



LEADER TIP

You could make this fable into a video to show if you would prefer. Or you could make several copies of the fable and have the young people act it out.

me, is that your donkey?’

‘Yes,’ replied the farmer.

‘Why do you treat him so harshly? Two healthy people like you could carry him more easily than he can carry you!’

The farmer and his son got down from the donkey’s back and firstly tied his legs together, then they slipped a pole through the rope and heaved the donkey onto their shoulders.

They had not walked much further before they came to a bridge which led to the market. The bridge was crowded with people and they all began laughing at the sight of the farmer and his son carrying the donkey between them. The noise frightened the poor donkey and he kicked himself free of the ropes that tied his feet together but fell over the wall of the bridge into the river below.

There was nothing the farmer and his son could do but go home again.

Try to please everyone and you please no one!

Ask the young people these questions:

- Why did the farmer end up losing his donkey?
- What should he have done?
- What can we do when we are faced with difficult choices and we’re not sure what to do?

POINT

As Christians we want to make decisions in line with God’s teaching. Discussing controversial issues with our leader, parents and other Christians helps us. The Salvation Army also has Positional Statements and Guidelines for Salvationists which have been carefully considered and prepared to help us make decisions and form opinions on controversial issues. They reflect our Salvation Army doctrines and have a biblical basis. These Positional Statements can be used as guidelines in our attitudes and behaviour

GOING DEEPER

1. Particularly for juniors

Use the work sheet and discuss the Guidelines for Salvationists. (See page 163.)

Have the Bible references for the subject(s) (see ‘From the Bible’) written out on slips of paper for different young people to look up and read out to the group. These Bible verses can be discussed to support the Army’s position and the work sheet completed.

Leaders may have to explain further some of the definitions and the meaning of biblical references.

If you are dealing with more than one issue, you could have a mix-and-match game where the Bible references are discussed and then matched with the Guidelines for Salvationists. Photocopies of page 163 would be used here.

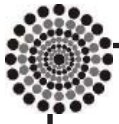
2. Small group discussion (Particularly for seniors)

Discuss answers to at least one of the following ethical questions.

- a. What are some reasons why a Christian married couple would want to limit the number of children in their family?
- b. What are some moral, social and legal problems associated with IVF and AID with donated material from other than the husband and wife?

Use the background notes to direct discussion and avoid getting off the topic.





FOR SENIORS

3. Preparation for conference (Particularly for seniors)

You have been asked to represent The Salvation Army viewpoint on family planning at a conference. Using the information in the background notes, make a list of the arguments you could present. (This is activity 1 on the senior work sheet.)

4. A forum

As an alternative to the other Going Deeper options, you could use this lesson to have a 'forum' or 'panel' discussion on these topics. People who could be asked to sit on a panel could be a Christian doctor, a social worker, another young people's leader, an officer, a lay person with experience in these fields. (You may think of others.)

It's important to brief the panel members on the aim of this session. Choose your panel members carefully. Make sure they are familiar with The Salvation Army's Guidelines for Salvationists on IVF and contraception beforehand and prepared to reinforce these statements. If possible give the young people the option to write down their questions and give the panel time to prepare.

TAKING IT HOME

The moral issues we have discussed are a secular challenge to Christian standards and character. Salvationists recognise the need for creative, moral and Christian reasoning as the world, rich in new knowledge and technology, races ahead of its moral development, bringing new ethical problems. The Army, with its ethics based on Jesus Christ's teachings, has a consistent approach to matters of personal morality – strong doctrine balanced by strong mercy and compassion.

We live in a world of difficult issues and we need to be informed people. We can't begin to give an answer if we don't know the questions! If we fail, then the world will make up its mind on matters that are literally life and death issues without hearing what Christians believe.

Pray asking God for wisdom to understand the difficult moral problems of our age. Thank Him for the guidance of the Bible and of the Holy Spirit. Ask for His enabling grace to help us be an influence for good in the world by our presence and participation.

FOLLOW-THRU

In Get Involved and Grow in mission there is a challenge to take part as a helper in a creche. Some of your young people may like to accept this challenge.

REFERENCES

CLIFTON, Shaw, *Strong Doctrine, Strong Mercy*, International Headquarters, London, 1985.

FIELD, David, *Real Questions*, Lion Handbook.

MILLER, Les, *A Christian View of IVF*, Anglican Information office.

Territorial Positional Statements and Guidelines for Salvationists.

WHERE THE ARMY STANDS

(From Guidelines for Salvationists)

IVF (IN VITRO FERTILISATION)



□ Many married couples face pain through childlessness, and their anguish elicits a compassionate response from those who are in the helping professions. That response includes understanding, counselling and the provision of specialised services and procedures which may be helpful in eliminating impediments to fertility.

□ Reproductive technology today provides solutions to infertility for many couples, but it also opens doors to techniques, some of which are clearly immoral and others which are clouded in ethical uncertainties. Its use raises questions in the light of theological premises and is potentially dangerous to the sanctity and dignity of human life. With an array of possibilities for assistance, or interference, in the sacred act of procreation, man's knowledge and skill must be matched with a deep sense of responsibility and reverence for life. Never should a child be considered the property of parents, but must be thought of as an individual human being with associated needs and rights.

Artificial Insemination by Husband (AIH)

□ The Salvation Army recognises artificial insemination, in which the husband's sperm is introduced into the uterus of his wife, as an acceptable procedure to assist the married couple to conceive, after natural methods have been unsuccessful.

Artificial Insemination by Donor (AID)

□ For some married couples AIH will be unsuccessful and the deep desire to have a child may lead the husband and wife to consider the option of artificial insemination by a donor. The Salvation Army advises against this procedure because of the serious legal, ethical, moral and social implications that may adversely affect the couple, the donor, the child and society at large.

In-Vitro Fertilisation - Husband and Wife

□ The Salvation Army recognises that for married couples who are unsuccessful in conceiving through normal copulation or artificial insemination (AIH), in-vitro fertilisation (IVF) may be considered, using the ova and sperm of the wife and husband.

□ The Army recommends that couples considering such a possibility be counselled and given a full explanation of the procedures, risks and potential consequences. This counselling ought to include alternatives to in-vitro fertilisation which are childlessness, adoption and fostering. The life that is conceived in vitro must be treated with respect, reverence and dignity. We believe that the intent of the production of fertilised ova should be to secure and safeguard pregnancy for the couple, and the health of the child. Any experimentation on such ova should be solely for these purposes.

In-Vitro Fertilisation - Third Party Donor

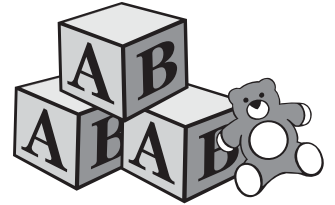
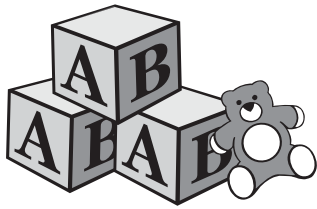
□ Many of the problems associated with AID apply equally to in-vitro fertilisation in which a third party donor is involved. The Salvation Army advises against IVF in which donor sperm and/or donor ova are used.



Summary

□ Artificial insemination and in-vitro fertilisation are acceptable when the sperm and ova of a husband and wife are used. The Salvation Army strongly advises against the use of donors because of legal, moral, social, psychological and ethical complications and implications.

□ The issues in the use of human assisted reproduction are many and complex. There are no easy answers. The Salvation Army will continue to make every effort to balance doctrine and principle with mercy and sensitivity. While maintaining our beliefs, the ultimate desire should be to offer love and counsel in Christ's name to those who choose such means of achieving parenthood.



What are two Bible references that support the Army's position on this issue?

1. _____
2. _____

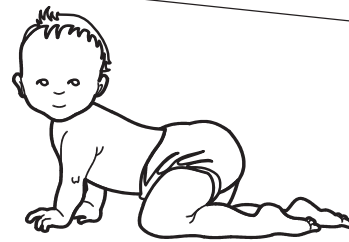


Write out one of these references or explain in your own words what it means.





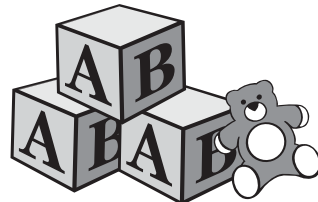
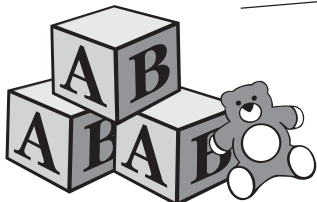
From your discussion list two possible benefits of either contraception or IVF.



List two potential problems related to the use of contraception or IVF.

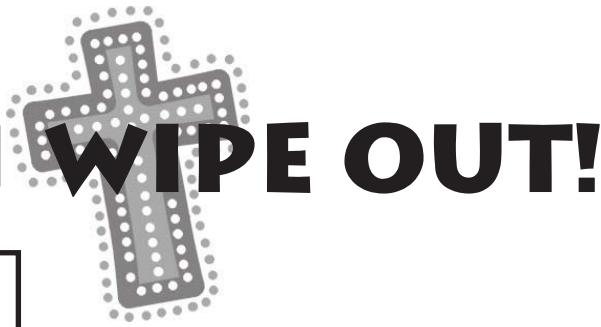


One thing I learned during this lesson was:



SESSION 19

WIPE OUT!



FROM THE BIBLE

Selected references.

AIM

To enable the young people to understand better what we mean when we speak of the 'atonement for the whole world' made by Jesus.

OBJECTIVES

As a result of this session the young people should:

- ❖ have an understanding of the concept of 'atonement';
- ❖ realise why the atonement provided by Jesus was needed;
- ❖ be aware of the principal results of the atonement;
- ❖ know some Scripture verses to support these views;
- ❖ be able to relate this concept of atonement to their own spiritual journey.

INSIGHTS FOR THE LEADER

Teaching doctrine is never easy – yet how can our young people have a clear understanding of what they believe if we do not tackle doctrinal sessions with enthusiasm? Try to involve your young people in some of the more active strategies and keep reinforcing what the term 'atonement' means.

This is one of two sessions based on Doctrine 6, 'We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has, by his suffering and death made an atonement for the whole world, so that whosoever will may be saved.'

This session aims to help the young people understand the concept of atonement and why it was needed to reconcile us with God.

The atonement is the central point of our Christian faith. It is important for the leader to be familiar with the following concepts and their scriptural basis, so that by the end of the session, the young people should have a better understanding:

- that all people are sinners;
- that man's sinful state naturally attracted God's disapproval and punishment;
- that man could do nothing to change his sinful state;
- that God initiated the atonement – He did something to save people from sin and its effects;
- the concept of atonement;
- the results of the atonement.

The meaning of the atonement

The word 'atonement' is the translation of the Hebrew word meaning 'to cover' or 'to wipe away'. An equivalent word is 'reconciliation' i.e. the act



CHECKLIST

Basically this is a teaching session but a variety of strategies are included to make the session meaningful for your young people.

There are two suggested Getting Started activities. You will need some advertisements for starter 1b.

There are five suggested Going Deeper approaches. It is important to work through approaches 3 and 5, so allow sufficient time for them to be completed.

Activity 3 on the work sheet can be completed during approach 5.

The first approach can be completed quickly.

Select which one of 2 and 4 your group would enjoy if you do not have time for all suggestions.

of making 'at one'.

The atonement:

- is one aspect of the saving work of God in Christ;
- is the work of Jesus to enable the sinner to be 'at one' with God through His death and resurrection;
- refers to the change of relationship between God and man achieved by Jesus.

Why an atonement was necessary and what it does for us

SIN

separates man from God
enslaves man to an evil power
condemns (brings judgement)

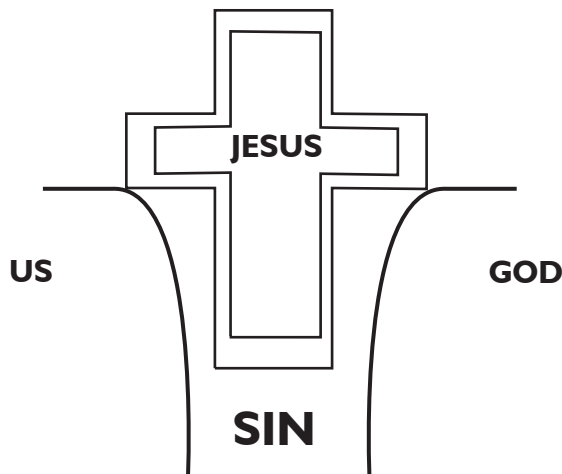
JESUS

makes us at-one with God
liberates
erases judgement

AT-ONE-MENT

Jesus brought God and man together
He bridged the gap separating them
He made amends

Another way to show this is in the following diagram.



JESUS BROUGHT US AND GOD TOGETHER

The atonement means that Jesus, in His death, dealt completely with the problem of sin – Christ assumed the guilt and punishment for us all.

Three aspects of atonement are:

1. Love

- that concern for mankind which motivated God in Christ to make an atonement. (Refer to John 3:16; Romans 5:8; Galatians 2:20; Revelation 1:5.)

2. Sin

- produced the need for the atonement. (Refer to Romans 3:23; I Corinthians 15:3.)
- Christ's blood was shed 'for the forgiveness of sin' (Matthew 26:28).

3. Substitution

- in that Jesus paid the death penalty for sin 'in the place of' the sinner.

- Jesus was not forced into it.
 - He was without sin and without penalty.
 - He took our place. (Refer to I John 2:2; John 1:29; Romans 5:6.)

GETTING STARTED

POINT

Many people find it impossible to accept God's free gift of salvation. They feel they need to do something to earn it – that there has to be a catch. In this session we will consider how God's Peace Plan is His effort to reconcile us to Himself.

1. What's the catch?

- What would you do if a man appeared in the shopping centre and began handing out \$100 notes?
 - * Would you take one and run?
 - * Would you ask him why he was doing it?
 - * Would you suspect it was stolen money and not touch it?
 - * Would you ring the police?
 - * Would you ask him what the catch was?

Or

- Look out for any kind of special offer advertised in newspapers, brochures, or on the wrapping of some food product. The more spectacular the offer, the better. Talk for a minute or two about the offer itself, see how attractive it is, what a bargain, etc. Then ask the young people how they think the firm or firms concerned can make such an offer without loss to themselves. The group may offer some suggestions – mutual arrangements between firms, bulk buying which allows goods to be sold for a small profit, etc. – but the point is that the people being made the offer will not really know how it is made, nor do they need to know. It is sufficient that the offer is made.

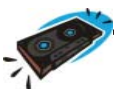
2. Tell one or both of these stories OR view the video clip

- Joan of Arc was born in the village of Domremy, in France. Because of her great service to her country, that village was excused the payment of taxes and tolls, and in the official register which recorded the village's debts to the government there was written in red ink, across the list, 'Free for the Maid's sake'. Across our lives, with its list of wrongs, can be written 'Free for Jesus' sake'.
- Nikolai Berdyaev, who abandoned Marx for Christianity, insists that neither history nor theology nor the church brought him to the Christian faith, but a simple woman called only Mother Maria. He was present at a concentration camp when the Nazis were murdering Jews in gas chambers. One distraught mother refused to part with her baby. When Maria saw that the officer was only interested in numbers, without a word she pushed the mother aside and quickly took her place. This action revealed to Berdyaev the heart of Christianity – and what atonement means.
- View the segment towards the end of the video where the crew of the ship 'Messiah' decide to give their lives to save the world.

POINT

It is wonderful to think that people could be brave enough to take the place of another. Such acts of heroism stir us.

We must always be stirred by the fact that Jesus took our place – set us free from the power of sin and died for us. This is what we want to consider in this session.



VIDEO CLIP

The video *Deep Impact* has a segment when the crew of the ship give their lives to save the world.

GOING DEEPER

1. Look at the doctrine

Have cards hidden around the room for the young people to find. Each card should have written on it one word from Doctrine 6.

As the young people find the cards, they should stick them onto a board so that the whole doctrine can be read.

Explain that we are going to consider why it was necessary for Jesus

to provide an atonement and what difference accepting such an offer makes to our lives.

Ask them to define the word atonement. Then read the dictionary definition to them.

Ask the young people: What do you think it means when we say Jesus 'made an atonement for the whole world'?

Who did Jesus bring together? (At-One) How did Jesus do this?

2. Role play set in a courtroom

The young people are members of the jury. (They listen to the evidence and decide who is right.) A young person or leader presents the facts of the case. The defendant is charged with embezzlement of \$50,000 from his employer. The employer explains how he is hurt because he had trusted this man and treated him as one of his family. The judge listens to the case and then the jury members' opinions as to the guilt/innocence of the defendant. An interruption occurs. The defendant confesses and says he is very sorry. The judge fines him \$100,000. He must also pay back all he has taken or he faces a long prison term. The defendant explains that he is able to pay back the money but not the fine. Just as the judge is ordering that he goes to jail, the employer offers to pay the fine for the defendant. He is the one who had been wronged, yet he was willing to pay the price and be reconciled to the guilty man.

What did the employer do? (Saved the man from the punishment he deserved.)

Was he worthy of this? (No, it was the employer's undeserved kindness.)

3. Why do we need to be reconciled to God?

People are separated from God

- a. **Consider:** there's something strange about the human race! People are capable of doing a great deal of good and, yet, at the same time people can commit terrible evil.

What's the explanation?

Is evil just the growing pains of the human race? Or is evil something that can be cured by proper education or better living conditions?

Not according to the Bible. . .

Check it out: The first few chapters of Genesis explain the truth about all of us.

We are made in the image of God, to enjoy fellowship with Him and to care for His world.

Read Genesis 1:26 - 28.

But we have all gone wrong, we are all sinners: through our disobedience and pride, we have become alienated from God and from each other.

The Bible makes it clear that what happened in the Garden of Eden is not just the story of two people – Adam and Eve. It's the truth about all of us.

Read Romans 7:21 - 25.

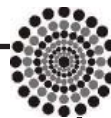
We seem powerless to help ourselves. So, what can be done?

- b. **Consider: God has an answer**

Only God can deal with our sin. Since He is pure and good and

DEFINITION

Atonement: Dictionary meaning – make amends. Hebrew word means – 'to cover' or 'to wipe away'. At-one-Ment. Write this on board.



LEADER TIP

You could quickly draw the diagram from the Insights for the Leader to emphasise the point of atonement.

holy, He cannot simply say that sin doesn't matter – clearly it does matter.

God has done something about our sin. Through Jesus He has made an atonement – literally 'at-one-ment'. He has made us 'at-one' with Himself. He has reconciled sinful people to Himself.

The Bible insists that the death of Jesus is the answer to our sin.

We can never fully explain how the death of Jesus works, but the Bible does give us some helpful pictures.

Check it out: The key to understanding all of these pictures is the fact that Jesus is God-in-man.

Through Jesus, God does for us what we could never do for ourselves. With that in mind the Bible invites us to think of the death of Jesus in these ways:

A demonstration of God's love: read Romans 5:8.

Through the death of Jesus, God is saying, 'Although you are sinners, I still love you enough to die for you.'

A ransom paid to free us: read John 8:34; Mark 10:45.

We are slaves in sin; we cannot free ourselves. Jesus pays the price of our freedom by His death on the cross.

A sacrifice: read 1 John 2:2.

In Old Testament times sacrifice, the death of an animal, was a symbolic way of offering your life back to God to atone for sins.

But the symbol never matched the reality.

People went on sinning! Read Hebrews 10:1 - 4.

Jesus is the perfect sacrifice. He does not offer an animal. He gives Himself by His death on the cross.

A substitute: read Isaiah 53:4 - 6.

Through Jesus, God Himself carries the pain and punishment of our sins.

A victory over evil: read Colossians 2:15.

The history of humankind is one long, sorry tale of our defeat by evil.

But Jesus, on the cross, faced evil at its worst and went on loving and forgiving.

He completely defeated the powers of evil.

4. For the juniors – match the actions and statements

If your group enjoys drama, get some of them to adopt one of the following postures, and to freeze in that posture until you come to them.

- one holding out hands as though they are Jesus on the cross (substitution);
- one will stand with back to the rest as if they have fought with them (reconciliation);
- one will stand with hands tied behind back, as if a slave (redemption);
- one will stand with head lowered, as if a prisoner in court (justification).

Have the following simple sentences on cards or board or overhead transparency and ask the remaining young people to match them to the right action.



LEADER TIP

A method of presentation would be to cut out three different coloured hearts – red, black and white. Use white for 'a demonstration of God's love'. Use black for 'a ransom to free us' and red for 'a sacrifice'. Write the relevant verses on each heart. Place each heart over the top of the previous one.



FOR JUNIORS

REDEMPTION: 'I was a slave, but Jesus bought me.'

RECONCILIATION: 'I was not speaking, but Jesus re-introduced me.'

JUSTIFICATION: 'I was guilty, but God pardoned me because of Jesus' death.'

SUBSTITUTION: 'I deserved punishment but Jesus took it instead.'

Once this is done, read the sentences again to reinforce the meanings of the words.

5. Brainstorming

List the young people's ideas of what Jesus achieved by dying for us.

Assign each young person 1 or 2 of the following verses. Let them each in turn read out the verse and say what they see are the positive outcomes for us because Jesus made us at-one with God.

Ephesians 1:7; Hebrews 2:14; 2 Corinthians 5:19; John 3:16; 2 Corinthians 5:15; Ephesians 2:18.

Now look at the list already compiled by the young people and write the reference for the verse which backs up their ideas. Add any further results that these verses mention.



LEADER TIP

This is also activity 3 on the work sheet so answers can be written directly on to it.

TAKING IT HOME

The truth is that everyone has sinned and so is separated from God. God could see only one solution for this problem - Jesus. Jesus made an atonement for the whole world. God excludes no-one and there are no favourites. God's door of love is open to all through Jesus. His invitation is for everyone. But we must respond for ourselves as individuals. We need to be sure that we have responded and accepted what Jesus has done for us.

FOLLOW-THRU

The fourth activity on the senior work sheet would, if followed through and performed, enable the young people to complete the challenge from the Get Involved and Grow In Worship segment to take part in a drama.

FURTHER READING

COUTTS, J., *This We Believe*, Salvationist Publishing and Supplies.

LARSSON, John, *Doctrine Without Tears*, Salvationist Publishing and Supplies, 1974.

YUILL, Chick, *Battle Orders – Salvation Army Soldiership*, Campfield Press, 1989.

Salvation Story, Chapter 7, MPG Books, 1998.



1. Fill in the missing words.

Doctrine ___ says, 'We _____ that the _____
 Christ has, by His _____ and _____
 made an _____ for the _____ world, so
 that _____ will may be _____.'

2. Place two of the following Bible references under these statements as a backup for them.

2 Corinthians 5:19

1 Corinthians 15:3

John 3:16

Romans 5:8

1 John 2:2

John 1:29

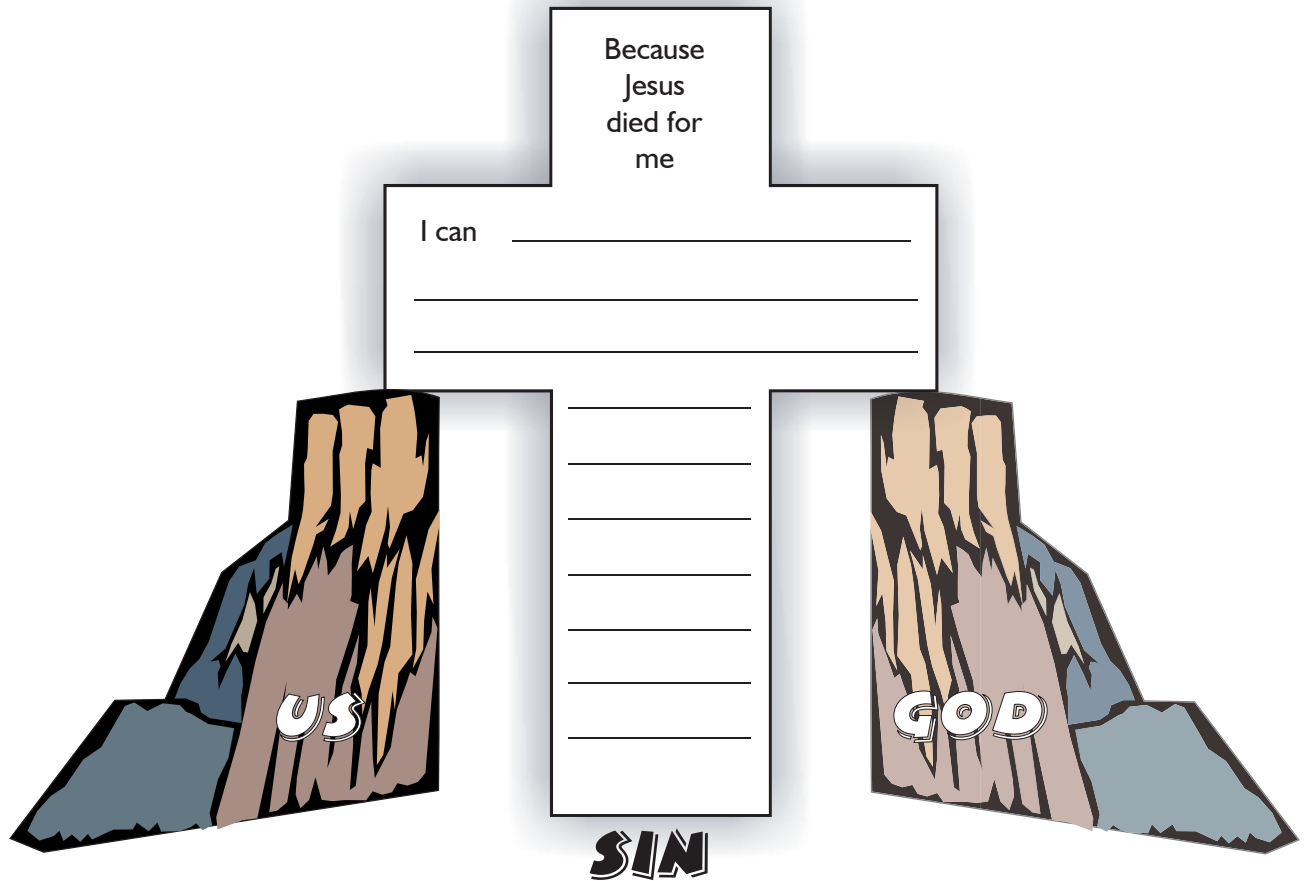
Jesus needed to die for us because we have all _____ and so are _____ from God.

God sent Jesus because He _____ us

Jesus took our _____ He _____ for me and all who will accept His _____

3. List on the cross the difference in our lives because Jesus took our place and has made us one with God.

JESUS BROUGHT US AND GOD TOGETHER



SIN SEPARATES US FROM GOD

- HIGHLIGHTS**
- Sin separates us from God.
 - Jesus Christ came to the world because God loves us and wants to have us back 'at-one' with Him again.
 - Jesus therefore took our place.
 - Because Jesus makes me 'at-one' with God I can boldly approach Him as my Father.



1. Doctrine 6 says: We believe that _____

2. Bible passages that support this are:
 (Put these verses with the right statement: John 3:16; 1 John 2:2; 2 Corinthians 5:19;
 1 Corinthians 15:3; John 1:29; Romans 5:8.)

The reason why God sent Jesus.
 He _____ us.

Why Jesus needed to come.
 _____ separated us from God.

Jesus took our place
 (He was the Substitution)

After putting the references under the statements, choose and write out the key words from one verse under the reference.

3 How do we benefit from Jesus' atonement?

Ephesians 1:7
2 Corinthians 5:15

2 Corinthians 5:19
John 3:16

Hebrews 2:14
Ephesians 2:18

List your ideas then write beside them a Bible reference that backs them up.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Our love does not earn forgiveness it follows it.

John the Baptist was the first to call Jesus 'the Lamb of God'.

4 With your group work out a role play that would be suitable to present on Youth Discipleship Recognition Sunday based on the meaning of atonement. See that separation, love and substitution are part of it.



In Old Testament times an animal was accepted as the substitute for a person's death.

Early Christians were in the habit of meeting in the early hours – before it was light.

SESSION 20

CAREERING AHEAD

FROM THE BIBLE

2 Thessalonians 3:6 - 13 and Ephesians 6:5 - 8 are the two key passages for the main teaching points.

✓ CHECKLIST

Decide which Getting Started activity you will use and prepare material suggested.

Have ready a chart/overhead transparency, paper, pens and pencils for Going Deeper 3.

The work sheets are also needed during the session.

Choose either Going Deeper 1 or 2 and then proceed to 3 and 4. If you have decided to have guest speakers join your group, give them time to prepare with clear directions for what you want.

AIM

To show the young people that God has given us principles to apply in the choosing of, and then working at, our life's vocation.

OBJECTIVES

As a result of this session the young people should be able to:

- ❖ understand the scriptural basis for work;
- ❖ consider their future careers or jobs in a spiritual context as part of God's plan for their life;
- ❖ examine the problems associated with choosing a career;
- ❖ summarise the qualities of a Christian employee;
- ❖ seek God's direction for their lives in a meaningful way.

INSIGHTS FOR THE LEADER

Carefully look at each Bible reference in context to grasp the principles concerning work and the personal qualities expected of workers.

Exodus 35:30 - 36:2

God gives work skills to man who then has the ability to pass them on to others.

Ecclesiastes 10:18

A warning about the consequences of laziness.

Acts 18:1 - 3

St. Paul (although a scholar) worked as a tentmaker, supporting himself as he preached.

2 Thessalonians 3:6 - 13

Paul rebuked some Christians in Thessalonica who had given up work and spent their days in idleness awaiting the second coming of Jesus. Paul reminded them of the example he set in working to support himself. Refusing to work means no meals was Paul's advice.

Ephesians 6:5 - 8

(More than 50% of the population were slaves at the time this was written.) Paul's advice to workers – loyalty, conscientiousness and reliability. Do your daily work as if you are doing it for Christ himself.

2 Timothy 2:15

Paul's advice to Timothy that he should be 'a worker who doesn't need to be ashamed' of his work.

Care should be taken to ensure that the notion of work, job, vocation or career is viewed in the light of God's concern for the whole person (body, mind and spirit). Every aspect of human life must be considered as part of God's commands and revealed will. If God is Lord of all, every aspect of life is important to him including work, leisure, relationships, mission etc.

At the same time be very sensitive to the employment opportunities (or lack of them!) in your particular area.

Keep in mind these possible situations:

- The rate of unemployment in your area.
- There are a lot of people in jobs that they hate and they can do nothing about it. It's 'that or nothing.' Having work is the most important issue.
- In small country towns the young people may know young people on the dole – they can't get a job and their parents won't let them leave home.

Research shows that many young people after about five years may choose to work in another area from the one they were trained for. So a job change is not unusual.

There could be many young people who will have to take jobs that are not the 'ultimate', but are all that are available. For them any job is better than no job at all. They must be encouraged to use the opportunities in that job to witness, by the conscientious way they fulfil the tasks given to them, as well as by speaking.

For further reading:

MACDONALD, Alan and CAMPOLO, Tony, *Frameworks: The Career Starter Guide*, Inter Varsity Press.

HUDSON, Christopher et al, *Career Clues For The Clueless*.

CLARK, Martin E., *Choosing Your Career*.

PAVLIK/POTTER, *Finding The Career That Fits You*.

GETTING STARTED

(Select one of the following)

1. **Questionnaire – In choosing**

Hand out work sheets for the activity 'In Choosing'. (Activity 1 on both sheets.) Allow time for each young person to complete this alone. Then discuss the views of young people as a group. 'Who rated this as 10?' 'Why?' 'Who disagrees?' 'Why?'

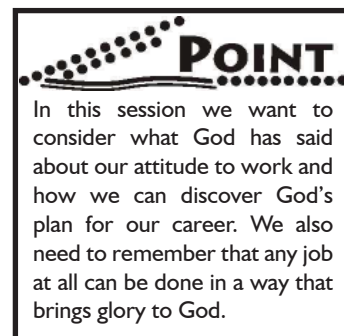
After a short time of discussion try to arrive at some generalisations. Be careful to keep this starter within a time limit.

Or

2. **Discussion**

Show young people the following and have them highlight a job that appeals to them.

- a careers booklet (available from WINZ, schools, library or management, Employment Plus;
- classified job pages from local newspapers;
- job careers posters (including Salvation Army publications about candidates, officership and other full time ministry options such as



youth pastors, school chaplains, camp workers and so on).

Or

Ask seniors to respond by completing the chosen career section of the work sheet (activity 3).

Discuss

- What do you hope to do (or are already doing) when you finish school?
- Why did you choose this job/career? Give reasons.
- Check each young person's response and arrive at some generalisations for the choices made (special aptitudes, personal interests, local opportunities etc.).

GOING DEEPER

1. Discuss: Are all jobs needed?

- Ask the young people to list half a dozen jobs/careers on a large sheet of paper, e.g., teacher, mechanic, nurse, butcher, IT professional, pilot, etc.
- Ask a young person to cross one out (say 'teacher'). Discuss for a few moments the ramifications for our present society if that occupation was not filled.
- Continue down the list allowing brief discussion after each deletion.

Do you consider one of these jobs more necessary than another? How can each of these jobs be used to serve God and bring glory to His name?

2. Guest speakers

Prearrange for several people with different jobs to talk for a few minutes on either of these topics. (Make sure that they know how long you want them to speak AND that they keep to this.)

'Why God called me to be a _____' or 'How God uses me in my daily work'.

3. Bible search

2 Thessalonians 3:6 - 13; Ephesians 6:5 - 8; Acts 18:1 - 3; 2 Timothy 2:15; Ecclesiastes 10:18.

- Ask each young person to read the passage/s a few times to gain understanding.
- Have each young person compose a brief statement summarising Collate all of the statements on a chart to form a summary of the Bible's perspective on 'Our Daily Work'.
- Consider whether these verses are applicable when so many people are unemployed.
- How can unemployed people fill in their time for God's glory?

4. What if . . . ?

Focus: Is God interested enough in me to have chosen a work for me to do?

Consider Exodus 35:30 - 36:2. What skills did God give Bezalel?

What were he and Oholiab to do with these skills?

Why do you think God expected them to do this?

Question: Has God given you a special skill?

Do you feel that you could work in a particular field if you were given the chance?

What can you do to make such a job a more definite possibility?

(Brainstorm and list the young people's ideas.) e.g.,

- Learn the importance of presenting myself well.
- Choose the right subjects at school.
- Study conscientiously to get good marks.
- Try to do some work experience in this field of work.
- Be courteous and willing to tackle any task when doing work experience.

Focus: Suppose you received a large inheritance and didn't need to work to survive.

Question: Would you be assured of happiness and contentment?

Would you look for avenues of service that you could take up?

Would you feel that you ought to set up a business to help others?

Focus: Many of the jobs in our society are inter-dependable. When one group of workers cease to work, they affect many other people.

Question: Consider any one area of work and make a list of how many other jobs/people would be affected if they refused to work.

e.g., electricity workers:

- Restaurants and fresh food stores would lose food.
- Security would be badly affected.
- Hospitals operating theatres could not function.
- Computer dependent work would cease.
- No heating/cooling for the frail.

Focus: If every Christian worker did his work for the glory of God, would there be any need for a supervisor or boss to check that he was working? (Re-read Ephesians 6:5 - 8.)

Question: How can the job/career you might choose become an offering to God?

Are there any special obligations that the Christian must accept in his/her job/workplace?

Focus: What if I have to leave school because of some unexpected circumstance and cannot continue studies to gain the qualifications I need for the job I so much want to do?

What if my school marks are not good enough to go on with further studies?

Question: What avenues are open to me in such circumstances?

TAKING IT HOME

Choosing the right job/career is one of life's most important decisions. Apart from earning a living, it can represent service to others and a place to witness for God. Therefore the needs of others, quality of goods and services produced and our personal relationship with God are key elements of daily work. In any occupation, the way I carry out my work can bring honour or dishonour to God's name.

Ask the young people to join in a prayer that God will guide them in the subjects they choose to do at high school or university so that they will be fitted to follow through His plan for their life's work.

FOLLOW-THRU

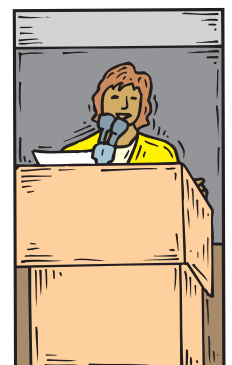
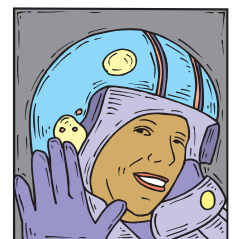
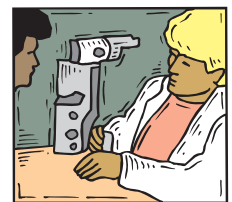
Encourage the young people to complete a challenge from the Training for Leadership segment. Helping the Junior Soldier Sergeant or completing some training in youth or children's work or use your talents could be completed to extend their skills.

Careering Ahead

1.

On a scale of 1 - 10 rate how important you feel these items are in choosing a job or career.
(1 = not important; 10 = very important).

- a. A good boss _____
- b. Pleasant work environment _____
- c. Good pay _____
- d. Plenty of opportunities _____
- e. A feeling of usefulness _____
- f. Good fringe benefits (holidays, pension, sick leave) _____
- g. Friendly workmates _____
- h. Easy work _____
- i. Interesting and challenging work _____
- j. Plenty of independence _____
- k. Regular weekend work _____



2.

My Daily Work

Why I want to work (Give reasons)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

As a Christian worker I should be _____
_____ and _____ (Ephesians 6:5 - 8)

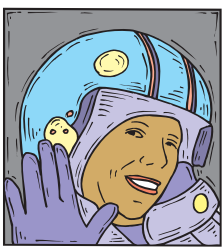
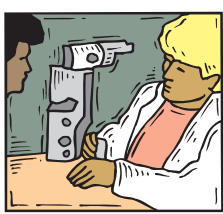
I would like to be a _____
(main occupation)

because _____
(reason for choice)

To become a _____ I will need to _____

3.

				C					
				A					
				R					
				E					
				E					
				R					
				S					



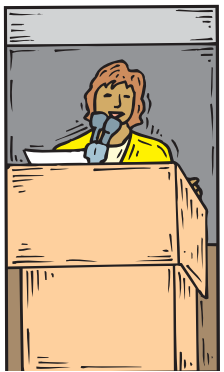
1. A meaty profession -----
2. Sometimes called 'sir' or 'miss' -----
3. Helps the sick -----
4. 'Hello, can I help you ... I'll put you through right now.'

5. Sorts out legal problems -----
6. For this you need a truck, a bus, a car etc. -----
7. One who works for God in a Church -----



4.

Write out 2 Timothy 2:15.

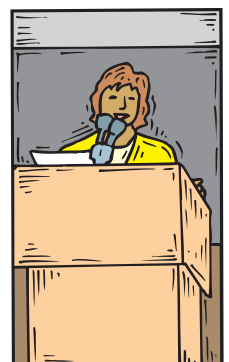
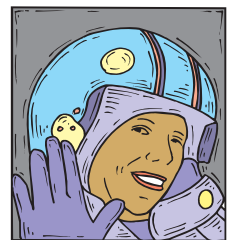
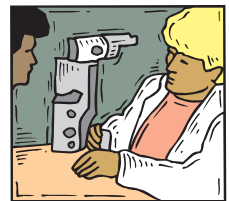
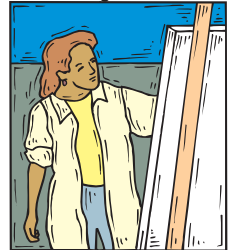


Careering Ahead

1.

On a scale of 1 - 10 rate how important you feel these items are in choosing a job or career. (1 = not important; 10 = very important).

- a. A good boss _____
- b. Pleasant work environment _____
- c. Good pay _____
- d. Plenty of opportunities _____
- e. A feeling of usefulness _____
- f. Good fringe benefits (holidays, pension, sick leave) _____
- g. Friendly workmates _____
- h. Easy work _____
- i. Interesting and challenging work _____
- j. Plenty of independence _____
- k. Regular weekend work _____



Luke was a doctor.

Work fascinates me, I can sit and watch it for hours.

2.

DO YOU AGREE?

Choosing the right job/career is one of life's most important decisions. For Christians a job can have special significance. Apart from earning a living, it can represent service to others and to the glory of God. Therefore the needs of others, quality of goods and services produced and our personal relationship with God are key elements of daily work.

Write the verses from 2 Timothy 2:15 or Ephesians 6:5 - 8 which tell us this!

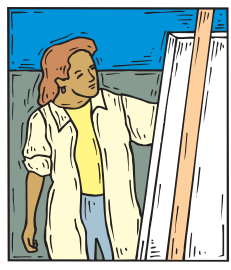
Paul worked as a tentmaker to support himself when he was on missionary journeys.

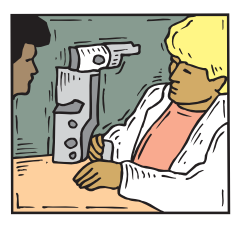
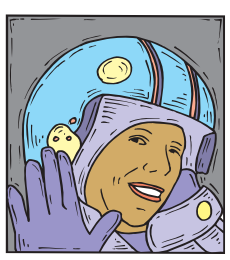
Jesus was a carpenter.

3.

Complete a paragraph using the following points:

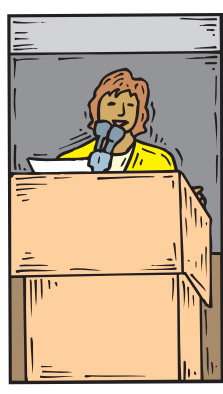
- a. My chosen job or career.
- b. The preparation I am making or need to make for it.
- c. Spiritual considerations I need to be aware of in my chosen job/career.
- d. Specific problems / dangers I need to be aware of in my chosen job / career.
- e. How I will be able to serve God and others in this job.





4.

What qualities does Ephesians 6:5 - 8 say a worker should possess?



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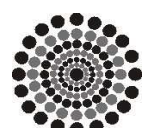
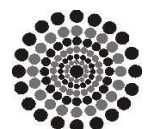
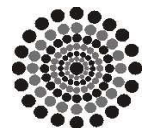
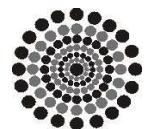
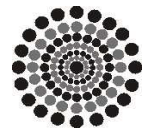
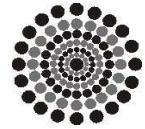
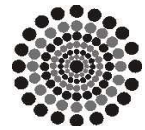
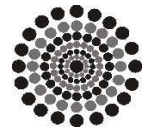
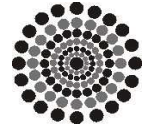
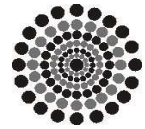
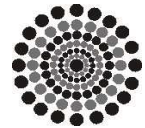
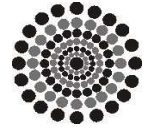
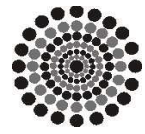
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A SIMPLIFIED FORM OF THE DOCTRINES OF THE SALVATION ARMY

We believe that

1. God helped good men to speak and write what is in the Bible, so that from it we may learn the way God means us to live.
2. There is only one God, and He is altogether perfect in every way. He is the Creator, Preserver and Governor of all things. We should not worship anything or anyone else.
3. God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son and the Holy Spirit are one God.
4. Jesus is both truly God and truly human: He has both God's nature and our nature.
5. Our first parents, by their disobedience, lost their sense of God's favour, and came under the power of sin; and because of this we are all inclined to do wrong.
6. On the Cross Jesus suffered and died for the sins of everyone, so that whoever wants to may be saved.
7. To be saved we must be truly sorry for doing wrong and trust in Jesus, then the Holy Spirit will make us new people.
8. Salvation is a free gift from God. It is received when we believe in Jesus; and when we are saved we know it.
9. To keep good we must trust in Jesus to help us, and we must go on doing as He wants us to do.
10. Saved people are given the chance to be used by God to help Him. When they have given themselves to Him fully, they can be given power to serve Him, and be kept from sinning.
11. When our bodies die we ourselves go on living in a new and different way. At the end of time Jesus will judge all people. Those who have chosen Him to be their Saviour will be happy to live with Him as their King, forever. Those who have not done so will always be unhappy because they chose what separates them from all that is good and lovely.

My Discipleship Record

(To be sent to Divisional Headquarters by the 10th of the following month)

Month: _____
Name: _____
Corps: _____
Form/Age: _____
Date received by Tribe Leader _____

What's the most important thing you have learned this month, and how will this be applied to your life? _____

TRIBE

Tribe Leader's Comments:

Attendance: Week

1

2

3

4

Divisional Youth Secretary/Officer's Comments:
