

Seeking God

Goal: Help teen see God as sought them & that they need to seek after a *RELATIONSHIP* with God

- How would you describe your closest friendships? What qualities does it have?
- Would you say those same qualities are in your relationship with God? What is missing?
- Do you view a relationship with God as an actual 2 way relationship?

Acts 17:24-28

- Does God need you? (No) How does that make you feel?
- How much energy has he put into your life? What does that show you? (how much God loves and wants a relationship with you)
- We are the ones who are supposed to reach out to God. Are you waiting for God to reach out to you?
- Is God guaranteed that you will reach out to him & love him?
- 1 John 4:19 our love is a response to God's love for us)

Matt 7:7-8

- Does finding & having a relationship with God take work/action?
- Whose responsibility is your relationship with God? Who is supposed to go after it? (theirs, not your's, parent's, or teen ministry's)
- How do you ask, seek, knock? (read, pray, ask) Are you doing those?

Jer 29:11-13

- How does it make you feel to know God has good plans for your life?
- Does it make you want to do anything seeing that God has planned out your life and has great plans for you?
- What kind of effort does God expect from you if you're going to seek him? Does he deserve it?
- Have you been seeking him with all your heart? Do you feel more compelled now?

Conclusion: What did you learn about God? What do you want to do now?

HW: Go back through our study and create your own notes & thoughts. Read your bible & pray every day to seek after knowing who God is. Take notes on what you learn about God.

The Word

Goal: Understand the role and importance of scripture, to see the scriptures as *God* speaking to them (vs. book) and the usefulness of the bible

- How would you describe your closest friendships? What qualities does it have?
- Would you say those same qualities are in your relationship with God? What is missing?
- Do you view a relationship with God as an actual 2 way relationship?

2 Tim 3:14-17

- All scripture is from the mouth of God. Scriptures though recorded by men, we're inspired by God (2 Pt 1:20-21)
- Is it hard for you to read the word as though God is speaking to you directly? Vs just as a book or words on a page?

2 Tim 4:2-4

- What is this verse saying about how people respond to the word?
- Why do people turn away?
- Are you ever tempted to listen to some verses but forget others?

Heb 4:12-13

- The word is sharp. Sometimes it hurts us to read (ex: surgery)
- Do you see the work active & living in your life?
- How does it make you feel to hear that we can't hide things from God? He judges our thoughts, attitudes, everything uncovered, laid bare

1 Tim 4:15-16

- Doctrine = teachings, beliefs. Out doctrine = bible
- How can you make sure that your life & doctrine match-up? (diligent devoted bible study (Acts 17:11))
- Can you have one without the other? (if not hypocrite, don't know what you believe or are living by) (ex: airplane wings)

John 12:48-50

- What if you had the answers to a test given to you by your teacher. Would you study them?
- Jesus is giving us the answers! He promises a day will come when we will be judged. Our lives will be judged against the bible. Study it!

Conclusion: Why is the bible & studying it important for your life? (get to know God, works in our lives, we will be judged by it, we must live by it)

HW: Read the bible every day this week. Write >1pg a conclusion on this study

Discipleship: What is a disciple

Goal: Understand what the term "disciple" means & where it comes from.

- What is a disciple? What are they supposed to do?
- What is the difference between a Christian and a disciple?

Acts 11:26

- In the bible, disciple = Christian
- Disciple (200x in NT) vs. Christian (3x in NT)
- Def of Disciple: a follower (you can be a follower of anything)
- We are Disciples of Jesus

Mark 1: 16-20

- Why we're these men named Jesus' disciples? (they followed him)
- This is why we are called disciples, we follow Jesus just like them
- You too are being called to follow Jesus if you want to be a disciple
- How did these men respond to Jesus calling? (without delay, left)
- Have you responded in such a way? Why/why not?

1 John 2:3-6

- How can we "walk as Jesus did"?
- 1) Learn about him! Read gospels to get to know Jesus and help him come to life to you so that you can imitate him and follow his example
- 2) Obey the word! What does this scripture say about obeying scripture?
- If we claim to love God we must obey his word.
- Do you see why your personal bible study is so important for being a Christian/disciple?

Conclusion: What does the bible say being a Christian/disciple really is? What does that mean for you if you want to be a disciple/how can you do that?

HW: Start reading through John to learn and imitate Jesus (either 1 section or 1 chapter per day depending on age & ability.) Keep a journal of what you learn about Jesus. Every day pick one thing every day out of what you read a try to work on that that day. Goals per day may be helpful.

Discipleship: Cost of Being a Disciple

Goal: Understand that the bible says that there is sacrifice that comes along with being a disciple.

- What is a disciple? What are they supposed to do?
- What is the difference between a Christian and a disciple?

Acts 11:26

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- If we claim to love God we must obey his word.
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Sin I: What is Sin

**those teen studying slower, recommend doing intro to sin fist, but not required*

Goal: Understand what the bible identifies as sin. Do not worry if this is a more informational study, but it should start to resonate that they are sinful.

Heb 4:12-13

- Allowing the word to uncover sin in our hearts can be painful.

***Illustration:** Someone has cancer. They need to undergo surgery to remove the tumor. Is it worth dealing with the pain if it means they will live? With sin we have to sometimes deal with the pain knowing that sin will also kill*

- Even with sin in our hearts, God can see them. We will have to own up
- Ask for some examples of sins: (notice if most are actions/visible)

Mark 7:20-23

- We often think of actions when we think of sin, but where is sin really?
- Sin comes from our heart! Though action not their, sin still present

***Illustration:** A tree has roots that are underground. The tree grows up to what we can see from the roots under the surface. The action of sin (murder) grows from the root of sin that is in our hearts (anger/hatred). To get rid of the tree you must take out the roots too. Same with sin.*

- Is it hard to think of sins that are in your heart are serious sin?
- Check for understanding. Feel free to go through together if they may be embarrassed to say they don't know (*def. of sins on following pg)

2 Tim 3:1-5 (may be more relatable)

- These are example of how sin in our hearts can manifest into action. These actions can point to sin in our hearts.
- Do you see any of these things in your life? How does it feel to see it pointed out?

Gal 5:19-21

- What happens if we live in sin? (not go to heaven or be in kingdom)
- Check for understanding. Feel free to go through together
- "and the like" all the bases are covered. You may have something similar to a sin in this verse and it is covered by and the like

James 4:17= sin of omission is the sin of not doing something you should

Conclusion: Do you understand what sin is? And what the consequences of sin are? Did this study help you to see the sin in your life? How did that make you feel?

HW: Go back through these scriptures of sins. When you come across one you see in your life now or in your past, add it to a list along with a brief example or explanation of how that is/has been in your life. Remember to look at your heart!

Simple Sin Definitions:

Immorality: violating accepted principles of right and wrong

Sexual immorality: broader term of sexual acts

Adultery: sex b/w a married person and someone other than his or her lawful spouse (**Matt 5:28** = lust = adultery)

Greed: a selfish and excessive desire for more of something

Malice: desire for injury, harm, or suffering to come to another

Deceit: concealment or distortion of the truth for the purpose of misleading

Lewdness: Behavior that is deemed morally impure or unacceptable in a sexual sense; Obscene; indecent; immodest

Envy: painful or resentful desire to possess another's advantage

Slander: words falsely spoken that damage the reputation of another

Arrogance: overbearing pride; superiority; "always right"; misplaced importance

Folly: lack of good sense or foresight; acting stupidly or rashly; foolishness

Impurity: Any sin that makes us unholy

Debauchery: Wild living, partying

Idolatry: Blind or excessive devotion to something

Witchcraft: Use of sorcery or magic; communication with the devil

Hatred: intense dislike or extreme aversion or hostility

Discord: lack of agreement or harmony; active quarreling or conflict

Jealousy: hostile toward a rival or one believed to enjoy an advantage

Fits of rage: fury; intense, violent and uncontrolled anger; violent action

Selfish ambition: self-seeking; looking out for own interests above others

Dissensions: strong disagreement; a contention or quarrel; discord

Factions: group within a group; clique

Drunkenness: state resulting from excessive consumption of alcohol

Orgies: unrestrained indulgence, especially sexual activity (group sex)

Sin II: Light & Darkness

Goal: To see the consequences of sin and impact on relationship with God; that there is only being in light or dark there is no gray. To see NEED for grace

1 Peter 2:9-10

- What two groups of people do we find here? What describes and identifies each group?
- Together come up with this (you will build on it thru study)

People in Light: a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, have RECEIVED MERCY

-----leave 1/3 page space on page between descriptions-----

People in Darkness: not a people of God, have NOT received mercy

- Make sure they see this from the scripture and agree
- Where do you think you are? Do you really think that? (*know vs feel*)
- What do you think the difference between the people in light vs dark?

Rom 3:22-24

- The difference between those in light vs. dark is not sin. ALL have sinned. Those in light and the dark both have sinned
- The difference is who has received mercy (look back at diagram)

- That mercy comes through Jesus (vs 24) (redeemed = buy back)
- Where do you think “good people” are? Light or dark? (**Mt 19:16-17**)
- It is not whether we are good, or sinless. It is about mercy. Only people in the light have received mercy.
- Do you feel safe in your goodness?

Ish 59:1-2

- What do your sins do? (separate you from God)
- If we are in the darkness, what separates us from God? (Sin)

Insert separation between 2 groups:

God & the People in Light: a chosen people, a royal Received Mercy



People in Darkness: not a people of God, have NOT received mercy

- Where do you think you stand? Have you been forgiven of your sins which comes through Jesus?
- It is not that God can not save us (vs. 1) but God is Holy and can have nothing to do with sin. If we have not received purified from our sins (baptism into Christ), God must separate himself from us b/c of our sin

Luke 15:11-24

- Who do you think this story is about? (you & God) How?
- When we sin, we choose to leave God like the son left the father
- God is gracious and loving and will rejoice when we come back to him.
- God wants to show us compassion and bring us into the light, but we must do it his way. We can not live in sin and be in the light
- How does seeing this side of God make you feel?

Conclusion: God’s law about the consequences of sin are clear. Where do you think you are, in light or dark? How are you feeling? Do you see the NEED for God’s grace? Do you NEED to be saved and shown mercy?

HW: It is important to identify the sins that separate us and God. Like a wall, our sins separate us and God. Go back through your notes on these 2 sin studies and start to identify the sin that is separating you and God. Sin in the past and present. You do not have to say every single time you lied, but put lying in general down and I can just ask about it. If there are big sins that burden your heart we would like you to be open about those too. Also put any sin that is currently in your life.

Confession

Goal: To understand why they need to confess their sins; provide a time to do so.

TIPS:

- Do not promise that you will not repeat anything. Make sure that you create a safe place. Ensure them that if anything comes out that you feel you need advice on that you will let them know and that will only happen if that is necessary.
- PRAY! Make sure you go into this time prepared and prayerful.
- Be a good listener. This is not a time to condemn them, but make sure that you are not making light of their sin either. Be loving and gentle.
- Do not be afraid to ask questions about specifics or frequency. Especially if you do not feel you are getting the whole story.
- If you are overwhelmed or surprised by anything, first off do not act like it. Secondly, do not be afraid to come back with a response after getting some advice.

1 John 1:8-10

- It is important that we "claim" our sin and acknowledge it
- We must confess to allow God to heal & purify us
- Confession is a purifying process. It pours out the filth and allows God to clean out our heart.

Ps 32:3-5

- We physically face the consequences when we hid things
- Have you ever done something wrong, hid it, and felt sick?
- God will forgive you. No matter what (**Rom 8:38**)

Jer 17:9

- We can deceive ourselves. It is important to acknowledge the truth out loud, not matter how ugly, do we do not deceive ourselves.

James 5:15-16

- We are supposed to confess our sin to each other. Why?
- So we can pray for each other. God gives us others to help
- So you can be healed. Confession is important for healing.
- Do you want to be healed from your sin? Do you think you can do that by keeping it in? The first step is getting it out.

Conclusion: How do you feel?

HW: Take time to confess your sins to God in prayer this week. This may be difficult, but it is important. Ask reverently for forgiveness, healing, and help repenting. Have them start to come up with their plan of repentance & changing these sins.

Repentance

Goal: Gain understanding of biblical repentance; to see importance of repentance with salvation, come up with a plan for repentance.

- What is repentance? What would it look like?
- Repentance: To turn from sin (do a 180 deg turn; do opposite)

Luke 13:2-5

- How important is repentance? (without it we can't make it to heaven)
- Are there worse sinners? (No, we all must repent)

Acts 26:9-16

- Explain what is going on. (Saul/Paul killed disciples, Jesus appeared to him on the road, and Paul became a disciple)

- How is Paul a good example of someone who repented?

Acts 26:17-20

- What was Paul's mission/message? (repentance)
- Open their eyes & turn them (=repent) from darkness to light.
- Why do we need to repent? (for forgiveness of sins)
- If you do not repent, can you be forgiven of your sin?
- Should we see anything when we repent? (YES! Demonstrate your repentance by your deeds) Is there visible repentance in your life?

2 Cor 7:8-11

- Our sins are supposed to make us feel sorrow/sorry. But is there good sorry and bad sorry? (Godly sorrow & worldly sorrow)
- **Worldly Sorrow:** feeling bad about being caught or having to face consequences; feeling bad because makes you look bad, etc
- **Godly sorrow:** it is about God, not about you. Feeling sorrow about breaking God's law and being disobedient. Realizing you did something wrong and wanting to change it.
- What does Godly sorrow produce? (repentance) Worldly sorrow?
- How can you test if you have godly sorrow? (vs 11)
- Do you think you have Godly or worldly sorrow about your sin?
- If we are going to repent, we must have Godly sorrow.

Go over their plan of repentance together. Make sure they understand what they need to repent of and how to repent. Make sure they understand repentance and that perfection is not the goal.

Conclusion: **Acts 3:19** Why do you need to repent? Although change is hard and takes work, God promises us times of refreshing will come. Is it worth it to you?

HW: Talk to others (3 dif types) to see if they see repentance & how you need to

Cross I: Grace through the Cross

Goal: To understand why Jesus had to go to the cross for them; getting a connection to the cross before understanding the facts of the cross.

Rom 5:6-8

- Who did Jesus die for? Why did he die?
- What was God trying to show us in Jesus' death?
- Our sin makes us powerless, Jesus was the only way

Rom 5:9-11

- What is Jesus saving us from? (God's wrath)
- In the darkness, we are enemies of God. We can only either be for God or against God.
- * **Reconcile:** to restore friendship or harmony
- * **Justified:** to prove or show to be just, right, or reasonable
- Jesus gives us the opportunity to be justified & reconciled with God. Without Jesus we would not have a choice to not face God's wrath for our sin.

1 Peter 2:21-25

- What is this scripture saying about the cross?
- Jesus took our sins with him on the cross.
- We must "die" (stop) to our sin and live for God. Only through the cross can we be healed.

Heb 9:24-28

- Jesus appears before God on our behalf (vs. 24) He is why we can come to God.
- Jesus sacrificed himself for our sin so we wouldn't have to face judgment after we die. Jesus sacrificed himself for you.
- Who will Jesus bring salvation to?

Conclusion: Why did Jesus go to the cross? How does it make you feel to know someone would die that for you? What opportunities does the cross provide you? What do you want to do?

HW: Rewrite your own notes on why Jesus went to the cross and what the cross provides. Write a short essay/conclusion with your thoughts about this study.

Cross II: Facing the Cross

Goal: To understand what Jesus endured by going to the cross. To see that this was not an easy task and to show how much God & Jesus love us by doing this.

* Use your digression which would be best for your teen:

Longer study: Matt 26:36-27:55 (you do not have to read all sections)

Shorter study: Mark 15:16-39

Matt 26:36-46

- How is Jesus feel about going to the cross?
- Was there emotional pain & stress he faced?
- Jesus' submission to God's will (we must imitate as disciples)
- Jesus dreaded the cross, but he did it because of his love for you

Matt 26:47-56 Jesus faced the trial alone; this was a slow process. Anticipation, trial, travel, torture, to death cross

Matt 26:57-68 Jesus was abused, beaten, mocked.

Matt 26:69-75 His friends denied they knew him.

- Have you ever denied Jesus? Denied you were a Christian, done wrong because you expected to receive grace? When we sin, we deny the cross. We say, "I don't know him" and allow Jesus to pay.
- How do you think Jesus felt without his friends?

Matt 27:1-10 Jesus was sold by a friend

Matt 27:11-26

- Who would you be in this setting? Who was the one to blame for Jesus' death? (all of them)
- We are like Barabbas, undeservingly set free and a innocent man dies instead of us.

Matt 27:27-55

Read Medical Account

- How are you feeling? What do you think about what Jesus did for you?
- Share about your own response to the Cross

Acts 2:22-38

- How did the people respond when they heard who Jesus was, did for them, and why?
- How should you respond to the message of the cross? (in action)

Conclusion: What is your response to the cross? How are you feeling? Our response should be to die to sin and live for righteousness.

Baptism

Goal: Understand what baptism is, why we need to be baptized, and that baptism's role in salvation.

Acts 2:36-41

- What do we see in these people before they got baptized?
 - o Hear the word (vs. 22-36)
 - o Understand the message of Jesus and who he was (vs. 22-36)
 - o Cut to the heart (vs. 37)
 - o Repented (vs. 38)
 - o Baptism (vs. 38)
- Why did Peter say they should be baptized? (for forgiveness of sins)
- Keep this process in mind as you look at other scriptures

Acts 22:3-16 (+Acts 9:9)

- What was Paul's conversion story?
- Did he follow a similar process as Acts 2?
- Where do you feel like you are?

Rom 6:3-4

- Jesus died paying the price for our sins. When we are baptized, we get to take part of that, participating in Jesus' death for our sins.
- We are buried with him through baptism (under the water = the tomb)
- We also are raised to a new life when we come out of the water just as God raised Jesus from the dead (+Col 2:11-12).

1 Peter 3:20-22

- Noah was saved through the water, that water symbolized baptism
- Our baptism: "it saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ"
- Do you need to be baptized to be saved? (YES!)
- It is an appeal to God for a clean conscience from our sin which can only be given by God.

Eph 4:4-5

- Because we are all taking part in the same crucifixion, we are all baptized in the same baptism. There is ONE baptism
- As the body/the church we are all joined through the same baptism, with the same father, same body, and same spirit

Conclusion: Do you understand what baptism is and why it is important? Do you need to be baptized to be saved? Do you think you need to be baptized? Do you want to be baptized? Do you feel ready to be baptized? Why/why not?

The Church

Goal: See the biblical view of the church, it's importance, structure, and roles.

- Do you think that church is important? Why?

Eph 2:19-22

- How does this scripture describe the church? Does it place importance on the church? How? ("joined together")
- When we are baptized, we become members of God's family

Illustration: we are like the bricks of a house. We are all joined together with Jesus as the foundation/cornerstone that we are built upon and that houses God!

Rom 12:1-8

- Is it hard for you to sacrifice for the church?
- We are supposed to sacrifice for each other (vs. 1-2), not viewing things from the world point of view. This worships God
- How is the church supposed to function?
- If you are a part of the body, and you do not fulfill your role, who suffers? (the church) "each member belongs to all the others"
- What will this mean for you when you become a disciple?

Acts 2:42-27

- What qualities of this church do you see?
 - o **Heb 3:12-14** cared for each other
 - o **Heb 10:23-25** meet together
- How could you follow this example?
- Do you think this is the kind of church Jesus envisioned?

Conclusion: What did you learn about what the bible teaches about the church? How does God view his church? How will this influence your life? Is it important to you?

Lordship

Goal: Understand the commitment of making "Jesus Lord" and what that will mean for them personally.

- What does Lord mean?
- Lord: *a person who has authority, control, or power over others; a master, chief, or ruler*
- What do you think it would mean to make Jesus Lord of your life? (you are giving your life over to Jesus' control and direction)

Acts 2:36 + 2 Peter 3:18

- God made Jesus both Lord (king/ruler) and Christ (savior). He is both or nothing. You can not have Jesus as your savior but not your king
- In the NT some form of our Lord Jesus Christ = 65+ times, the first century church understood Jesus was Lord of their lives
- How do you feel about giving up that control? Your life not being your own anymore? Are you willing to make Jesus Lord?

Luke 9:23 = Denying yourself and following Jesus is making him Lord

Luke 14:33 = Unless you are willing to give up everything

- Making Jesus Lord is the heart of being a disciple and his follower
- Is there anything you don't feel like you would be willing to make Jesus Lord of? Anything you want to keep for yourself?
- LORD OF... (topics that may need to be discussed in detail)
 - o Conduct (sin & repentance)
 - o Time: church, bible study, evangelism, (Heb 10:25, Matt 6:33)
 - o The Church: body of believers who obey & follow scriptures
 - o Relationships: friends, dating, marriage, family, etc not and in future (1 Cor 7:39, 2 Cor 6:14-18. 1 cor 15:33, Matt 10:37)

- Career & school
- Persecution
- Talents & gifts
- Money

Phil 2:9-11

- This is God's intent for us. To make Jesus Lord
- But Jesus promised us that he came to give us life to the full **John 10:10** and that comes through making him Lord.

Conclusion: Do you have anything you feel like you are holding back or afraid of letting go? What will making Jesus Lord look like in your life?

HW: Write a 1pg essay on what making Jesus Lord means in your life.

Counting the Cost

Goal: Understand if they are ready to make this commitment to follow Jesus. Ensure they understand the cost of following and are ready.

**Get lots of advice prior to this session about your teen and involve leadership. Be prepared with what you think the individuals biggest "costs" will be for discussion*

- Why do you want to become a Christian (love for God & cross key)
- What does it mean to be a disciple? What will that look like in your life daily?
- How do you become a Christian? How are you saved? Who is saved?
- What will it mean to make Jesus Lord of your life? What will that look like?
- What do you think the biggest costs of being a disciple will be for you? Do you feel willing to give those things up?
- What things have you had to give up? Do you understand you will have to continue to repent and crucify your sinful nature and desires apart from God?
- What role will the church/ the body play in your life? How is that important?
- Do you feel prepared to make this decision for the rest of your life though you do not know what will come in your path?
- What motivates you to make this decision? (Grace, no real cost, salvation, love)

Luke 14:25-35

- Is it important to assess the costs of something before you enter into it? How about with your relationship with God?
- Making Jesus Lord & being baptized is a commitment to God.
- Ex: marriage (know who you are marrying before committing to it)
- How does Jesus describe it if we do not finish?

Luke 9:57-62

- These men who had good excuses, how did Jesus feel about their offer to join him later?
- God doesn't want our commitment if we are only going to look back

John 6:60-66

- Does Jesus lessen his expectations just because we feel like it is hard? What about down the line when you feel like it is hard. Will you walk away?

Acts 8:36-38 Do you relate to the Eunuch? When you want to be baptized?