

UNDEFEATED

AND UNCHAINED!

Passion,
Purpose,
Purity,
& Power

UNIT ONE: PASSION
TEACHER'S GUIDE



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AND UNCHAINED!

TEACHER'S GUIDE

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For Parents And Teachers: What you need to know about drugs.

Alcohol

Alcohol slows down vital functions, which results in slurred speech, unsteady movement, and an inability to react quickly. It distorts a person's judgement. If they consume more than the body can handle, they start to feel "stupid" or lose coordination or control.

Alcohol **overdose** can cause inability to feel pain, toxicity causing the body to vomit out the poison, and finally unconsciousness, coma, or death. The reactions depend on how much is consumed and how quickly.

Marijuana

Marijuana joints create severe impact on the user's lungs. Not only does it cause sore throats and chest colds, but gives as much exposure to cancer-causing chemicals as smoking five cigarettes.

Marijuana users have poorer memories and mental ability than non-users. Animals that have been given marijuana by researchers have even suffered structural brain damage. Whereas alcohol contains only one substance (ethanol), marijuana contains more than 400 known chemicals, including the same cancer-causing substances found in tobacco smoke. THC (tetrahydrocannabinol), the main mind-altering ingredient found in marijuana, stays in the body for weeks or even possibly months, and damages the immune system.

Cocaine

Once a person begins to take cocaine, it is almost impossible to stop, because of its physical and mental grip. It stimulates parts of the brain and creates a feeling of euphoria (high). Only higher doses and more frequent use can bring about the same effect after the first use. It can lead to death from respiratory failure, stroke, cerebral hemorrhage, or heart attack. Children of cocaine addicted mothers come into the world as addicts themselves, and many have birth defects and other problems.

Crack

Crack is the most potent form of cocaine, and also the most dangerous. It can be up to twice as strong as regular cocaine. Because addiction can develop even more quickly if it is sniffed rather than snorted, a user can become addicted after the first try. Crack is often sold at such low prices that even teens can buy it, but because the amount needed to support the habit grows so quickly, it does become very expensive.

Crystal Meth

Crystal meth first acts as a stimulant, but then begins to systematically destroy the body. It can lead to memory loss, aggression, psychotic behavior, and heart and brain damage. It is highly addictive. Many get hooked from the first time that they use it. It is one of the most difficult addictions to treat, and leads to death for many.

Inhalants

Inhalants can cause damage to the heart, kidneys, brain, liver, bone marrow, and other organs. They starve the body of oxygen, and force the heart to beat irregularly and more rapidly. Repeated use can lead to muscle wasting, and damage to the lungs and immune system.

Heroin

The buyer of heroin on the street never knows the actual strength of the drug in the packet, so there is always the risk of an overdose. It is highly addictive and withdrawal is extremely painful. The drug quickly breaks down the immune system, and leaves one sickly, thin, and ultimately, dead.

Prescription Painkillers (Oxycodone, Hydrocodone, etc.)

These drugs react on the nervous system in a similar way to heroin. Oxycodone is the most dangerous. It is sold under many trade names: Percodan, Endodan, Roxiprin, Percocet, Roxicet, and OxyContin. They are all very addicting, and the withdrawal can be agonizing.

Ritalin

Ritalin is the common name for methylphenidate. It is classified by the Drug Enforcement Administration as a Schedule II narcotic, the same classification as cocaine, morphine, and amphetamines. Teenagers abuse it for its stimulant effects.

Effects of Ritalin use include: nervousness, insomnia, anorexia, loss of appetite, pulse changes, heart problems, and weight loss. It can also cause hallucinations, suicidal thoughts, and psychotic behavior, including violent behavior.

*The above information has been adapted from material provided by *The Foundation For A Drug-Free World*. You can learn more at www.drugfreeworld.org.

Here are some of the warning signs to look for:*

Physical and health signs of drug abuse

- ☐ Eyes that are bloodshot or pupils that are smaller or larger than normal.
- ☐ Frequent nosebleeds could be related to snorted drugs (meth or cocaine).
- ☐ Changes in appetite or sleep patterns. Sudden weight loss or weight gain.
- ☐ Seizures without a history of epilepsy. ☐ Deterioration in personal grooming or physical appearance.
- ☐ Impaired coordination, injuries/accidents/bruises that they won't or can't tell you about- they don't know how they got hurt.
- ☐ Unusual smells on breath, body, or clothing.
- ☐ Shakes, tremors, incoherent or slurred speech, impaired or unstable coordination.

Behavioral signs of alcohol or drug abuse

- ☐ Skipping class, declining grades, getting in trouble at school.
- ☐ Drop in attendance and performance at work--loss of interest in extracurricular activities, hobbies, sports or exercise--decreased motivation.
- ☐ Complaints from co-workers, supervisors, teachers or classmates.
- ☐ Missing money, valuables, prescription or prescription drugs, borrowing and stealing money.
- ☐ Acting isolated, silent, withdrawn, engaging in secretive or suspicious behaviors.
- ☐ Clashes with family values and beliefs.
- ☐ Preoccupation with alcohol and drug-related lifestyle in music, clothing and posters. ☐ Demanding more privacy, locking doors and avoiding eye contact.
- ☐ Sudden change in relationships, friends, favorite hangouts, and hobbies.
- ☐ Frequently getting into trouble (arguments, fights, accidents, illegal activities).
- ☐ Using incense, perfume, air freshener to hide smell of smoke or drugs.
- ☐ Using eyedrops to mask bloodshot eyes and dilated pupils.

Psychological warning signs of alcohol or drug abuse

- ☐ Unexplained, confusing change in personality and/or attitude.
- ☐ Sudden mood changes, irritability, angry outbursts or laughing at nothing.
- ☐ Periods of unusual hyperactivity or agitation.
- ☐ Lack of motivation; inability to focus, appears lethargic or "spaced out."
- ☐ Appears fearful, withdrawn, anxious, or paranoid, with no apparent reason.

* "Reprinted with permission from the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc. (NCADD) www.ncadd.org."

UNDEFEATED

A Life of Passion, Purpose, Purity, and Power

Introduction

Dear Teacher,

I hope this series of lessons will be a real help to your students. We originally set out to produce a curriculum with the primary intention of keeping young people off drugs. (Of course there are many other destructive activities awaiting them these days, including drinking, sexual involvement, witchcraft, the trap of eating disorders, gang involvement, and so on. These are also addressed in these lessons). However, this is much more than a "Don't do these things" presentation. These lessons are designed, with God's help, to lead each young person into a life of adventure, one that is "undefeated."

Every young person has great potential. For some, that potential has been buried beneath fear, anger, self-hatred, despair, pain, or one of many other factors that have affected their lives. Many are simply surviving; living for the present day, and whatever hope, relief, or satisfaction they can get. Some are simply looking for a place to belong. Simply warning young people about the dangers of drugs isn't enough. They need to know Who God is, how much He loves them, who they are in Him, and their purpose for being on this earth, among other truths.

This curriculum, in itself, is not adequate to keep every kid from going down the destructive path of any of these behaviors. Most importantly, they need a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. There is also the need for involvement from parents, teachers, coaches, pastors, and other role models/mentors to come alongside of them. However, these lessons can be very important tools, and we believe that if each one is presented as intended, the Holy Spirit can use it to help break through the obstacles in the lives of young people, and bring freedom and purpose.

We hope you will pray over each lesson as you prepare to teach it. The teacher is at least as important as the material he or she will be presenting. It is also a good idea to pray that the Holy Spirit will prepare the heart of each student to receive and respond to the teaching. So, pray BEFORE class, pray DURING class, and pray AFTER class. Pray for every child by name. It WILL make a difference.

May God bless you as you lead your group of young people on this adventure.

Tim Hanson

Unit One: Passion

How to Use These Lessons

These lessons are designed to be flexible and simple to use. One of the main goals in this curriculum is to get the students to engage in discussion. As the students come in, tell them to go ahead and answer the true/false questions on their own, and then discuss them as a group. Each question has a suggested answer (in the teacher's manual) to help you get started. There will be other discussion questions in each lesson as well. Talking about their lives and the problems and temptations they face is often an important step in living an overcoming life. You may want to use the "anticipatory participatory" method of discussion. This involves the practice of calling on individual students by name to answer a question (at times). This method keeps the attention of the students, as they never know when it may be their turn to be called upon. (Be gentle and judicious with it, though, as some kids are much more shy; you won't want to put too much pressure on them). Once a discussion about a particular topic starts rolling, you may find that there is seemingly no limit on how much the students want to have input.

This unit is designed to cover thirteen class sessions. You will see that some lessons contain more material, and will need two class sessions for completion. These will be indicated in the lesson titles.

As you will have access to the lessons in digital form as well as the printed version, you will be able to simply click on the links to the videos, if you have access to the internet. You may, rarely, find that the link has expired. (We encourage you to preview the videos before class). We suggest, in that case, that you type in key words on the Youtube search bar, and you will likely find either the same video under another link, or a similar video that you can use.

There is another reason to preview any videos before the actual class time. You may feel that a particular video is too intense for the group you are teaching. In that case, you could simply leave it out, or find another video, with a similar theme, to use in its place. You will see that there is no reference to videos, nor any questions pertaining to them, in the student version. This is intentional, to avoid any confusion, in case you will be teaching this series without access to the internet.

In the back of this Teacher's Guide, you will find thirteen "Partnering with Parents" letters. These can be sent home, one each week (you will need to copy and cut them into individual letters), with the students. They are brief suggestions to help parents deal with issues involving their kids.

Sample Class Session:

Begin the class by opening in prayer. You may want to ask a student to lead this.

Allow the students 3 minutes to answer the True/False questions. Be sure to let them know that they will not be graded on these. Then discuss those questions.

You may or may not choose to use the suggested object lesson, depending upon the age group you are teaching.

Go on to part two of the lesson. (You may decide to use certain sections of the material, and skip others, as time permits. If you go over the material ahead of time, you will gain a better idea of what is most important for your particular group).

Follow the instructions from that point forward.

You may want to establish a system of rewards for your students, based on their age group. This system can be based on attendance, Scripture memorization, and completion of accompanying activities. You may want to include a certificate of completion for each student that fulfills a certain level of requirements during the quarter.

Lesson One: Awesome God

Object Lesson (optional) <http://www.thesource4ym.com/outreach/topic.aspx?id=14>

Main Objectives: The students will come to understand the following truths, and learn how to apply them to their lives:

1. God not only exists, but He is an awesome Being Who created everything.
2. God knows and cares about each of them personally.
3. They have an enemy who hates God and them, and offers destructive "solutions" to their problems.
4. God has provided a way for them to live in victory, and ultimately have a home in heaven.

Lesson Two: Created in His Image

Object Lesson (optional) <http://yourlifeuncommon.blogspot.com/2010/04/jakes-object-lesson.html>

Main Objectives: The students will come to understand the following truths, and learn how to apply them to their lives:

1. God created each of them as special individuals, with a nature like His own.
2. Satan tries to distort their self-image, even to the point of hating themselves at times.

3. God has a special plan for each of their lives, which Satan tries to disrupt/destroy in various ways.
4. There is no problem or temptation too big to overcome with God's help.

Lesson Three: For God so Loved...You

Object Lesson (optional) <http://meaningfulmama.com/day-94-grace-in-jesus-blood-character.html>

Main Objectives: The students will come to understand the following truths, and learn how to apply them to their lives:

1. God loves them so much that He sent Jesus to die in their place, and take the punishment for their sins.
2. Each of them needs to personally ask God's forgiveness, and receive Jesus as their Saviour.
3. Even though God loves them, He still hates their sins, and has provided ways to be free from them.

Lesson Four: YOU... Love Others

Object Lesson (Optional) <http://meaningfulmama.com/day-62-kindness-with-toothpaste-week-9.html>

Main Objectives: The students will come to understand the following truths, and learn how to apply them to their lives:

1. The Bible teaches them to love everyone, not just those who love them.
2. Loving others doesn't mean doing everything others want them to do.
3. Those who offer them drugs or alcohol (or other destructive things) don't love them.
4. With God, they can love even the most unlovable people, even while hating the things they do.

Lessons Five and Six: Prayer: The Greatest Work (Two class sessions)

Main Objectives: The students will come to understand the following truths, and learn how to apply them to their lives:

1. Prayer is the greatest "work" that they can do, and it will help them overcome temptation.
2. It is important that they establish a regular time for prayer, when possible, but they can pray anytime and anywhere they need to.
3. Prayer is more than simply asking God for things; it includes LISTENING to Him as well.
4. It is important to pray with others as well as alone.

Lessons Seven and Eight: Do I Have to Forgive? (Two class sessions)

Object Lesson (Optional) <http://meaningfulmama.com/day-345-forgiveness-and-explosion.html>

Main Objectives: The students will come to understand the following truths, and learn how to apply them to their lives:

1. Jesus taught that if they want to be forgiven, they need to forgive others.
2. They need to forgive even if they don't feel like it, or if the other person doesn't ask for forgiveness.
3. Unforgiveness will usually hurt them more than it will hurt the one who did them wrong.
4. Forgiving someone doesn't always mean that they have to trust the other person.
5. They can be forgiven of ANY sin, if they confess it to God.

Lessons Nine and Ten: What is Courage? (Two class sessions)

Main Objectives: The students will come to understand the following truths, and learn how to apply them to their lives:

1. Having courage doesn't mean they will never FEEL afraid, but will do the right thing even when they feel fearful.
2. Drugs or alcohol won't give them true courage, but rather delusion and stupidity.
3. God can give them courage to say no to drugs, alcohol, and other destructive things.
4. If they fear (reverence) God, they won't have to fear people.

Lessons Eleven and Twelve: Control Myself? (Two class sessions)

Object Lesson (Optional) <http://freebiblelessons.net/object-lessons/dont-explode-with-anger>

Main Objectives: The students will come to understand the following truths, and learn how to apply them to their lives:

1. It is neither right to get even, nor to stay angry at someone.
2. It is possible to stay pure, even in an impure world, with the weapons God has given them.
3. It is never the right time to use drugs or alcohol to help them "feel better."
4. There is only one group of people who never become addicted to drugs or alcohol - those who never start using them.

Lesson Thirteen: What is Endurance?

Object Lesson (Optional) <http://meaningfulmama.com/day-217-optimism-with-diet-coke-and.html>

Main Objectives: The students will learn how to apply the following truths to their lives:

1. Their problems can make them stronger, with God's help.
2. Drugs and alcohol are "false comforts" offered by Satan to trap them in worse problems.
3. When they know that God wants them to do something, they should keep trying, even when others think it looks too difficult.
4. The best place to find encouragement is in the Bible.

Lesson One:

AWESOME GOD

OUR CHAIN BREAKER



Part One: Questions to Consider

1. God created the world, including the first man and woman. TRUE. See Genesis 1:1 *"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."* and Genesis 1:26...*"Let us make man in our image."* Gen. 2:22 *"Then the rib which the Lord God had taken from man He made into woman."*
2. Satan hates God, and also hates you, since you are God's creation. TRUE. He hates God because God is good, and he (Satan) is evil. He especially hates people who choose to be good. He would like to destroy you if he could, whether it is through drugs or alcohol, or some other destructive means. **(Go to Part Two, first paragraph* after these first two questions)**
3. Our sins are no big deal, since God loves us so much. FALSE. Romans 6:23 tells us that *"The wages (punishment) of sin is death."* That means, if Jesus hadn't died and taken our punishment on Himself, we would all die what the Bible calls the *"second death."* This death is talked about in Revelation 21:18...*"But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murders, sexually sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."*
4. We only have to do more good things than bad things to make it to heaven. FALSE. Isaiah 64:6 tells us...*"But we are all like an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags."* **(Go to Part Two, second paragraph** after questions 3 and 4)**

Scriptures to Memorize:

Genesis 1:1 *"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth"*

Proverbs 15:3 *"The eyes of the LORD are in every place, watching the evil and the good."*

Matthew 19:26 *"...with God all things are possible."*



PART TWO: GOD IS ALL-POWERFUL (HE CAN DO ANYTHING)

Genesis 1:1 *"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth"*

*Satan has attacked the Bible throughout history. He starts with the first chapter, because he doesn't want us to believe God's story of how the earth was created. He wants to destroy our faith in the whole Bible, and change our view of God and the truth. He knows that the truths in God's word are what will give us power to win the battle against every destructive problem we might face. He hates God, and because God created you, Satan hates you also. He would like to see you hooked on drugs, alcohol, or any number of other life-destroying things. Imagine these things as chains that he puts around people.

TEACHER: Read the article, in the box to the right, to the students.

As you watch the following video clip, think about this question: Does it take more "faith" to believe that all of this was created by an intelligent Being, or that it "just happened?"

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_RKByQf9jsk (Creation)
(4:28)

**The great news is that Satan is not anywhere near equal to God. He inspired the enemies of Jesus to kill Him. But, when Jesus died on the cross, He said, "It is finished," meaning that God's plan for Him to take our punishment and provide a way for us to be saved was completed. And the greatest thing is that He rose from the dead, and He is alive! He broke the chains of death, and he is now the "Chain Breaker" for us. Satan thought that he won when Jesus died, but he really lost. We don't have to be afraid of him.

God can't just pretend that our sins are no big deal. All sin has to be punished. No matter how many good things we might do, they will not make up for the sin that is in us. Thankfully, Jesus took our punishment for us when He died on the cross. When we choose to turn from our own sinful ways and attitudes and follow Him, we no longer have to fear the punishment of a never-ending hell, even though we deserve it. The greatest truth is that He loves you. You may be looking for love in all the wrong places, but there is Someone Who will always love you.

TEACHER: Please use your own discretion as to whether this video is too intense for the age group you are teaching.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rnum2n1Z-kw> ("I wanted to be loved") (2:10) (SEE QUESTION ON RIGHT)

- Psalm 19:1 *"The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows His handiwork."*

- Matthew 19:26 *"And looking at them Jesus said to them, "With people this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."*

A new study was released showing that marijuana-related emergency visits by kids in Colorado more than quadrupled since the state legalized marijuana. In 2005, only 149 teens were admitted for marijuana-related visits. That number spiked to 639 by 2015, most of which were related to **MENTAL ILLNESS.**



Why did the guy in the video start hanging out with the drug dealers? Did his life get better once he found these new friends? Do you think they were real friends? Why or why not? Whom do you know that will always be a real friend?

PART THREE: GOD IS PRESENT EVERYWHERE

When you realize that God is everywhere, you never have to feel alone. Even if you have to stand alone at times because you refuse to do something that "everyone else is doing," just know that God is with you, and this is more important than having a hundred people on your side.



Have you ever felt alone? Do you feel alone now? Why?

Think of the story of Ralph, a fourth-grader who was constantly bullied by a fifth-grader named Fred. One day Ralph shared this problem with his big brother Jake. Jake told him, "OK, here's what you need to do. Tomorrow morning, get to school early, and wait on the front steps for Fred. When he arrives, you tell him that you don't expect any more trouble from him." Ralph replied, "Right, and he'll beat the snot out of me." "Just do it," Jake told him. "Trust me." The following morning, Ralph was waiting on the steps when Fred arrived. Just as Jake had told him to do, he confronted Fred... "We're not going to have any more trouble, are we, Fred?" He was shocked when Fred responded, "OK, no problem," and walked away. Just as Ralph was beginning to feel the enjoyment of his new-found "power," he turned around to find that his brother Jake had been standing behind him the whole time.



Who does Fred remind you of in this story? (Jesus, or Satan) Why?

Who does Jake remind you of, and why?

(TEACHER) Think of Jesus as your Big Brother, standing with you. He is many times more powerful than Satan.

Part Four: God knows EVERYTHING

God knew all about you before you were even born. It doesn't matter whether you were "planned" by two loving parents, or the result of two people getting together for one night, He loves you, and has a plan for your life. And you will only be truly happy when you fit into His plan.

Since God knows everything about you, it means He knows when you sin. So you don't need to be afraid to confess your sins to Him. For example, what if you told Him that you had already tried drugs or alcohol? Or that you had already messed around sexually. He won't say, "Whoa, I didn't know that you were that kind of person. I'm so shocked." He already knows. When you confess, you are just agreeing with God that you have sinned. And confession is the first step towards forgiveness...and freedom.

- Jeremiah 23:24

"Can a man hide himself in hiding places so I do not see him?" declares the LORD. 'Do I not fill the heavens and the earth?' declares the LORD."

- Proverbs 15:3

"The eyes of the LORD are in every place, watching the evil and the good."

- Psalm 139:4

"Even before there is a word on my tongue, Behold, O LORD, You know it all."

- Jeremiah 1:5

"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart..."



Is there something in your life right now that you need to confess to God?

PART FIVE: HOW CAN WE RELATE TO AN AWESOME GOD?

Even though God is awesome, He still has time for us. We can still come to Him with our problems and our needs. Our biggest need is to be saved - forgiven of our sins - and become part of His family. It starts with confessing (admitting) that we have sinned. The Bible says, in Romans 3:23, that "all have sinned." In Romans 6:23 we are told that the punishment for sin is death, but then we are told that there is a free gift that God provides - **life** - a life that never ends, in heaven, after we leave this world. We are told that this life is a free gift because of what Jesus did for us.

In our world today, many are looking for answers; trying to fill a deep, empty place in their life. Some are trying drugs, New Age religions, or Islam, to name a few. Witchcraft has become more popular, especially with books and movies such as *Harry Potter*. These are all false and empty, even destructive. **TEACHER: Ask the students if they know someone who has been involved in any of these. This may lead to a discussion about the dangers of these false "answers."**

Our awesome God sent the Son that He loved so much to this world full of evil, and watched Him die on the cross. Why? John 3:16 tells us that is was because He loves the world, meaning the people that are in the world. That includes you. You can come to Him today, and be forgiven for all your sins. You can simply pray a prayer like this, and if you are serious about following Jesus, He will come into your life:

Dear God, I know that I have sinned against you. I am sorry, and I ask You to forgive me. Cleanse my heart...give me a new heart, and help me to live for You. Thank you, in Jesus' name, amen.

If you prayed this prayer, and meant it, God will help you live for Him. He can change you by His power and heal your broken heart, where you may have been wounded by others' words or actions. It is also important to pray every day, read your Bible, and tell others about your decision to follow Him.

Some will laugh at you, and others will admire you, when they see that you are different.

TEACHER: Lead the students in Prayer, and if time permits, allow for any questions they may have about their new life.



Lesson Two:

MADE LIKE MY FATHER



PART ONE: DISCUSS THE TRUE/FALSE QUESTIONS WITH THE STUDENTS.

1. Your ancestors were apes that gradually got smarter and less hairy. FALSE. Genesis 1:26 tells us that God said, "Let us make man in Our image, after Our likeness..." In Jeremiah 1:5 we read, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart..." Matthew 19:4.. *"And He answered and said to them, 'Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning 'made them male and female...'"*The idea of evolution, that man descended from other forms of life, didn't come on the scene until the 1800's. There's a reason that men have pushed this idea. If they could convince themselves and others that we are here by chance, then they would have no responsibility to honor and obey God. If we are just animals, we can live as we please.
2. If someone tells you that you will never change, then it must be true. FALSE. Anything is possible with the help of God. No matter how strong a habit or addiction is, or how you see yourself, the power of the Holy Spirit can change you. When we believe that we can't change, we are dealing with what the Bible calls a **stronghold**. This is like a military fortress in the physical world. We need to confess (say out loud) Scriptures that reveal who we are in Christ, and His power to heal and set us free. **ASK, "Has anyone ever told you that you will never change?"**
3. God loves you more if you are good, and less if you fail. FALSE. God's love for us doesn't change, whether we do it right or blow it. We don't have to try to impress Him or win His love. When we sin, His Holy Spirit points us back to Him to ask forgiveness.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY:

Genesis 1:26 *"Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness;'"*

Jeremiah 1:5 *"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; Before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations."*

4. Everything that makes you feel good is good for you. FALSE. Many things that feel good at first can be very bad for you. Alcohol and drugs often bring a good, or even great feeling at first, but when their effect starts to wear off, watch out. With most drugs, you will never get as high a feeling after the first time, and it will take more and more to get the effect. Soon, you will discover that you are trapped, and can't get out.
5. You have an enemy that wants to destroy you. TRUE. Satan hates you, and wants to destroy you any way that he can. He wants to make you believe that you have no real purpose or value. He uses things that happen to people to get them to hate themselves. This is often the first step in getting people to use alcohol or drugs.

PART TWO/A: YOU ARE CREATED IN HIS IMAGE

Genesis 1:26 *"Let Us make man in Our image"* This means that God made us to be like Him in many ways. Like God, we have the ability to feel happy or sad, and even angry. We have a free will to make decisions, and we have a soul that will live forever, even after our body dies.

Psalms 139:14 *"I praise You, because I am fearfully and wonderfully made..."*

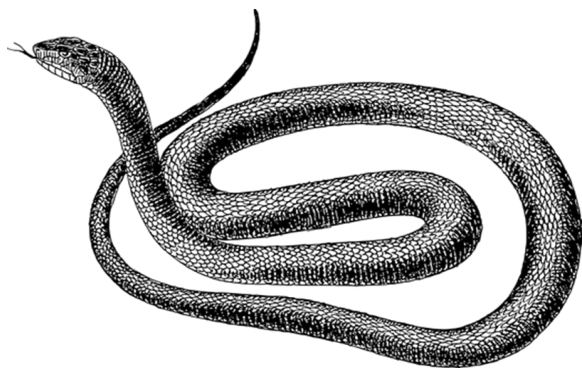
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BpZT4U1z844> (baby forming in womb) (5:58)

PART TWO/B: SATAN, OUR ENEMY, DISTORTS THAT IMAGE

He began with the first man and woman on earth, Adam and Eve, with his question, "Did God really say you must not eat from any tree in the garden?" He followed it with the lie, "You won't really die," and finally, "God just doesn't want you to be like Him." He uses the same approach to get people to sin today. For example, he will try to get you to question whether drinking or drug use is really wrong, then he will try to get you to believe that it won't hurt you. If he can get you to believe a third lie - that God doesn't really care about you, then he has set you up to do self-destructive things.


<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iE7ukc7MV-k> ("Your Brain on Drugs")(35 seconds)

Once the first couple sinned, mankind was forever born with a sinful nature. But, thankfully, there is hope through the sacrifice of Christ. He came to free us from the curse of sin, a curse that not only can keep us out of heaven, but also cause us misery during our time here on earth. He doesn't want us to know this.



Just as Satan has lied about the beginning of the world, he also got people to believe another lie – that man himself came from lower forms of life. If he can get us to believe that we are just "animals" that evolved, then it removes our sense of responsibility to a Creator God. Secondly, it opens the way for us to believe that we are continually evolving, and eventually will become "gods."

My name is Dan Williams. I'm 29 years old, from Lakeland, Florida. I grew up in a great home with loving parents who always pointed me to God's Word. Early on, I remember praying to Jesus and asking Him to save me. However, when I got a little bit older, my identity got very tied up in sports, especially basketball. During this time, around 13-14 years old, I began to experiment with marijuana and alcohol. When the reality hit me that my chances of playing college basketball, and especially pro ball, faded, I dove full steam into partying. It became everything to me, and my identity in Christ was lost. Only 1 year after graduating high school, I found myself locked in county jail. My drug and alcohol use had begun to quickly accelerate at a speed that I could not contain. My mom and dad discovered a program called Teen Challenge, where I could get some help. I remember feeling so alive after giving my heart back to Jesus! He changed everything about me—my attitude, my vocabulary, and my purpose. (Dan is married to Holly Williams; her story is on page 8)

 Can you name two things Dan lost when he put partying and drugs at the center of his life? (Possible answers...His love for Jesus, his sports career, his IDENTITY)

Now he wants to shape what our “image” (self-image) is. He often does this through other people. Maybe your father or mother abandoned you when you were little, or your parents got a divorce, and somehow you believe that it was your fault. Or you often heard things like “you’re bad,” “you’re slow,” “you’re stupid,” “you’re ugly,” or even, “you’re worthless.” Many boys, especially, have had a hard time in school because they were slightly behind their classmates in learning to read. You may have even been sexually abused, and now you are filled with bitterness towards the one that did it, or hatred of yourself.

TEACHER: Ask the students if they would like to share any personal experiences like this. Then, if needed, take time to pray for students with wounds.

Sometimes, our self-image may be shaped by other things (poverty, handicaps, learning disabilities, family members with major problems, etc.). We might really believe that our situation, or we ourselves, cannot change.

Satan hates us, and he wants us to hate ourselves. If he can do this, it is much easier to get us to use drugs or get involved in other self-destructive activities. Jesus, however, called him a liar and the father of lies. Sometimes, when things are really difficult in our lives, we may be tempted to find “comfort” in something or someone that may actually be harmful....these can be called “false comforts.” They can be the wrong friends (we want to fit in or be cool), and/or alcohol, drugs, or even sexual activity. These things can seem to bring relief, but it doesn’t last, and often very soon we will find ourselves in a trap that can destroy us.

The great news is that you have a heavenly Father who not only loves you, but has a great purpose for your life, no matter what your past or family situation looks like. Whether you ever become rich or famous or not, His plan will bring you true happiness (joy) that the things of the world can't. It isn't just a matter of saying no to drugs, etc., but saying yes to Him.

(TEACHER) In this video, you will see the faces of people who used drugs—before and after pictures. These people didn't plan to be ruined by drugs when they first started using them. They are good reminders that our enemy, Satan, also wants to change our outward image, and make it worse. Jesus came not just to save us from the punishment for sin, but also from it's horrible effects in our lives. When we turn to Him and are saved, He changes us.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D5nc5Kqqaj0>
(1:43) (before and after faces of drug use)



Kelly knew about evil. Her father was known in the community as the head of his gang. At home, he physically and emotionally wounded his wife and children. Her greatest fear was that she would grow up to be like him. She felt like two persons: one person was dragged into the horrible world of her father; the other was a girl who had met Jesus at Vacation Bible School and learned to sing "Jesus Loves Me."

After years of counseling and Bible study, Kelly began to see herself as God sees her. Satan would try to tell her who she was, because of her father, but she would read in the Bible who God said she was.

PART THREE: FROM A SHEPHERD TO A KING (1 SAMUEL 16)

David, who wrote many of the Psalms, started out as a shepherd. How surprised his whole family must have been when the prophet Samuel revealed that he was to be the next king of Israel. Notice that David didn't say, "No, I can't do it." He had come to know the Lord so well during his days as a shepherd, that he knew nothing was impossible for God. God can give us faith to believe for whatever changes He wants to make in our lives.

David had to wait a long time between the moment when he was told that he would be the king, and the time that it finally happened.. First, he had to go through a number of hard experiences with people that disdained him (thought he wasn't good enough).

When Samuel the prophet asked to see David's sons, and the Lord led him to reject seven of them, David's father, Jesse, didn't even mention David until Samuel asked if he had any other sons.



What are some things that you think you could never do? Do you think that God could help you do it?

Have you ever had someone try to make you feel that you weren't as good as them?

Later, after David had offered to fight Goliath, he was brought to King Saul. Saul also disdained David's ability..."*You are just a youth....*"

Finally, it was Goliath who disdained David. He told him he would feed him to the birds and the beasts, and cursed David by his gods. Goliath was HUGE. In his own ability, David could never have defeated him, especially with just a sling-shot. But David knew that this was about God's honor. He believed that if he honored God, God would honor him. "*I come to you in the name of the God of the armies of Israel, Whom you have defied.*" We read that God did honor David. The one stone that David slung at the giant hit its mark, the giant fell, and David "removed" his head. The rest of the Philistines ran away, and a great victory was won.

My name is Holly Williams. Growing up I knew who God was, and was active in church. My parents were divorced, but I remember having a normal childhood. As I got older, I started to discover that my dad was an alcoholic. The fun-loving dad I spent the weekends with somehow turned into a different person when I wasn't around. At the age of 13, my family received an unexpected phone call that my dad was in a coma, due to a combination of alcohol and pain medication. When my dad woke up, he was in a vegetative state and without speech. This event caused a lot of confusion in my life and was the start of years of deep-rooted pain. In high school, I felt as though I lost my identity and tried to find it in different social groups, which lead to experimenting with drinking and marijuana. I was unable to finish high school, but as a strong-willed 17-year-old, decided to move out and start a life of my own, 200 miles away from home. I became a workaholic, depressed, without goals for my life, and in bondage to drugs and alcohol. In January of 2011, my life quickly went downhill. I was arrested three times within three months for drug-related charges, and on the verge of suicide. Upon my last arrest, my mom said that she wouldn't bail me out of jail again...I was stuck. It was in jail that I started attending chapel services, and the Lord started speaking to me about my life and my sin. I had a public defender visit me, and he gave me a packet that included a Teen Challenge application. One week later I was standing in front of a judge, who agreed to release and court-order me to Teen Challenge. In May of 2011, I walked through the doors to a place where God would show me true hope and freedom. Four months into my Teen Challenge journey, God radically touched my life on a missions trip during an altar call, at Freedom Chapel in Long Island, NY. I knew from that day on that I would serve the Lord and be used in ministry.



What was Holly trying to find in high school, which led her to try marijuana and alcohol? Where did she finally find her REAL identity? Have you ever felt like you didn't know where you fit in?

PART FOUR: NO MATTER HOW DIFFICULT YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES ARE, GOD CAN USE THEM, AND YOU, IN A GREAT WAY TO HELP OTHER PEOPLE.

Nick Vujicic was born without arms or legs. Everyone considered him a “vegetable” when he was born. When he was finally allowed to enter the regular school system, he was laughed at and bullied by other students. When he was 10, he tried to drown himself, but changed his mind because of his love for his parents. For years he prayed for God to give him arms and legs, and even told God that, if He didn’t answer this prayer, he would not praise Him. One day, however, his mother brought him a newspaper clipping about a man from a different part of the world who was dealing with a severe disability (TEACHER, EXPLAIN “DISABILITY” IF NECESSARY), and Nick realized that he wasn’t the only one in the world with disabilities.

Nick later got married, and now has two children. He speaks all over the world, and his testimony challenges people to believe that they can overcome almost any handicap or other problem.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=USUvzKDroqM> (Nick) (4 min.)

God has plans and a wonderful purpose for you....

- Jeremiah 29:11 *“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.”*

PART FIVE: HAVE YOU DECIDED?

We have looked at Who God is, and who YOU are in the eyes of God. As our lesson pointed out, He loves you so much, and gave His own Son to take your punishment for sin. Next week we will look at God’s plan of salvation more fully. You don’t have to wait until then, however, to make a decision to give your life to Him. You can do it today, by praying a simple prayer, something like this:

Dear God, I realize that I am a sinner, and I need forgiveness. Thank You for sending your Son to die in my place. Please forgive my sins; I give you my life, and choose to follow You. In Jesus name, amen.

If you have asked God to forgive you, and received Jesus as your Savior, then you can trust God to help you. Ask Him to fill you with His Holy Spirit, to give you power to live for Him and share him with others. (See Acts 1:8) “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

TEACHER, PLEASE TAKE TIME TO PRAY WITH STUDENTS WHO WANT TO BE SAVED, LEADING THEM IN A SINNER’S PRAYER. ALSO ENCOURAGE AND PRAY WITH THOSE WHO WANT TO BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cnmnEc6gF3E> (Song, “I don’t need my name in lights”)(3:26) (if time permits)

Lesson Three:

HE LOVES...YOU!



PART ONE: THOUGHTS TO CONSIDER

1. If our mother or father is a Christian, we are automatically Christians also. FALSE: Each one of us needs to ask God to forgive us, and ask Jesus to come into our lives and save us. No one can do this for us.
2. We can choose to follow Buddha, Mohammed, or anyone else to get us to heaven. FALSE. In John 14:6, Jesus said, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."*
3. In order for us to be saved, Someone else had to take the punishment for our sins. TRUE. Jesus was the One Who took our punishment. Speaking of Jesus, 1 Peter 2:24 tells us, *"Who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree.."*
4. After we die, it is too late to try to get ready to meet God. TRUE. Hebrews 9:27 tells us, *"And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment.."*
5. God loves us more if we don't have any problems. FALSE. God loves the person with many problems just as much as those who have few. In fact, in Psalm 34:18, we read, *"The Lord is near to those who have a broken heart..."*
6. If we have done really bad things, we probably can't be saved. FALSE. Romans 10:13 tells us, *"for **whoever** will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved,"* (ASK, "Have you ever felt that you were too bad to be saved?)"

Scriptures to Memorize:

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

Isaiah 53:5 *"He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on Him, and by His wounds we are healed."*

Romans 6:23 *"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

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

PART TWO: GOD'S AMAZING LOVE FOR US

There is no mother or father on earth that will ever love you as much as God, your heavenly Father, loves you. He knows what you need, and He wants to provide it. No matter what you have done, your heavenly Father, because of His love, has provided a way for you to have forgiveness for your sins and be saved.

God was not surprised when Adam and Eve, the first man and woman, sinned. He already knew that it was going to happen, even before He created them. The Bible tells us that Jesus was *"the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world."* (Revelation 13:6). This means that God planned for Jesus to die, to take the punishment for our sins, even before the world was created. The prophet Isaiah told about the suffering and death of Jesus about 600 years before it happened. (... *"he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed."* Isaiah 53:5).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bIxt5HC-9oI> (Crucifixion scene) (6 min.)

PART THREE: OUR SIN, HIS SACRIFICE

God is not surprised when **you** sin, either. Once you understand that you are a sinner (*"All have sinned..."* Romans 3:23), you can ask God's forgiveness, and ask Him to save you. If you are serious about deciding to follow Jesus, He will change your life. His promise of a home in heaven is just part of the blessing of being saved. God's Holy Spirit actually comes to live inside of you. Jesus called the Holy Spirit *"the Helper"* (John 14:26), because He helps us live a life that is pleasing to God and overcome temptations. This includes the temptation to use drugs or alcohol.

....*"By His wounds we are healed..."* refers to the whipping that Jesus received before they nailed Him to the cross. This part of His suffering was to make a way for us to be healed – of sickness, injuries, even a broken heart. Psalm 34:18 tells us that *"The Lord is near to those who have a broken heart."* Sometimes people are tempted to use drugs in order to escape from the pain that is in their heart, pain that is there because they have been abandoned, rejected, or hurt in some other way. Drugs or alcohol are both "false comforts," that is, they don't really provide comfort, but instead make a person feel the pain a little bit less....for awhile. Later, when they come down off of the drug, the pain is still there, and a new problem is forming – addiction.



1 Jn. 4:10 *"In this is love, not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."*



Do you know someone

who is or has been addicted to drugs? What was their life like? Why do you think they started using drugs?

TEACHER:

Please encourage discussion among your students.

As we grow in God, we develop a new self-image. The old self-image — filled with difficult life experiences, and maybe even self-hatred — begins to disappear. The amazing thing is that when you know who you are in Jesus, you don't have to try to impress people. If Jesus is really your Lord, it will be much easier to say no to temptations, even the temptation to use drugs.

It is also important to surround yourself with friends who love Jesus, to provide support and prayer. An “accountability partner” is someone who will be honest with you about what they see—things you may not see, or want to admit, about yourself. This should be a person whom you can trust with information you share about your struggles.

PART FOUR: LIFE-CHANGING

David Ring was born with cerebral palsy. Some would say that he was born to lose. He became an orphan at age 14, and was moved from family to family with nowhere to call home. He endured constant physical pain, humiliating public ridicule and constant discouragement. His life seemed hopeless until he gave it to Jesus Christ, Who not only showered him with love, but also self-respect and self-acceptance. Today, he speaks to churches, youth, business people, and so on, to motivate them.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aSHanqFD_JA&t=112s (Teen Challenge student testimony) (3:00)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8wyW1nPB03o> (Anna's story) (2:42) (Best one: If you only have time for one of these, this is the better one).

PART FIVE: WHAT ABOUT YOU?

Q. Have you ever asked God to forgive you for your sins? Do you believe that He did forgive you? I John 1:9 tells us that *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* To confess our sins means that we agree with God that we have sinned.

We then make a choice to repent of our sins, which means that we choose to turn around and go in a new direction. We make the choice, and God gives the strength to be able to live for Him.

TEACHER: Please ask the students if they have any questions about what it means to be saved, or any other questions, before leading them in the sinner's prayer.

**2 Corinthians
5:17 (NKJV)
tells us...**
***"Therefore, if
anyone is in
Christ, he is a
new creation;
old things have
passed away;
behold, all
things have be-***



Lesson Four:

LOVE EVERYONE!?



PART ONE: THOUGHTS TO CONSIDER:

1. The Bible teaches us to only love people that love us. FALSE. The Bible, in many places, teaches us to love others, even "our enemies." (Matthew 5:4).
2. If we love people, we will do whatever they want us to do. FALSE. Loving people means that we do what is best for them, not always what they want.
3. Everyone that we love will love us back. TRUE. No matter how much we love people, some will not love us back. **(ASK "Has this ever happened to you?" How did it feel?)**
4. It is possible to love everyone. TRUE. If we ask God, He can put love in our heart for anyone.

Scriptures to Memorize:

Matthew 5:44
"But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you."

1 Peter 4:8 *"And above all things have fervent love for one another, for 'love will cover a multitude of sins.'"*

John 15:12
"This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."



PART TWO: IS IT POSSIBLE TO LOVE EVERYONE?

You have probably met some people that you don't love, even some that you think only their mother could love. So, what do we do with the Scriptures that command us to love? We have to first understand that love is not just a feeling, even though that's how it looks in the movies. Love is a choice, just as forgiveness is a choice. It is about **choosing** to do what God commands, and then letting His power make it happen inside of us. It is so easy to forget that our God is supernatural, and He can change us if we let him. Did I say, "Change **us**?" Yes, with God's help we can love someone even if **they** never change. We aren't talking about **liking** what they do or say, or how they think, but instead, loving the person.

Someone once asked the head of a big company how he got such good workers. He replied, "I know that there is gold in everyone. Sometimes you just have to get past the dirt to get to the gold." This man had discovered one of the secrets of loving people - being able to look past their bad personalities and habits, and seeing them as God sees them. God sees what we **can** be, through the power of Jesus Christ. Many thousands, for example, have been changed by God's power in the Teen Challenge program.

 Describe one kind of person it is difficult to love.

Do you think it is impossible?



PART THREE: THE APOSTLE PAUL AND JESUS LOVED THE UNLOVABLE

The Apostle Paul traveled to many parts of the world, sharing the truth about salvation through Jesus Christ. Lots of people hated him for this. Once, they stoned him and thought he was dead (maybe he was), but his friends prayed for him and he got up and finished his journey. Even some of the people that he had led to Jesus showed him disrespect at times, but he continued to love them.

Of course, Jesus is the greatest example of loving the unlovable. We see Him taking time for those whom others rejected: The woman at the well who was living with a sixth guy without marrying him, Zaccheus the tax collector, the blind beggar Bartimaeus, the woman caught in adultery, etc. He always had time for "broken" people. Most amazing of all was that He loved even those who crucified Him, and mocked Him. He prayed for His Father to forgive them.

PART FOUR: MODERN-DAY EXAMPLES OF LOVE

Raoul Wallenberg, from Sweden, came to the country of Hungary to help rescue Jews who were being hauled to the death camps during World War II. He set up "safe houses" for them, and gave them papers saying that they were now citizens of Sweden. He risked his life to save them from death. One of the women that he rescued told about one of the safe houses, where the Jews had to move to the cellar because the building had been bombed. She said, "in the cellar, the actual comfort was no greater than in prison, but what a difference. First of all, we were considered worthy of saving. And that is just an incredible feeling."

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c2rodR3JurU> (Raoul W. rescue) (5:06) (OPTIONAL)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PKve5ciwU5I> (Love your enemies, true story) (5:18)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j7saCOHlmXA>
(Jews and Arabs washing each others' feet) (6:03)
(YOU MAY WANT TO SHOW A SMALL PORTION, OR MORE, AS TIME PERMITS)

PART FIVE: WHAT ABOUT YOU? HOW GOD'S LOVE FREES US TO LOVE OTHERS

One of the difficult things in life, for many people, is worrying about what other people think about them. The best way to get over this is to learn about the awesomeness of God, and how much HE loves us. When we feel secure in His love, it doesn't matter so much what people think of us, and it helps us to be more free in our relationships with them. For example, if you encourage others to avoid drugs or alcohol, there will be some people that don't like yousome may even hate you, but you don't have to be afraid of them.

Of course, the first thing, if you haven't already done it, is to give your life completely to Jesus Christ. Your teacher will be happy to lead you in a prayer to do this.

TEACHER: Please be sure to give opportunity for students to pray to receive Christ as their Savior. Find out if they have any questions or misunderstandings about what this means, and lead them in the sinner's prayer if needed.

YOU can show someone by your actions and words, that they have great worth - especially to God. Ask God to point you to someone to whom you can show the love of Jesus, and start praying for opportunities to do it. When you truly start to love others, your own problems don't seem so big anymore, and your life becomes an adventure.



There are people all around you that have been so ignored or mistreated that they don't know what it's like for someone to be kind to them, to treat them with respect. Remember the woman who talked about how it meant so much that Raoul Wallenberg thought that she and the other Jews were worthy of saving.

Lessons Five and Six:

WHY PRAY?



PART ONE: THOUGHTS TO CONSIDER:

1. It is good to set aside a certain time of each day for prayer and Bible reading. TRUE. Without a set time, it is too easy to forget to pray, especially when we are busy.

Ask: What is the best time of the day for you to pray?

2. Nothing is too big or too small to pray about. TRUE. We can talk with God about anything, including our hurts. The more we pray, and see answers to our prayers, our faith will grow, and we will be able to trust God for bigger needs. God cares about your prayers just as much as He does about the prayers of the most "important" people in the world.

Ask: What is the biggest thing you ever prayed about?

3. Prayer is only for asking for things from God. FALSE. Prayer should also include thanking and praising God, and listening for what He wants to say to us.

4. We should only pray in church. FALSE. God is with us everywhere, and He can hear us anytime.

Ask: What is your favorite place to pray, and why?

Memorize:

II Chronicles 7:14 *"If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land."*

Matthew 26:41 *"Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."*

Philippians 4:6 *"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;"*

James 5:16 *"Confess your trespasses [sins] to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much."*

PART TWO: WHAT DOES GOD SAY ABOUT PRAYER?

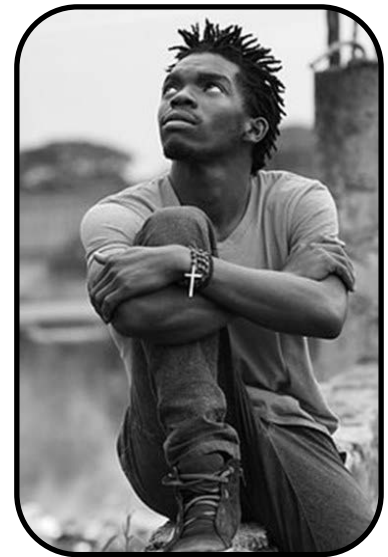
There are many Bible verses that encourage us to pray. Prayer is a gift that God gives us, so that we can communicate with Him. It is not just about asking God for things. Actually, prayer should involve more listening than talking, but most Christians don't really look at it that way. Many see prayer as a way to get things from God, and there are many books written that tell us how to do that.


Of course, God wants to give us good things, but He wants something much more important - that we get to know Him better, and bring honor to Him.

Psalm 145:18 tells us, *"The Lord is near to all who call upon Him, to all who call upon Him in truth."* "IN TRUTH" means that we aren't pretending to love Him, pretending to want to know what He wants. Once we have given our lives to Jesus, we are at war with the devil. We are always having to make choices, and sometimes it isn't easy. When we set apart time for prayer each day, we strengthen our spirit, so that it is easier to make the right choices, especially when it comes to things like alcohol and drugs.

Jesus, when His disciples couldn't cast a demon out of a boy, said, *"This kind does not go out except by prayer **and fasting**."* When we fast along with our praying, our spirit is strengthened even more, as well as our faith. **Fasting** means that we decide to do without something for a time, in order to focus on prayer and getting closer to God. It can be food, or something else, such as television, the internet, or any other thing that we enjoy. When we are fasting from one thing, it often becomes easier to say no to other things also. This can be especially helpful if someone is trying to break a destructive addiction, such as smoking, drug use, or looking at pornography. The prophet Daniel fasted from meat and sweets for twenty-one days while he prayed for the Israelites to be able to return to their homeland. You may want to talk with your parents about this, especially if you are going to fast from food completely for one or more meals. Just understand that fasting may be tough to do, especially at first. You may have never fasted, but you have probably missed a meal at one time or another. What does your stomach say? FEED ME **NOW!** I'M DYING! God can give you the strength to do it, though, if you ask Him.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kvl4QS6bkvQ> (Mother bear rescues cub from Mountain Lion) (3:54) (see question in box)



 What are some ways that this scene might remind us of prayer, God, and His care for us?

(SOME SUGGESTIONS):

1) The mother came to the rescue when her cub desperately cried. Sometimes we have to get desperate in order to really cry out to God, and He especially answers desperate prayers. 2) The cub was no match for the lion, but just the presence of the mother drove the lion away. God's presence drives away the attacks of the enemy: fear, anger, bitterness, etc. 3) The mother started the healing process, licking the cub's wounds, just as healing is available in God's presence.

PART THREE: PRAYING DANIEL

One person in the Bible who was known for his praying was **Daniel**. He is described in Daniel chapter 6 as having an "excellent spirit," probably because he prayed so much. His enemies couldn't find anything bad to accuse him of, so they set a trap. They got the king to sign a law that no one could pray to anyone except him for thirty days, knowing that Daniel prayed three times a day with his windows open. Do you think Daniel started closing his windows because of this? No, he didn't. Just imagine those guys hiding in his bushes, so they could catch him in the act. For this he was "blessed" with a free night in the den of lions, complete with a free meal. The problem was that Daniel was supposed to **BE** the meal. However, he was probably the only one who slept that night. His enemies couldn't sleep because they were so eager to see what was left of Daniel in the morning. The lions themselves sure couldn't sleep. They were hungry, and even though their midnight snack was right in front of them, they couldn't open their mouths. The king fasted all night and couldn't sleep because he really cared about Daniel, and was so worried about him.

Not only did Daniel survive, but God turned the whole thing around. Daniel's enemies were destroyed instead of him, and more importantly, the king made a new law:

*"To all peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth: Peace be multiplied to you. **I make a decree that in every dominion of my kingdom men must tremble and fear before the God of Daniel.** For He is the living God, and steadfast forever; His kingdom is the one which shall not be destroyed, and His dominion shall endure to the end. He delivers and rescues, and He works signs and wonders in heaven and on earth, who has delivered Daniel from the power of the lions."*

TEACHER: Daniel's enemies wanted him dead. Ask the students if there was ever someone who hated them and wanted to hurt them, or see them hurt. Did they pray?



PART FOUR: MODERN-DAY PRAYER STORIES

A True Story Reported by an OMF Missionary at His Home Church:

While serving at a small field hospital in Africa, I traveled every two weeks by bicycle through the jungle to a nearby city for supplies. This required camping overnight halfway. On one of those trips, I saw two men fighting in the city; one was seriously hurt, so I treated him and witnessed to him about the Lord Jesus Christ. I then returned home without incident.

When I arrived in the city several weeks later, I was approached by the man I had treated earlier. He told me he had known that I carried money and medicine. He said, *"Some friends and I followed you into the jungle. We waited for you to go to sleep."*

(continued on next page)

We planned to kill you and take your money and drugs. Just as we were about to move into your campsite, we saw that you were surrounded by 26 armed guards." I laughed at this and said I was certainly all alone out in the jungle campsite.

The young man pressed the point, "No sir, I was not the only one to see the guards. My five friends also saw them, and we all counted them. It was because of those guards that we were afraid and left you alone." Later..... As this story was told at a church in Michigan, one of the men in the church jumped up and interrupted the missionary. He asked, "Can you tell me the exact date when this happened?" The missionary thought for a while and recalled the date. The man in the congregation related his side of the story: "On that night in Africa it was morning here. I was preparing to play golf. As I put my bags in the car, I felt the Lord leading me to pray for you. In fact, the urging was so great that I called the men of this church together to pray for you. Will all of those men who met with the Lord please stand?" The men who had met that day to pray together stood - there were 26 of them.

Share a story about one of your prayers that was answered. It may have been a prayer for someone else to be saved, or for yourself or a friend to be healed, or some other need that you really needed God to help you with.



"GOD SENDS A WIND"

John Hall and his wife, Cuba, were missionaries sent by God to reach people all over the world who didn't know about Jesus. On one of their trips, in the Assemblies of God Speed-the-Light airplane known as *The Ambassador*, they faced a seemingly impossible situation. (*The Ambassador* was an army surplus C-46 airplane, used to carry Assemblies of God missionaries to countries around the world).

They had left the airport in Iceland for the long flight to the United States, after ministering all over the world, and delivering supplies to other missionaries in need. Now it was the long flight home. That is, until a storm hit.

From Iceland, the next refueling stop was in Greenland. When they got within 200 miles, the radio tower said fog was rolling in and landing was impossible. The plane had been flying for many hours, and they were well past the half-way point. It was too late to return to Iceland.

Soon they ran into a big storm, with huge headwinds pushing against them. The plane, using its powerful engines to push through the storm, was gaining steady ground, but it was going through fuel at a rapid pace.

The missionaries on board the plane cried out to God, *"Help us, please. We're running out of fuel."*

The pilot couldn't find a way around the storm. The headwinds were just too strong, and the winds kept pushing it back. More and more fuel was being used. Soon the fuel gauge would be on empty. Would this be the end of the missionaries?



Then the pilot flew down through the thick clouds, to an altitude of only 1000 feet. The plane was so close to the water that the missionaries could see the reflection of the airplane in the ocean. They continued to pray. Suddenly, the plane lurched forward. Something was pushing the plane!



The pilot shouted that some sort of a 50-mile-an-hour strong tailwind was pushing the plane forward past the strong headwinds that were trying to push it backwards. The tailwind continued all the way to the airport. The plane safely landed with only the tiniest amount of fuel left on board! God had miraculously provided a strong tailwind to push it plane forward so only a small amount of fuel was used. As a result, it didn't run out of fuel, and crash. A concert of praise to God could be heard on the plane as they landed at the airport. God had answered the prayers of the missionaries and spared their lives.

TEACHER: Ask the students to share a story of one of their prayers that was answered, and one that has still not been answered. Perhaps you could agree with them in prayer right now about those.

PART FIVE: A PRAYER PLAN

Abe Lincoln is said to have made the following statement, "If I had only six hours to cut down a tree, I'd spend the first four sharpening my axe." For the Christian, prayer is like sharpening our axe. Prayer prepares us for God's work, but it is in itself the greatest work.

It's easy to talk about prayer, but often harder to really do it. This is because our enemy, Satan, hates prayer, and will do anything he can to keep us from praying. He will tell us that we don't have time to do more than just a quick bedtime prayer, or will bring interruptions into our day to keep us from praying at all. Just like every other spiritual battle, our prayer life must be fought for, and that will include a plan, or strategy. (continued on next page)

We can pray anywhere, at any time. It is important, though, to have a special time (and maybe even a special place) each day for prayer. It is probably the most important habit that we can develop in our life. Some people find it easier to have their time early in the morning; others at night. Also, if you are a student, it would be great if you could find at least one other person at school to pray with you, maybe every day, even if it is just for a few minutes.

At first, try to plan for at least 5 or 10 minutes. Remember, prayer is not just asking God for things,, but also about listening for Him to talk to you, and also taking time to thank and praise Him. You might ask, "How will I know if He is talking?" Sometimes it is a feeling inside of you, that you should do this or that. Or, He may show you an area of sin in your life. There may be times when you hear actual words in your mind. Maybe there is something you have been doing, or saying (or thinking), that you never realized was not pleasing to the Lord. He will show you, if you are willing to listen. He may tell you to go and speak with a certain person who needs encouragement or even salvation. Or, if you have made yourself available to the Lord as a a prayer warrior, He will sometimes lead you to pray for someone in trouble. Like the stories you read about in this lesson, it could be someone on the other side of the world. There are many stories of Christians being urged by God to pray for someone, and they never knew how God answered their prayer until months or years later. Learning to know His voice comes with our growth as Christians, and we will not grow without having a prayer life.

Finally, start a **prayer list**. It may start small, but as you hear about people who need prayer, and add their names. It's a good idea also to keep a record of answers to those prayers. A **prayer journal**, or diary, can include your thoughts and feelings, as well as things God is saying to you. To help you get started, below are some examples of things you may want to include in your prayer list:

- God's help in overcoming fear, or anger, or other things that hurt our testimony for God.
- Strength to resist temptation, such as the temptation to use drugs or alcohol
- A clear mind for your studies
- Healing for people that are sick or injured
- Salvation for family members, schoolmates, etc.
- God's help for persecuted Christians

It is good to begin to pray about coming events or situations well ahead of time. Pray about even the details, the "little things." Maybe you haven't faced any real pressure or temptation to try alcohol, drugs, or sex, but you can prepare even now to face those things by developing your prayer life and growing in strength as a Christian.



It doesn't matter whether you are ten, twenty, or 80. If you are a born-again Christian, you have the responsibility to pray, not just for yourself, but also for others. If you have never prayed for anyone, you can start now. Maybe you have a classmate at school or someone with whom you work who is sick, or has some other need. It could be the beginning of many adventures.



TEACHER: Ask if any of the students would like to pray to receive Jesus as their Savior. Explain what it means. Then lead in prayer for those who need to take this step.

Again, encourage them to seek to be filled with the Holy Spirit, and pray with any who would like to ask God for this infilling right now.

Ask the students to start a prayer list, and even a prayer journal, where they record prayers and the answers to them. This can be included in the requirements for them to receive a certificate of completion at the end of the quarter. You may want to provide a small notebook for each one, and help them get started right now.



Lessons Seven and Eight:

DO I HAVE TO FORGIVE?



PART ONE: DISCUSS THE TRUE/FALSE QUESTIONS WITH THE STUDENTS:

1. We only need to forgive others when they ask us to do it. FALSE. The Bible never teaches that we should forgive only when asked. (Colossians 3:13) *"bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do."*
2. We should forgive once or twice, but not if someone mistreats us more than that. FALSE. (Matthew 18:21,22) *"Then Peter came to Him and said, 'Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?' Jesus said to him, 'I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.'* (Jesus is really saying that there is no limit to the number of times that we should forgive someone).
3. When we forgive, it doesn't mean that we have to completely trust the other person. TRUE. We can forgive someone, and then ask God for WISDOM in our dealings with that person in the future, especially if they don't act like they plan to change.
4. We should only forgive when we feel like it. FALSE. The commands of Jesus to forgive aren't changed by how we feel. We will rarely "feel like" forgiving, but we must not be led by our feelings. Forgiveness is a CHOICE. We pray something like this: "Father, I choose to forgive. Please cleanse me of any UNFORGIVENESS in my heart towards this person." We are responsible for our CHOICES, our OBEDIENCE, not our feelings. If we obey God, the feelings will follow. Someone has said, "Our feelings must not be the engine on our train. Our WILL must be the engine, and the feelings the caboose." In some cases, it may take time for the feelings to change, but if we continue to CHOOSE to forgive, they WILL change. |
5. Jesus demonstrated forgiveness even to those who killed Him. TRUE. Jesus forgave His killers while He hung on the cross. (Luke 23:34)

Scriptures to Memorize:

Matthew 18:21,22 *"Then Peter came to Him and said, 'Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?' Jesus said to him, 'I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.'"*

Matthew 6:15 *"But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins."*

Luke 23:34 *" Then Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.'"*



6. If we want God to forgive us, we need to forgive others. TRUE. Matthew 6:15 *"But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins."*

7. Unforgiveness can cause us to have more problems in our own lives. TRUE. Unforgiveness will usually hurt us more than the person whom we haven't forgiven. It can open the door to fear, and can even cause physical problems, like arthritis. Often, unforgiveness or bitterness affects all of our relationships.

8. God will forgive ANY sin if we confess it and ask His forgiveness. TRUE. I John 1:9 says *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us of all unrighteousness."*

PART TWO: JOSEPH AND HIS BROTHERS

Joseph was the favorite son of his father, Jacob. Because of this, he was hated by some of his brothers. One day Jacob sent him to check on the rest of his sons, and they came up with a plan. "Let's kill him," said one, but another brother talked them into throwing him into a pit. It just happened that some people who bought and sold slaves came along, and Joseph was sold to them. Years went by, and, after years of being a servant and then a prisoner for a crime that he didn't do, Joseph became a leader in Egypt, second only to the king.

More years passed, and one day the brothers showed up to buy food from the Egyptians. The guy that talked to them had on more make-up than a movie star. Of course they didn't recognize him as their brother. When he told them who he was, they thought for sure that he would get even, but the next surprise was that he forgave them. He told them that even though they meant him harm, God meant it for good, because He used all that had happened to bless all of them.



Do you think you could have forgiven those brothers, as Joseph did?



PART THREE: JESUS FORGIVES

We see the perfect example of forgiveness in the life of Jesus. Not only was He mocked, spit upon, beaten with fists, and had a "crown" of woven thorns forced onto His head, but that was just the beginning. He was whipped with a "cat-of-nine-tails," which was a whip with several leather strips at the end. On each of these strips were sharp pieces of bone or glass. With every lash of the whip those strips wrapped around Jesus's torso, arms, and legs, then to be jerked back, ripping open the flesh. The prophet Isaiah, who predicted Jesus' death about 600 years before it happened, described the result....*"His appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any human being, and his form marred beyond human likeness."* (Isaiah 52:14)

The final act was to nail Him to a cross, naked, with spikes driven through His wrists and ankles. While He hung there, the very people for whom He was dying began to mock Him. Jesus responded with the prayer, *"Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they are doing."*

Some Bible scholars believe Jesus taught that we open ourselves up to torment when we won't forgive. Unforgiveness/resentments can lead to fear coming into a person's life. Studies have shown that it can even cause physical problems such as arthritis or high blood pressure.



PART FOUR: "IMPOSSIBLE FORGIVENESS?"

Peggy Covell grew up in Japan, where her parents were missionaries. When Japan became unstable in 1939, her family moved to the Philippines. After high school, she came to the U.S. to go to college. Her parents sent her younger brother and sister as well, because it looked like war would soon touch their part of Asia.

When the Japanese captured the city of Manila in 1942, Peggy's parents fled with other missionaries to a mountain hideout, where they lived peacefully for almost two years. Eventually, the Japanese found and captured them and sentenced them to death. The missionaries asked for some time to pray and read their Bibles together first. As they continued to sing hymns, they were taken away one by one and beheaded.

Peggy didn't get the news about her parents' deaths until after the war. She struggled with strong hatred for the Japanese. Then one day she began to wonder what her parents might have prayed in those final minutes before their deaths. She was certain that they must have prayed for God's forgiveness for those who were about to kill them. How could she do less?

Peggy volunteered at a camp in Colorado where Japanese prisoners were still being held for a time after the war. She came to serve them and show them forgiveness. Her love and kindness touched even the hardest hearts.

"Why do you do this?" they asked. Her gentle reply was, "Because the Japanese army killed my parents, but the Holy Spirit has washed away my hatred and has replaced it with love."

One man who heard the story of her kindness was Mitsuo Fuchida, the Japanese hero who led the raid on Pearl Harbor, which brought the U.S. into the war. Fuchida simply couldn't understand her forgiveness, because in the "Bushido Code" of his culture, revenge was not only permitted, it was required for an offended party to carry out revenge to restore honor. Someone who had murdered your parents would be a sworn enemy for life. He began to read the Bible to find out more about this strange love, and soon afterwards became a Christian.



The following is an amazing story of forgiveness.....

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o2BITY-3Mp4>)

(Mary Johnson forgives her son's killer, and more.....)



1. Do you think you could forgive someone who killed someone that you love?

2. Did Mary Johnson feel like forgiving her son's killer right after it happened?

3. Who helped her forgive him?

4. What did she do besides simply forgiving him?

5. Is there someone that the killer had to forgive?

Why do you think that is important?

The following video shows a man forgiving his daughter's killer. Watch the reaction on killer Gary Ridgeway's face. He still faced consequences for the death of the man's daughter, and 47 other victims. In this courtroom scene family members of his victims have the chance to speak to him. Most are full of hate and bitterness. Watch what happens when one victim's father tells him that he has forgiven him.

(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f2_OOaP763k) (3:20)



Why did this man forgive Gary Ridgeway?

Do you think this act of forgiveness may have had an impact on Gary Ridgeway later, as he served his life prison sentence?



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kBfAsla86Ko> (Sarah's forgiveness story (4:27)



Who else was Sarah able to forgive, once she chose to forgive the man who attacked her?

What did she get in return?

**VERSION TWO: FOR USE WHEN YOU
HAVE NO ACCESS TO INTERNET.**



A MAN FORGIVES HIS DAUGHTER'S KILLER

Gary Ridgeway killed 48 women. At his trial, the judge allowed a time for the family members of the women to say something. Most told of their hatred for him, even wishing him a horrible death or a place in hell. Gary sat with a stony face, not reacting to any of them. Finally, one old man got up and said this, "Mr. Ridgeway, a lot of people here hate you. I want you to know that I'm not one of them. You've made it difficult to live up to what I believe, that's what God says to do, to forgive. You are forgiven, sir." As he said these words, the stone face broke into tears. It showed the power of forgiveness to touch even the most hardened heart.



Why did this man forgive Gary Ridgeway?

Do you think this act of forgiveness may have had an impact on Gary Ridgeway later, as he served his life prison sentence?

A MOTHER FORGIVES HER SON'S KILLER

Mary Johnson's only son Laramiun was murdered at a party when he was only 20. The killer was a 16-year-old kid named Oshea Israel. He was sentenced to 25 years in prison, and wound up serving 17. God told Mary to visit him in prison. Her visits became regular. When he got out, Mary introduced him to her landlord, and asked him if Oshea could move into the same building - right next to her. Mary not only forgave him, she became like a mother to him. She says, "Forgiveness is for yourself." (In other words, the person who suffers the most is the one who won't forgive).



1. Do you think you could forgive someone who killed someone that you love?

2. Did Mary Johnson feel like forgiving her son's killer right after it happened?

3. Who helped her forgive him?

4. What did she do besides simply forgiving him?

5. Is there someone that the killer had to forgive? Why do you think that is important?





Part Five: What About You?

More questions to think about:

1. Can you think of instances where someone has hurt you? It could be another child, or even a parent or relative.
2. Have you considered forgiving them, even though you don't feel like it?
3. Do you know how to forgive, especially when you don't feel like it?
4. Is there anything for which you haven't forgiven yourself?
5. Have you asked God to forgive you, and, if so, do you think that He has?

TEACHER: Encourage the students to confess unforgiveness towards anyone that comes to mind (including themselves if necessary), and ask God for His forgiveness. You may want to lead them in a prayer like this: *"Father, I confess my unforgiveness toward _____. Please forgive me for holding onto this unforgiveness. I choose to forgive them, and I give these feelings of anger and resentment to You. Please cleanse them from my heart. In Jesus's name, amen."*



Lessons Nine and Ten:

NO FEAR?



Part One: Questions to Consider

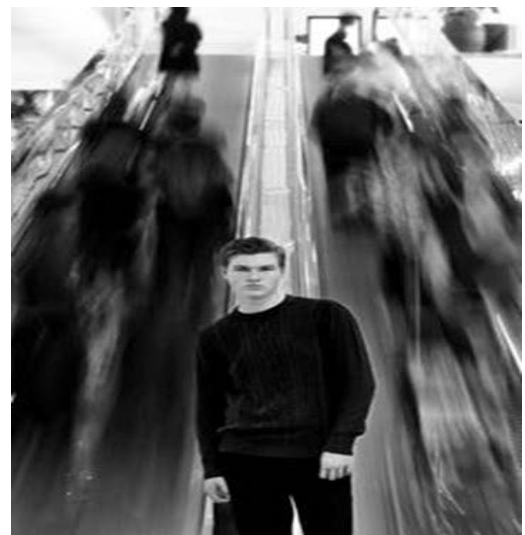
1. People who have courage never feel afraid.
FALSE. Being courageous doesn't mean that you never FEEL afraid. It means that you do what needs to be done **EVEN THOUGH** you may feel fear. **Ask students to tell about a time when they felt great fear. What did they do?**
2. Drugs or alcohol can give us more courage when we need it. FALSE. Whatever feeling you may get from drugs or alcohol, it is because your brain is not working properly. It is not courage, but delusion (and stupidity).
3. People who are big and strong always have more courage than others. FALSE. Size and strength have nothing to do with it. If you are big and strong, for example, you wouldn't always need as much courage as a smaller person.
4. The older you are, the more courage you will have. FALSE. Age has nothing to do with it. You can be a coward at age 60, and be courageous at age 5.
5. It often takes courage to say no to things like drugs.
TRUE. One of the most courageous things that a young person can do is to say no when many around you are saying yes. It takes courage to be different. **Ask students to tell about a time when they had to do this.**
7. If we fear (have reverence for) God, we don't have to fear people. TRUE. The more we fear God, the less we will fear people, or their opinions of us.

Scriptures to Memorize:

II Timothy 1:7 *"For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind."*

Psalms 27:1 *"The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?"*

Psalms 34:4 *"I sought the Lord, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears."*



What do you think this picture might represent?

PART TWO: DAVID'S COURAGE

We read in I Samuel 17 about David's battle against the Philistine Giant, Goliath.

David was simply a shepherd boy when he confronted Goliath on the field of battle; however, he had already killed a lion and a bear, before he met the great challenge of facing a giant. Probably everyone watching that day thought David would be easily destroyed, but they were not adding God to the equation, as David was. David was **passionate** about God's honor; that is, he cared more about God's honor than he did about his own life. The Bible speaks in several places about the "fear of God." It is talking about a reverence and deep respect for Him, and an awareness of His awesomeness. When we "fear" God, we don't have to fear anyone, or anything else. That includes the fear of what people think or say about us. We are free...free to say no to things that hurt God's heart....things that can destroy us, including drugs or alcohol.

We might never face an actual giant as David did, but there may be things in our lives that seem like giants. There may be circumstances in our lives that seem just as impossible as David facing Goliath, but if we are obeying the Lord, He promises to be with us in any situation. He told Joshua three times to be strong and courageous; the third time he also told him not to be afraid, for "The Lord your God is with you wherever you go." (Joshua 1).



45 Then David said to the Philistine, "You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. 46 This day the Lord will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you and take your head from you. And this day I will give the carcasses of the camp of the Philistines to the birds of the air and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. 47 Then all this assembly shall know that the Lord does not save with sword and spear; for the battle is the Lord's, and He will give you into our hands."...

48 So it was, when the Philistine arose and came and drew near to meet David, that David hurried and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine. 49 Then David put his hand in his bag and took out a stone; and he slung it and struck the Philistine in his forehead, so that the stone sank into his forehead, and he fell on his face to the earth. 50 So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone, and struck the Philistine and killed him. But there was no sword in the hand of David. 51 Therefore David ran and stood over the Philistine, took his sword and drew it out of its sheath and killed him, and cut off his head with it.....And when the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled."

David stood all alone when he faced Goliath. Maybe right now you feel like you are standing alone in some way. Maybe you are the only one in your group who chooses not to use drugs or alcohol, or participate in other destructive behaviors. Maybe you are being laughed at for being a real Christian.

You may have heard people say that they feel more confident, or even more courageous when they have drunk some alcohol or taken certain drugs. That isn't really courage, but loss of judgment because their brain isn't working properly.

Do you know what happened on September 11th, 2001? Who were the heroes that day? How did they display courage?

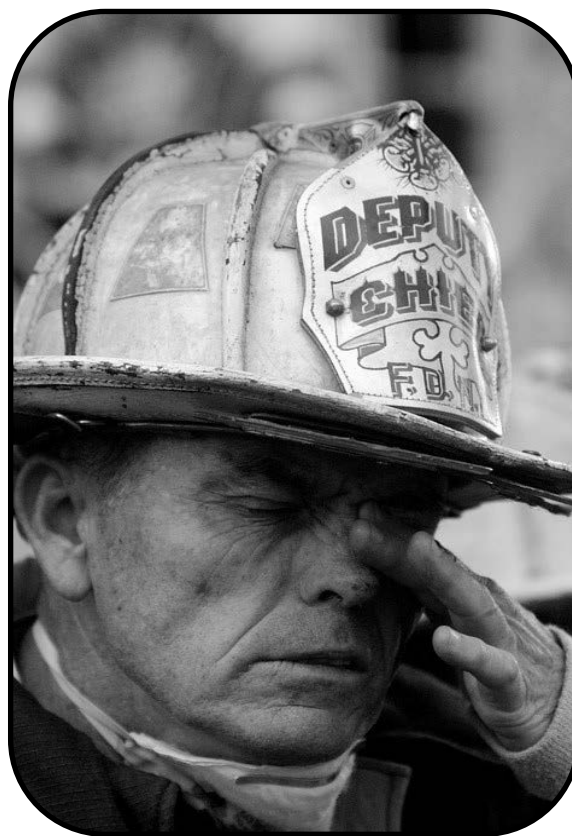
TEACHER: On that day, nearly 3000 people were killed when terrorists took control of four separate airplanes, and flew three of them into buildings. While people were running to get out of the Twin Towers in New York City, heroic firemen and policemen were running into them to save lives. There were 343 firemen killed, as well as 60 policemen and 8 paramedics. These brave men and women showed the world what it means to have real courage, and set a great example for us all. They sacrificed their lives to save others.

Ask the students Who else sacrificed His life, to save others in a different way.

Q 1. Why didn't one of the Israeli army guys go out to fight Goliath?

2. Do you think that David might have felt some fear when he faced Goliath? Did he act afraid?

(TEACHER) David didn't act afraid, because he was so passionate about God's honor, and so angry about Goliath mocking God and His people. God can change us so that His honor becomes more important to us than our own reputation, or even our own life.



PART THREE: OTHER COURAGEOUS PEOPLE IN THE BIBLE

Nehemiah showed great courage after he heard that the city where he grew up, Jerusalem, was still in ruins. He was one of those who had been taken captive to Babylon, and his job was serving wine to the king. One day he had a sad look on his face, and the king asked him about this. Now, if you were the guy who served the king his wine, you first had to taste it yourself, to make sure that it wasn't poisoned. So, if one day you showed up at his table with less than a cheerful look, of course the king might think there was something wrong with the wine. He answered the king by telling him of his sadness over the news of his home city. The king ended up helping Nehemiah go back to Jerusalem to rebuild its walls. (We need to realize that Nehemiah had "done his homework" by praying about the whole situation beforehand).

Even though he had the support of the ruler of that whole part of the world, his task was hard. There were those who didn't want the Jews to come back and rebuild the city. They tried every way they could think of to stop the work: mockery, threats, bad reports to the new king, etc. Remember, though, that Nehemiah was a man of prayer. He prayed before and during the work of rebuilding. He refused to quit, even though his enemies tried to scare him. A conversation in Nehemiah 6, verses 10 and 11, shows his courage and determination. (See it in the box) God blessed Nehemiah's faithfulness and courage, and the walls were rebuilt.



Do you think that Nehemiah could have rebuilt the walls without God's help? Why or why not?

Esther

Esther was a young woman who found herself chosen as the new queen of King Xerxes. When it became known that a wicked man, Haman, had hatched a plan to have all the Jews of the kingdom killed, she went to the king for help. Now that wasn't as simple as it sounds. There was a law in the kingdom that if anyone approached the king without being called by him, they could be put to death. Esther knew there was great danger, so she called for the Jews to fast (go without food) for 3 days before she would go to the king. Well, God gave her favor with the king. She was received by him, and before it was over, Haman was put to death instead of the Jews.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TFa1AMXtwfo> (play from 1:41 to 1:44:46)(4 min.)

John the Baptist

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tBukGcc8p-E> (3:41)

John the Baptist was the only person whom the Bible says was filled with the Holy Spirit while he was still in his mother's womb. We read that he had a very unusual diet - locusts and wild honey. I wonder; did he eat them as a kid also? How would you like to show up in the school lunchroom eating grasshoppers? And his clothes...camel's hair (must have shopped at "Prophet's Closet"). (Might as well have worn a t-shirt that said, "Beat me up at recess"). He had a very special calling, to prepare the people for the coming of Jesus. He took this assignment very seriously, not just telling about Jesus, but challenging the people to repent, which means to change their minds about their sin and turn away from it. He once even called some religious leaders a "bunch of snakes." John was willing to take a stand against evil all by himself.

..."Afterward I came to the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah, the son of Mehetabel, who was a secret informer; and he said, 'Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple, and let us close the doors of the temple, for they are coming to kill you; indeed, at night they will come to kill you.' And I said, 'Should such a man as I flee? And who is there such as I who would go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in!'"



Have you ever had to take a stand for or against something all by yourself?

Do you think you could take a stand for what is right, even if no one else agrees with you?

Who would help you?

Of course John's message and boldness made him unpopular with some people, and soon he was thrown into prison for telling the king that it was wrong for him to have his brother's wife, whose name was Herodias. One day Herodias' daughter danced for the king and his guests, and the king was so impressed that he offered her a wish. Her mother told her to ask for John's head on a plate. Someone was sent to the prison, and John's head was chopped off. He now enjoys a great reward in heaven.

PART FOUR: MODERN-DAY EXAMPLES OF COURAGE

Skyler Miller, a junior at Logan High School in Logan, West Virginia, had prayed for a long time that Jesus would send him into the hall to preach the gospel, because he "wanted to be fearless and bold like the disciples and the apostle Paul." One day he heard God say to him, 'Today is the day, Skyler. Go be a light and let the broken know Who I am.'

Skyler has overcome the often fatal disease of leukemia twice. When he began to preach in the hallway one day, a crowd gathered. Tyler preached and invited the other kids to give their lives to Christ, and about ten of them responded.

That step of obedience didn't end there. Before long, hundreds of people in that area of the country got saved.

IRENA SENDLER SAVED 2500 CHILDREN FROM THE NAZIS



Over half a century ago, a man by the name of Adolf Hitler became the leader of Germany. He had the idea that there were certain groups of people who didn't deserve to live. He especially hated the Jews. He killed over 6 million Jewish people in Europe, as well as smaller numbers of other groups. This horrible time was known as the Holocaust. You may have read about this in school (If you haven't, ask your teacher to tell about it). There are many stories of people who rescued Jews during the Holocaust,

but Irena Sendler's story is especially amazing. When the Nazis (Hitler's soldiers) invaded her country, Poland, and rounded up all the Jews into a ghetto (a walled-in part of the city where they forced them to live), she knew that before long they would be taken to concentration camps, where many of them would be killed. She was a social worker and became a nurse so she could sneak food and medicine into the ghetto. She did even more: Irena and her group helped get about 2500 children out of the ghetto, to keep them from being taken to the camps. They gave them something to put them to sleep, and sneaked them out in toolboxes, cloth sacks, or even through sewer drains. They were taken to Christian orphanages, where they were given new names, so that the Nazis wouldn't know they were Jews. She kept their real names in a jar buried in her backyard, so that she could try to get them back to their families when the war was over. Irena was eventually caught by the Nazis, who imprisoned and tortured her, breaking both of her legs. When the war ended she devoted herself to getting the children back to their families.



Desmond Doss didn't believe that he should carry a gun or threaten another human life, which became a problem when he was drafted into the Second World War. He was allowed to serve as a medic (field "doctor"). On Okinawa Island, when the Japanese attacked his unit on top of a cliff, nearly every man was hit by at least one bullet. Desmond quickly rigged up a stretcher that could be lowered by a series of ropes and pulleys to the ground below. Then, by himself and with the enemy sometimes shooting at him, he lowered his fellow soldiers, one by one, to safety. President Truman said it was 75 men that Doss pulled to safety when he presented him the Medal of Honor, but Doss insists it was closer to 50. That was only one instance of astonishing bravery and self-sacrifice Doss showed during his military service.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sXu9J1R5H8M> (1:33)

A YOUNG HEROINE

Malala was born on 12 July 1997 in Mingora, a town in the Swat District of northwest Pakistan. She was named after a Pashtun heroine. Her father ran a school near the family's home. He was against the Taliban (terror group), who were trying to stop girls from going to school. Malala herself spoke out for the rights of girls to study. She and her father both received death threats, but it didn't stop them.

In 2011, she received Pakistan's first National Youth Peace Prize, and was nominated for the International Children's Peace Prize. Because she was receiving so much attention around the world, the Taliban decided to kill her.

On October 9th, 2012, as Malala and her friends were traveling home from school, a masked gunman entered their school bus and asked for Malala by name. She was shot with a single bullet which went through her head, neck, and shoulder. Two of her friends were also injured in the attack. She survived, but was in critical condition. She was moved to Birmingham in the United Kingdom for treatment at a hospital that specializes in military injuries, and wasn't able to leave the hospital until January of 2013.

Because the Taliban had tried to kill Malala, people protested all across Pakistan. Over 2 million people signed a petition demanding the right to education, and the government passed Pakistan's first *Right to Free and Compulsory Education* Bill. She accepted the Nobel Peace Prize on December 10th, 2014 with Indian children's rights and education advocate Kailash Satyarthi. Malala gave her \$1.1 million prize money to pay for the creation of a secondary school for girls in Pakistan.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NIqOhxQ0-H8> (2:21)

TEACHER: If you have less than ten minutes remaining in your class time, you may want to skip these questions and go on to part five.

1. Have you ever faced a situation as difficult and dangerous as that of Malala?

2. Is there something more important to you than your own comfort or your own safety? What if Malala had only cared about herself?

3. How might we compare Malala's enemies with those who push drugs?

PART FIVE: WHAT ABOUT YOU?

Maybe you will never face the kind of danger that Malala faced, but at times you will have to decide whether to do the right thing, even if it is very hard. It may be that someone will offer you alcohol or drugs, or try to get you to do something else that could destroy your life. It may even be a "friend" who does it. Why do so-called friends offer us these things? It may be that they don't want to do it alone, that it will be more "fun" to do it with someone else. They may want you to become their customer, or break down your guard, so that they can take advantage of you (A common plan of guys is to get a girl drunk or high, in order to be able to do what they want with her). Whatever their reason, you can be sure that they are not a true friend.

When it comes to drugs or alcohol, it can take courage just to say no. After all, "everyone is doing it," right? No. That is what you are supposed to believe, but it isn't true. Many of the most successful people in the world have said no to these life-wreckers, and their stories can encourage the rest of us. How **do** you say no to those who try to get you to drink or use drugs? The best way is still to just use that one word. NO. You don't have to think up excuses. You don't owe anyone an explanation, unless you want to say something that will discourage others from doing it.... "I don't want to be a zombie," "...I like my brain the way it is," "I'm already addicted to milk," "I get high on Jesus," ...etc.

It isn't just about you. You were created (yes, created - you weren't an accident) for a special purpose, and much of that purpose has to do with helping other people. Of course the most important way that you can help anyone is to point them to Jesus. Most other ways of helping have to do with their safety or happiness during their life here on earth. Far more important is their "forever." They, as well as you, will spend forever either in heaven or hell. Remember to start with simply being a friend to them.

Have you begun to share your faith in Jesus with your friends and others? Many people find it difficult to do this, because it sometimes causes them to be laughed at or ostracized (left out). God can give you the courage to do it, if you ask Him. There are also many books and websites that can give you ideas as to how to go about it. The most important part, though, is what they see in your own life. If you really follow the teachings of the Bible, they will see a difference. This doesn't mean that you have to be perfect before you can share the truth. No one is.

Ask the Lord to fill you with His Holy Spirit. Jesus told His followers, just before He went back to heaven, to wait in Jerusalem until they received power, when the Holy Spirit would come upon them. Power for what? Mainly, to be "witnesses," to share their faith with others. Some of them, like Peter, were not bold men before they were filled with the Holy Spirit, but afterwards, what a change! Peter, who had said that he didn't even know Jesus, because he was afraid, stood up and preached a powerful message after he was filled, and thousands of people got saved.

(TEACHER, David Wilkerson, the founder of Teen Challenge, realized in the earliest days of the program that the baptism in the Holy Spirit is what made a major difference in the lives of those who overcame their addictions and lived lives of victory.) Take time to discuss with the students what it means to be saved, and what it means to be filled with the Holy Spirit. You will want to provide opportunities for them to pray the sinner's prayer and/or pray to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Lessons Eleven and Twelve: **CONTROL MYSELF?**



PART ONE: THOUGHTS TO CONSIDER:

1. It is better to get even than to stay mad at someone.
FALSE. Neither one is right. We need to choose to forgive, and ask God to cleanse us of unforgiveness. Romans 12:19...*"Beloved, do not avenge yourselves,...for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay,' says the Lord."* Ask, **"What do you think Ephesians 4:26 means, when it tells us not to let the sun go down on our anger?"**
2. It is impossible to keep our thoughts clean, when there is so much impurity around us. FALSE. God has provided spiritual weapons to help us win this battle. It starts with **wanting** to be pure, and then using His Word as a sword.
3. When we are angry, we should let everyone know it.
FALSE. We should start by talking to God about it. His Holy Spirit will let us know if we were wrong, if we will listen. If someone has truly done us wrong, we need to look at Matthew 18:15-17....*"Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone...But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that, 'by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.'* And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector."
4. Sometimes it is good to have a drink (of alcohol) or use drugs to help us get over our anger or hurt. FALSE. Either of these "false comforts" are a path to abuse and destruction. We may feel better for a short time, but when that wears off, we still have to face our problem. Also, we will have taken the first step towards **addiction**.

Scriptures to Memorize:

1 Corinthians 9:27 ...*"I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified."*

Proverbs 29:11 *"A fool vents all his feelings, [loses his temper] but a wise man holds them back."*

Proverbs 21:23 *"Whoever guards his mouth and tongue keeps his soul from troubles."*

Romans 12:2 *"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."*



Part Two: What About My "Rights?"

In these verses, we see that Jesus didn't hold on to His "rights" as God the Son. Instead, we see that He became like a servant. He was here on earth totally to do what God the Father had asked Him to do....serve and die. Even when He was hanging on the cross, and was mocked by some who watched, He didn't stand up for His rights, even though He could have asked for thousands of angels to destroy His enemies.

What if Jesus would have fought for His rights? First of all, He would have gotten into a lot of fights, because He had many enemies among the religious leaders, and they were always trying to trick Him into saying or doing the wrong thing. It wasn't too long before they wanted Him dead, and they worked hard to make it happen.

There are other "rights" that we think we need to defend, such as our time, our things, our reputation, our money, and our relationships. When we insist on our rights, we run into battles with nearly everyone. Even little "Buster," who gets his way at home will eventually find out that it doesn't work that way out in "the big world." When he gets to kindergarten, he gets a big surprise....other kids have rights, too, and some of them will fight for them. Even if Buster is the "baddest" (toughest) kid in his class, he will run into someone who is "badder" somewhere, like the second grade bully on the school bus. And then there are teachers, principals, police, judges, etc. that he will run into, who aren't going to treat him like Mommy does.

There may be times when we feel that people in authority have no right to tell us how to do this or that. Maybe we think that it is none of their business. The Bible has a name for this kind of attitude. It is rebellion. This is a dangerous attitude, because it can take us out from under God's "umbrella of protection" that we will talk about in the lesson on obedience. God has placed people in authority (parents, teachers, policemen, etc.) over us for our own protection. The prophet Samuel told King Saul that rebellion was like the sin of **witchcraft**. Pretty serious stuff.



Philippians 2:5-9

"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, Who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore, God hath highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name,..."



Many times in our lives, we will have people say or do things to us that make us angry because we feel that we have a "right" to be treated better than that. What about our feelings?

What are some examples of this?



What is something that really makes you angry? Why? What should you do about it?

Everyone has angry feelings at times. In the first chapter of the first book of the Bible, we read that we are made in God's image. That includes having feelings like He has. Twice in the Bible we read about Jesus getting angry, but it wasn't about **His** rights. Once it was because people were dishonoring God's house, and the other time it was because He knew that the religious leaders were against His healing a man on the Sabbath day.

We sometimes expect certain things to happen a certain way because that's how they happened in the past. Back to our imaginary "Buster;" we see that his mother let him argue with her, even yell at her or hit her when he was a toddler. He goes off to school thinking that everyone else will let him do it also, whenever he is mad....until he meets "Bruiser." Many arguments, fights, and even wars have started because of "rights."

When we allow anger to have a place in our lives, we sometimes open ourselves up to other things as well, including fear or depression. Often when people are angry, they are more easily tempted to drink, take drugs, or do something else to make themselves feel better. We learned about these "false comforts" in an earlier lesson. Satan, our enemy, loves to set traps to destroy us.

You may have a lot of anger because of things that have happened to you. Many grown men, for example, still carry a lot of anger around because their dad either mistreated them or wasn't connected at all to their life. You may already be dealing with that, and/or other things. Maybe you feel that because life hasn't been fair, you will just do what you want, and "forget the rest of the world." That's exactly what your enemy, the devil, wants. He will see that someone comes along to offer you something to "make you feel better."



And it just might....for a little while, until you find yourself trapped. Until you are vomiting your guts out, or having nightmares even in the daytime, and feel like you will die unless you get another "fix." Or, until you look at yourself in the mirror and see a different person.

There is a true story of a young man whom God saved out of a life of alcohol addiction. He even went to a Bible College, graduated, and became a minister. One day he was driving home after having an argument with someone about money, and the thought came to him (you know where it came from), "Why not stop and have a beer?" He stopped at a bar. Q. Do you think that he had just one beer?

No. He said, "I went on a seven-year drunk." Imagine that! One drink, to make him feel better, led to seven years of his life being lost. Thankfully, he survived, and eventually stopped drinking again, but he could never have those years back. A few years after he stopped drinking, he died in his sleep, around the age of 50. It seems that his body had never completely recovered from the years of abuse.

Just as we talked about in the lesson on forgiveness, you may need to confess this kind of anger to God and ask Him to help you forgive. Remember, forgiveness is a **choice**. We can't change our feelings; we **choose** to forgive, ask God to forgive us, and **He** brings healing and a change of feelings. Remember, He is supernatural, more super than Superman, and through His power we can be changed.

So, we've talked about our rights, and choosing to forgive, but what about the moment when that angry feeling rises up inside of us? Before we have the chance to pray about it, or even really think about it, we may have a very strong urge to to react, whether with our words, our fists, or worse. This is where we need to have self-control.

What is the secret? It is no secret at all. We need to have more strength on the inside (our spirit) than the strength of the temptation (to "blow our top") that comes to us from the outside. Only time spent with God, in His Word and in prayer, can produce this. If we don't, we will continue to lose the battles with anger and other temptations.

PART THREE (A): OTHER AREAS WHERE WE NEED SELF-CONTROL

You are living in a world that surrounds you with temptations. Whether it is drugs, alcohol, sex, or something less harmful such as overeating, the battle is never over.



The first thing to remember when it comes to temptation is to stay as far away as you can.

Someone once asked, "How do you control yourself when you are in the back seat of a car with your girlfriend or boyfriend?" Stupid question? Yes. If you have half a brain (wisdom; discretion, etc.), you don't GET into the back seat of the car with your girlfriend or boyfriend. If you want to avoid a problem with alcohol, you stay away from parties or other places where you know it will be available.



What would you answer if someone invited you to this kind of party?

What about television and the internet? If you want to keep your mind clean, don't surf the internet without a responsible person close by.

PART THREE (B): WHY DO I DO WHAT I DO?

Many of us have patterns in our lives - things that we are used to doing. We choose to do some of these things, but others have become a habit. Others are compulsions (things we feel a strong urge to do, even if they don't always make sense or we don't like them).

When we find that we can't stop doing a certain thing even when we try, it may be that it has become an addiction. It could be addiction to tobacco, alcohol, drugs, sexual activity, pornography, or other harmful things. Many people think that they can mess with these kinds of things without getting addicted, until one day they try to stop and find out that they can't. That is when they need help, starting with help from God. In the last section of this lesson, we will look at "tools" or "weapons" that God has provided to help us get free/stay free of these traps.

PART FOUR: PEOPLE IN THE BIBLE WHO SHOWED SELF-CONTROL:

David: In I Samuel chapter 24, we read about David and Saul.... "Now it happened, when Saul had returned from following the Philistines, that it was told him, saying, "Take note! David is in the Wilderness of En Gedi." 2 Then Saul took three thousand chosen men from all Israel, and went to seek David and his men on the Rocks of the Wild Goats. 3 So he came to the sheepfolds by the road, where there was a cave; and Saul went in to attend to his needs. (David and his men were staying in the recesses of the cave.) 4 Then the men of David said to him, "This is the day of which the Lord said to you, 'Behold, I will deliver your enemy into your hand, that you may do to him as it seems good to you.'" And David arose and secretly cut off a corner of Saul's robe. 5 Now it happened afterward that David's heart troubled him because he had cut Saul's robe. 6 And he said to his men, "The Lord forbid that I should do this thing to my master, the Lord's anointed, to stretch out my hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the Lord." 7 **So David restrained his servants with these words, and did not allow them to rise against Saul.** And Saul got up from the cave and went on his way."



David could have killed Saul, who was trying to kill him. Why didn't he?

Daniel had been taken captive to Babylon along with many other Israelites. He and some of his friends were chosen for special service to the king, because they were "smart, wise, and good-looking." There was a problem, though. The man in charge of their training wanted them to eat and drink certain things, things that Daniel and his friends felt they couldn't eat. In Daniel chapter one we read,

"But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the chief of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself."

Daniel persuaded the man to let them eat their own kind of foods, and they ended up looking healthier than the others, but can you imagine the pressure that was on them? Their choice could have cost them everything. You may be faced with difficult choices when it comes to the temptation to try drugs, alcohol, sex, or some other destructive activity. You will be in a position to overcome that temptation if you have been strengthening your spirit man.

PART FIVE: A BATTLE YOU CAN WIN

When the Apostle Paul wrote the words on the right, he was referring to athletes, especially those who competed in the ancient Olympic games. The winners would receive a wreath made of olive leaves. Paul refers to the great self-discipline and self-control that they practiced, to earn a prize that would not last. **How much greater it is to "train" for a crown that will last forever, our reward in heaven.**

Are you having a hard time with self-control? God has already provided tools for you to win this battle. It is up to you to begin to use them.

Here is a sample battle plan that you may want to use, to strengthen your spirit man:

10 - 15 minutes of Bible reading

10 minutes of Bible memorizing, especially verses that have to do with your areas of weakness).

(Start with one or two sentences; it will get easier to memorize longer portions as you keep doing it)

10 minutes or more of prayer and praise (You can go back and look at the lesson on "Prayerfulness" for ideas to help you)

For some people, morning is the best time to spend with the Lord; for others, it is before they go to bed. The important thing is that we give God the best part of our day. Don't fall into the habit of mumbling a half-asleep prayer when you are falling into bed.

Now, you might say, "I don't have time to do all that every day." Do you have time for Facebook, or watching your favorite team on TV, or surfing the internet? We humanoids MAKE time for things that are important to us. You need to ask yourself how badly you really WANT to win the battles that you face.

Are you going to church? We're not talking about going on Christmas and Easter. Are you there every week? You may have heard people say, "I don't get anything out of church." What do they want "out" of it? Our number one reason to go to church should be to honor God; to worship Him with other believers, and be encouraged by Him and them.

"Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified." 1 Corinthians 9:24-27



Did you ever consider that maybe someone else may be encouraged just by seeing you in church every week?

Is there someone that you see at church that makes you feel encouraged? That asks about you? Someone that lets you know they are praying for you?

Being part of a church provides accountability in your life. What does that mean? It means that you are surrounded by people that care about you, who will notice when you are missing, and even call to see if there is something wrong.

Besides the accountability that comes with being part of a church, you need people in your life who will listen without judging, but aren't afraid to tell you the truth. For some of you, this will include one or both of your parents (not always possible, for various reasons: mom and/or dad messed up with drugs or other problems, or never there for you). It can be an older brother or sister, or mature friend. This person (or persons) could include a special schoolteacher, Sunday School teacher, pastor, children's church director, youth leader, or even your coach. It is best, of course, if they are a Christian.



If there is no one who is filling that role in your life, you could ask someone to fill it. It may mean going to someone whom you respect and asking them to pray for you and give you advice about things. In this way you may encourage them to get more involved in your life and be the person that fills that need.

There is another reason to have someone trustworthy in whom we can confide. When we are harassed by the enemy, whether with temptation, fear, or any other issue, simply telling someone else about it exposes him, and often helps us overcome. Satan loves to work in secret, and when we expose him, he often runs and hides.



Why is it important to have people in our lives who will tell us the truth about ourselves? Is there someone like this in your life? If so, describe that person.

TEACHER: Please be sure to ask whether there are any students who have not received Jesus as their Savior, and if there are, encourage them to do so. Warn them about the danger of pushing aside the voice of the Holy Spirit and hardening their heart.

Lesson Thirteen:

NEVER GIVE UP!



Definition of Endurance: To go through a difficult situation without quitting or losing hope.

PART ONE: QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. Problems that we face can make us stronger, with the help of God. TRUE. Everyone will have problems in this life. For the follower of Jesus, problems can become opportunities to get to know God better, and also show others that He is real.
2. God doesn't always know how bad things are for us. FALSE. God knows everything, and completely understands our sufferings. Jesus suffered more than anyone for us, and He can carry us through our tough times.
3. Sometimes it is ok to use alcohol or drugs to get us through a difficult time. FALSE: It is never ok to use alcohol or drugs to help us "get through" a hard time. Alcohol and drugs are "false comforts," which Satan offers us, in order to trap us in worse problems.
4. Nothing is too hard for God. TRUE. (See Jeremiah 32:27) ASK, "Have you ever faced a problem that you **thought** was too hard for Him?"
5. If we know what God wants us to do, we should keep trying, even if others think it's impossible. TRUE. If we know that God is leading us to do something, it doesn't matter how many people think that we can't do it. All through history, men and women (and young people) have obeyed the Lord and done the "impossible," because, again, there is nothing too hard for Him.



6. The best place to find encouragement is the Bible. TRUE. The Bible is not like any other book. It is more than just stories and information. It is a supernatural book. When we read and study it, it has power to change our lives.

Scriptures to Memorize:

Galatians 6:9 *"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."*

Hebrews 10:36 *"For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise."*

Hebrews 12:2 *.."Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."*



Q Is there something that you have been expecting, or something that you have hoped for, maybe for a long time, and it still hasn't happened? It may be something that you were promised, or that you have worked so hard for, but it now seems like you will never have it. Have you ever been tempted to give up on it? Do you sometimes feel that bad situations will never change in your life? Have you ever been tempted to try drugs or other destructive things to help you feel better? Many people have chosen the "quick fix," by turning for relief to something that will become a trap and destroy them. Whether it is drugs or something else, your enemy, the devil, will be sure to offer you something to keep you from turning to the only One Who can really help you - Jesus.

PART TWO: DAVID'S ENDURING HOPE

I Samuel 16-31

David had been anointed as the future king of Israel by the prophet Samuel, but it was years before it came to pass. In between, he killed a giant, became a soldier in King Saul's army, and later was hunted by the jealous Saul. He barely escaped with his life more than once. He even had an opportunity to kill Saul and end the terrible nightmare, but didn't.

David could have become angry and given up hope of surviving, much less becoming king. But he had grown close to God during his long, lonely hours as a shepherd boy. He had learned that nothing was impossible for God. In his greatest moments of discouragement, David turned to God, Whom he had found to always be faithful. Many of his Psalms were written during such times, including Psalm 23.

One day news came that Saul and his sons had been killed in battle. Although this meant that David's long season of running for his life was over, he was still sad to hear the news. Not only was Saul dead, but also Jonathan, Saul's son, who was David's best friend. David was then crowned king of Judah, and later, king of all Israel.

PART THREE: THE GIRL WHO DIDN'T GIVE UP

In 1974, a plane was struck by lightning while flying over the Amazon Jungle of South America. It was shattered into pieces, and everyone on board was lost....or so it was thought. Miraculously, one girl survived. Still strapped to her seat, Juliane Koepke fell nearly two miles into the jungle, receiving only a broken collarbone, concussion, a black eye, and cuts.

Juliane's parents were zoologists (scientists that study animals) in the jungle, and her father had taught her how to survive there. He had told her that if she ever got lost in the jungle, she should look for a stream, follow it to a larger one, and follow that to a river, where she would eventually find help. (Next page)



The day after the crash she found a creek and started to wade downstream, but it was very hard. The only food she had was some candy she had found at the crash site, and her wounds were quickly filled with parasites (tiny bugs that eat flesh).

As she travelled downstream, she discovered more wreckage from the plane, and found some of the crash victims. *"I found another row of seats with three dead women still strapped in. They had landed head-first and the impact must have been so hard that they were buried almost two feet into the ground. I was horrified -- I didn't want to touch them but I wanted to make sure that my mother wasn't one of them. So I took a stick and knocked a shoe off one of the bodies. The toe nails had nail polish on them and I knew it could not have been my mother because she never used nail polish."*

Juliane continued wading through jungle streams full of crocodiles, piranhas, and devil rays.

"Sometimes I would see a crocodile on the bank and it would start into the water towards me, but I was not afraid. I knew crocodiles don't tend to attack humans."

After 10 days, starved and exhausted, she finally came to a small boat and a hut on the river. She stayed there, hoping to be rescued. The next day a group of Peruvian lumberjacks found her and brought her to the next town. She became known as the miracle girl, and received hundreds of letters from people she had never met before. *"It was so strange,"* she says, smiling. *"Some of the letters were simply addressed 'Juliane -- Peru' but they still all found their way to me."*



One of the greatest examples of endurance is the story of **Louis Zamperini**. When Louis was young, his older

Q 1. What do you think would have happened if Juliane had just given up and stayed where she was?

2. Whom do we have with us that Juliane doesn't mention in her story?

3. Do you ever think that it might be easier to just go along with those who mess with drugs, instead of choosing to stay away from them?

brother got him involved in running, to keep him out of trouble. He set a high school record for the mile run in 1936, and later became part of the 1936 Olympic team. After the Olympics, he set a college record for the mile.

After college, Zamperini joined the U.S. Army Air Corps. His plane crashed into the Pacific Ocean in 1943. He and two crewmates survived, and drifted on two life rafts for weeks. One of the men died, but Zamperini and Russell Phillips finally made it to the Marshall Islands on their 47th day at sea. They were immediately captured by the Japanese Navy, held in captivity, severely beaten, and mistreated until the end of the war. At the Naoetsu prison camp Zamperini was tormented by prison guard Mutsuhiro "The Bird" Watanabe. He had at first been declared missing at sea, and then, a year and a day after his disappearance, KIA (killed in action). When he eventually returned home, he received a hero's welcome.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XrBTDbxOZE8)

v=XrBTDbxOZE8 (Powerful scene from "Unbroken" movie about Zamperini) (play from 0 to 3:55)

PART FIVE: WHAT ABOUT YOU?

What about you?
Have you ever felt
like giving up?
That life was just
too hard, too painful?
Maybe the things that have
happened to you
have made you
angry and bitter, or
afraid to even hope
anymore.



There is good news. There is Someone Who understands how you feel. He knows you better than you know yourself. His name is Jesus. The Bible tells us that He was tempted in every way that we are, and yet didn't sin. He suffered and died for YOU on the cross.

Whatever you may be going through right now, just know that you can talk to Him about it. There are also people who care about you, and are ready to listen...perhaps your Sunday School teacher, or a schoolteacher, or coach, or a caring neighbor.

You can pray about it right now, in this class, and have your teacher and classmates pray with you, if you like.



TEACHER: Please encourage the students to share any prayer needs that they have, and take time to prayer over them. You may want to start by asking for prayer for a need in your own life, or for a family member. Often other people feel more free to share their problems and needs when they see that we also are dealing with issues in our own life or family.

NOTE: Please consider going on to Unit Two of “Undeclared,” which deals with “Purpose.”

Partnering with Parents

Dear Parent(s),

We are so happy to be able to serve your son/daughter. Our prayer is that we, with God's help, can encourage him/her to become all that God intends; to fulfill His purpose for his/her life. God has a great plan for your child, and He loves him/her very much.

We want to encourage you as a parent also. Each week we will be sending home with your son or daughter a "Partnering with Parents" paper, with information that you will hopefully find useful.

Thank you for the privilege of serving you and your son/daughter!

Partnering with Parents

Leading your Children to Christ

Dear Parent(s),

There are many things that we can do to help our kids in this life. Some are discussed in other "Partnering with Parents" letters. The MOST important thing is to point them to Jesus Christ, and encourage them to make a decision to commit their lives to Him as their Savior. We must not assume that our kids have made this decision just because they attend church and Sunday School regularly. Of course pastors and Sunday School teachers often do lead children to pray a sinner's prayer, but it is important that parents make sure that their kids not only understand what it means to receive Christ, but also that there are eternal consequences.

Perhaps you are a parent who doesn't know Christ personally yourself. If so, there is no better time than right now to make the decision to give your life to Him. Your eternal soul is at stake, as well as what happens in your life here on earth.....and, the effect it will have on your children.

Partnering with Parents

This Week's Focus: Building up your Child

Dear Parent(s),

Most young people struggle with how they see themselves. They are bombarded with messages, from their friends, other peers, even strangers at times. These messages may be in the form of mockery, ridicule, criticism, and outright rejection. It is extremely important that you, as a parent, take special care to give your child positive, encouraging messages, that build up the child's self-esteem.

Most important is conveying to your child how God sees him or her. There are many Scripture verses that tell us how God sees us, and the plans that He has for us. It would be great if you could set up a system to reward your kids for Scripture verses that they memorize.

Partnering with Parents

This Week's Focus: Do Our Children Know They are Loved?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rnum2n1Z-kw> (2:10) Video, "I just wanted to be Loved"

We might take it for granted that our kids know that we love them, but it isn't necessarily true. Kids sometimes interpret things differently than they are intended. For instance, when we discipline them in anger, it may send a message that we don't like them, or even don't love them. They may feel that we resent them as a person, rather than disapproving of some aspect of their behavior.

This is why communication is so important. We need to keep the channels of communication open between us and our kids. A major part of this involves listening, as we discuss in another "Partnering" letter. If our kids feel that they can tell us what's going on in their lives, especially their feelings about themselves, it can make all the difference in the world. Then, when we do need to apply discipline, we can discuss the reason for it, and reassure them that, while we disapprove of a specific behavior, we still love them just as much as ever.

We also need to make the most of opportunities, not just to tell them that we love them, but to show it by our responses...when they succeed, when they fail, when they experience rejection, etc.

Partnering with Parents

What are our Goals in raising our children?

We need to ask ourselves what our goals are in raising our children. Of course, we want to raise a secure, well-adjusted child. (It has been said that one of the worst forms of child abuse is to raise a child that no one can love). But, more than this, we want our children to grow up with a "Kingdom" mentality...that is, they understand why God put them here...to love Him and glorify Him in their life actions and testimony.

*The Puritans (group of early American settlers) understood that their main responsibility in raising their children was not to make them happy, but holy. They knew that true happiness was a by-product of holiness, and that happiness could never be attained when it was pursued.

However noble our goals and our understanding of how to reach them, we need to remember a couple things:

That it is prayer, prayer, and more prayer that is going to make the real difference.

That even with our best efforts, and prayers, our children may, at least for a time, try their own "ways" and bring us hurt and disappointment. Then, we still have to stand on Proverbs 22:6..."Train up a child in the way which he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it."

Partnering with Parents

This Week's Focus: Words That Wound

Words are powerful, whether they are used to tear down or to build up. It's important that the words we speak to our kids, even when we have to apply discipline, serve to build and not tear down.

It is easy, when we are tired or irritable, to speak words that wound, such as "Won't you ever grow up?" or "I am so sick of your attitude." Well into their adult years, men can remember feelings of hurt or anger over critical words spoken, especially by their fathers. One man said, "I only wanted to hear him say just once what God said about Jesus on the day of His [baptism]: 'This is My beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased.'"

Partnering with Parents

This Week's Focus: Know Who Your Kids' Friends Are

As parents, we can try to do everything right in the way we relate to our kids, and overlook one important thing; knowing their friends. The older a child gets, the more they will (normally) be influenced by their peers, and less by their parents. Even the most well-disciplined and well-behaved young person can have his or her attitude (and life) detoured by the wrong friends.

It is wise to start while your kids are young, even preschool age, to monitor their friendships. Of course no parent can completely control who their child will rub shoulders with, especially as they go off to school or even encounter other kids at church. However, a parent, even in those situations where they are not on the scene, can provide protection, especially if they develop and maintain good communication with their son or daughter.

It goes back to the issue of LISTENING. If your kids know that they can talk with you about anything, it will keep you on the inside track when it comes to their relationships. This becomes even more important as your kids get into their teen years.

There may be instances where you, as a parent, will have to firmly say no, when it comes to your child spending time with certain other young people. This is never easy, and you run the risk of angering not only your child, but the potential friend, AND their parents. It is worth it in the long run, however, when you consider the potential damage the wrong kind of friend can do.

Partnering with Parents

This Week's Focus: Know Who Your Kids' Friends' PARENTS Are

We have looked at the importance of knowing who your kids' friends are. There is another area, one that is often overlooked. Who are the **parents** of your kids' friends? What will your son or daughter encounter when they are visiting their homes?

While your son or daughter's friend may seem well-adjusted and decent, there may be issues in their homes that present dangers. These may include parents (or siblings) that are into pornography, alcohol or drug abuse, or even witchcraft, to name just a few. Just as you wouldn't want these elements in your home, you should be just as concerned about the possibility of your child's exposure to them in another home.

Don't be afraid to check it out. It is better to be safe, even if it may mean your child, their friend, and their friend's parent(s) mad at you. Don't wait until something happens that may introduce destructive elements into your son or daughter's life.

Partnering with Parents

Keeping Promises

One of the things that can cause children to become angry and rebel is when their parents break their promises. Everyone may have to break a promise at times, when a crisis arises and we have to be somewhere that we hadn't planned. However, when this happens regularly, children soon learn that their parent's word doesn't mean anything. This can lead to distrust and even bitterness, which can then lead to rebellion.

We need to first be very careful about making promises, and when we do make them, to do our best to keep them. In Colossians 3:21, we are told, *"Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged."*

Partnering with Parents

Praying for your child(ren)

There is nothing more important in parenting than praying for our children. We can't begin to protect them from every danger they will face - spiritual, physical, psychological - but God is with them everywhere. If you haven't done so already, please start the practice of praying for them every day.

You may want to also start a prayer journal, writing down what you prayed, and the date. Then, you will be able to keep track of God's answers, and your faith will grow. There is nothing too big or too small to bring to God's attention. He cares deeply about you and your children.

There is more. Jesus, after casting a demon out of a boy, spoke to His disciples about the role of prayer **and fasting**. Fasting adds power to our prayer life. If you have never fasted, you may want to start by skipping just one meal, and use that time to pray. You may also choose to only fast from sweets for a time, or meat, or even certain activities, such as TV watching, etc. Just know that prayer and fasting do make a difference.

What You Need to Know About Drugs, Part One

Alcohol

Alcohol slows down vital functions, which results in slurred speech, unsteady movement, and an inability to react quickly. It distorts a person's judgement. If they consume more than the body can handle, they start to feel "stupid" or lose coordination or control.

Alcohol overdose can cause inability to feel pain, toxicity causing the body to vomit out the poison, and finally unconsciousness, coma, or death. The reactions depend on how much is consumed and how quickly.

Marijuana

Marijuana joints create severe impact on the user's lungs. Not only does it cause sore throats and chest colds, but gives as much exposure to cancer-causing chemicals as smoking five cigarettes.

Marijuana users have poorer memories and mental ability than non-users. Animals that have been given marijuana by researchers have even suffered structural brain damage. Whereas alcohol contains only one substance (ethanol), marijuana contains more than 400 known chemicals, including the same cancer-causing substances found in tobacco smoke. THC (tetrahydrocannabinol), the main mind-altering ingredient found in marijuana, stays in the body for weeks or even possibly months, and damages the immune system.

Cocaine

Once a person begins to take cocaine, it is almost impossible to stop, because of its physical and mental grip. It stimulates parts of the brain and creates a feeling of euphoria (high). Only higher doses and more frequent use can bring about the same effect after the first use. It can lead to death from respiratory failure, stroke, cerebral hemorrhage, or heart attack. Children of cocaine addicted mothers come into the world as addicts themselves, and many have birth defects and other problems.

Crack

Crack is the most potent form of cocaine, and also the most dangerous. It can be up to twice as strong as regular cocaine. Because addiction can develop even more quickly if it is sniffed rather than snorted, a user can become addicted after the first try. Crack is often sold at such low prices that even teens can buy it, but because the amount needed to support the habit grows so quickly, it does become very expensive.

Partnering with Parents

What You Need to Know about Drugs, Part Two

Crystal Meth

Crystal meth first acts as a stimulant, but then begins to systematically destroy the body. It can lead to memory loss, aggression, psychotic behavior, and heart and brain damage. It is highly addictive. Many get hooked from the first time that they use it. It is one of the most difficult addictions to treat, and leads to death for many.

Inhalants

Inhalants can cause damage to the heart, kidneys, brain, liver, bone marrow, and other organs. They starve the body of oxygen, and force the heart to beat irregularly and more rapidly. Repeated use can lead to muscle wasting, and damage to the lungs and immune system.

Heroin

The buyer of heroin on the street never knows the actual strength of the drug in the packet, so there is always the risk of an overdose. It is highly addictive and withdrawal is extremely painful. The drug quickly breaks down the immune system, and leaves one sickly, thin, and ultimately, dead.

Prescription Painkillers (Oxycodone, Hydrocodone, etc.)

These drugs react on the nervous system in a similar way to heroin. Oxycodone is the most dangerous. It is sold under many trade names: Percodan, Endodan, Roxiprin, Percocet, Roxicet, and OxyContin. They are all very addicting, and the withdrawal can be agonizing.

Ritalin

Ritalin is the common name for methylphenidate. It is classified by the Drug Enforcement Administration as a Schedule II narcotic, the same classification as cocaine, morphine, and amphetamines. Teenagers abuse it for its stimulant effects.

Effects of Ritalin use include: nervousness, insomnia, anorexia, loss of appetite, pulse changes, heart problems, and weight loss. It can also cause hallucinations, suicidal thoughts, and psychotic behavior, including violent behavior.

*The above information has been adapted from material provided by The Foundation For A Drug-Free World. You can learn more at www.drugfreeworld.org.

Partnering with Parents

Warning Signs of Possible Drug Abuse*

Physical and health signs of drug abuse

- Eyes that are bloodshot or pupils that are smaller or larger than normal.
- Frequent nosebleeds could be related to snorted drugs (meth or cocaine).
- Changes in appetite or sleep patterns. Sudden weight loss or weight gain.
- Seizures without a history of epilepsy.
- Deterioration in personal grooming or physical appearance.
- Impaired coordination, injuries/accidents/bruises that they won't or can't tell you about- they don't know how they got hurt.
- Unusual smells on breath, body, or clothing.
- Shakes, tremors, incoherent or slurred speech, impaired or unstable coordination.

Behavioral signs of alcohol or drug abuse

- Skipping class, declining grades, getting in trouble at school.
- Drop in attendance and performance at work--loss of interest in extracurricular activities, hobbies, sports or exercise--decreased motivation.
- Complaints from co-workers, supervisors, teachers or classmates.
- Missing money, valuables, prescription or prescription drugs, borrowing and stealing money.
- Acting isolated, silent, withdrawn, engaging in secretive or suspicious behaviors.
- Clashes with family values and beliefs.
- Preoccupation with alcohol and drug-related lifestyle in music, clothing and posters.
- Demanding more privacy, locking doors and avoiding eye contact.
- Sudden change in relationships, friends, favorite hangouts, and hobbies.
- Frequently getting into trouble (arguments, fights, accidents, illegal activities).
- Using incense, perfume, air freshener to hide smell of smoke or drugs.
- Using eyedrops to mask bloodshot eyes and dilated pupils.

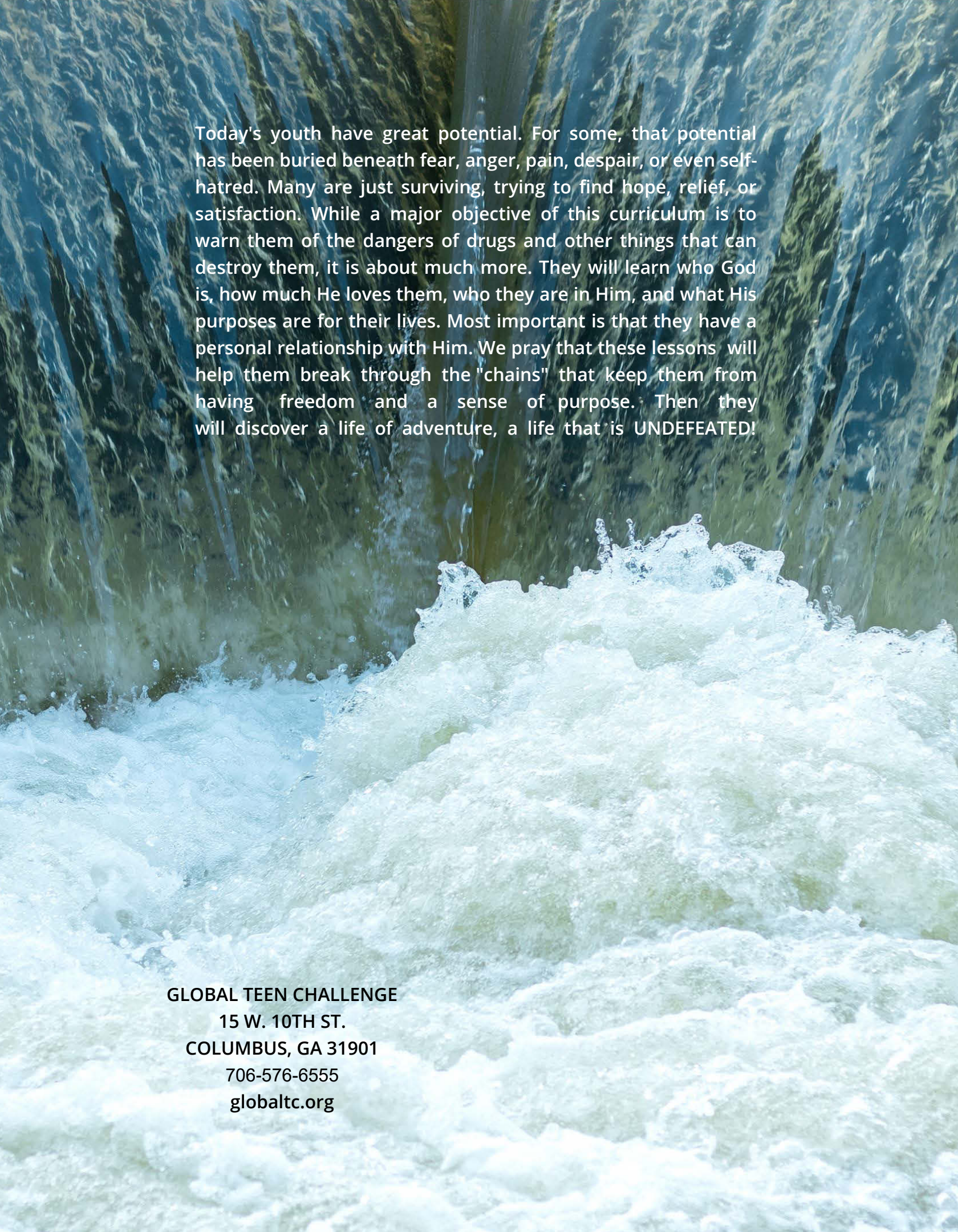
Psychological warning signs of alcohol or drug abuse

- Unexplained, confusing change in personality and/or attitude.
- Sudden mood changes, irritability, angry outbursts or laughing at nothing.
- Periods of unusual hyperactivity or agitation.
- Lack of motivation; inability to focus, appears lethargic or "spaced out."
- Appears fearful, withdrawn, anxious, or paranoid, with no apparent reason.

Helpful Videos:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MuxkICiShVA>

* "Reprinted with permission from the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc. (NCADD) www.ncadd.org



Today's youth have great potential. For some, that potential has been buried beneath fear, anger, pain, despair, or even self-hatred. Many are just surviving, trying to find hope, relief, or satisfaction. While a major objective of this curriculum is to warn them of the dangers of drugs and other things that can destroy them, it is about much more. They will learn who God is, how much He loves them, who they are in Him, and what His purposes are for their lives. Most important is that they have a personal relationship with Him. We pray that these lessons will help them break through the "chains" that keep them from having freedom and a sense of purpose. Then they will discover a life of adventure, a life that is UNDEFEATED!

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