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WHY AM I HERE?

NOTES FOR THE LEADER

As you prepare for this Explore God lesson, reflect on the key question for this session, “Why am I here?” Though they may not be able to state their questions clearly, many kids may wonder if God really has a purpose for their lives and if they matter in the grand scheme of things. Here are a few additional ideas for adapting the experience to your particular situation.

In each Explore God session, we provide options for the lesson introduction. The first is an activity-based option that will draw kids into the topic of the lesson. The second is a skit-based option that includes a script you can use to help kids start to understand the main teaching for the class.

- Each Explore God lesson provides a Lesson Observations for the Leader section. In addition to giving you a better grasp of the context and background of each passage used in the lesson, this commentary may spark ideas for further study or for adapting activities to best meet the needs of your kids.
- Be sure to read through each of the activities ahead of time. This will help you become familiar with the direction of the teaching plan and will let you know what supplies you might need to collect for the lesson.
- Lesson 1 emphasizes the value that we have in God’s eyes. Remind kids throughout the lesson that their value is based on how God sees them and how God wants to use them to fulfill His purpose for their lives. Encourage them to avoid letting culture or society define their worth and to keep their focus on the worth God provides.

BIBLICAL TRUTH

Our lives have purpose and meaning because God made us, loves us, and wants to use us for His glory.

LIFE TRUTH

God’s love for me and His plan for my life give my life purpose.

- You will have opportunities to share the gospel over the course of this lesson. As you do, make sure you emphasize that good works should be our response to all God has done for us, not the source of our salvation.
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LESSON OBSERVATIONS FOR THE LEADER

Genesis 1:27

As part of His acts of creation, God made human beings—both male and female—according to His plan. This verse clearly states that God serves as Creator. The Hebrew word for “created” indicates that He made something completely new—something that had not been in existence before.

What’s more, He made human beings in His image. While theologians have debated exactly what being made in the image of God means, it is certain that we are made to reflect Him to others. This is not said of any other creature God created. Human beings alone carry His image in their lives. This unique truth of God’s creation also gives humanity a unique value and purpose.

1 John 3:1

God is the source of genuine love in our lives. He loves us beyond compare. In fact, some Bible versions translate the word “given” as “lavished” to emphasize the overwhelming nature of His love. The idea appears to have left John breathless as he considered the magnitude and generosity of the Father as He pours out His love on us.

And because of His love, we can become children of God—that’s really His desire for our lives. He adopts into His family those who will receive His free gift of salvation. Again, His amazing love leads Him to do an amazing thing: to transform those who were formerly His enemies into family members.

And John emphasized that we can know this for a fact: “so we are.” As believers walk in the assurance of God’s love, we can trust Him to help us fulfill His purposes for our lives.

Ephesians 2:10

This verse puts a bow on an incredible description of the salvation God provides through His grace—and not our own efforts. Humans were dead in their sins and could not save themselves, but God worked on our behalf. While this salvation is not the result of our good works, it should prompt us to perform godly works for His glory.

We can do this because we are God’s workmanship. In the original language, that term relates to a work of art—a masterpiece. That’s how God views us—

as valuable creations of His own hands. But He didn't just create us to sit around and look nice. He created us to do good works for His honor and glory.

He already knows what He has planned for us, and He wants to reveal that to us so we can fulfill His purpose for our lives. Part of understanding that our lives have purpose is understanding that God created us to do things for His honor and glory—acts of kindness, love, and grace. When we perform these acts, we reflect Him and point others to Him.

LEARNING PLAN

Lesson Introduction

For an activity-based introduction, find several common household items and put them on a display table prior to the start of the lesson. To begin the lesson, show kids the items on the table one at a time. Encourage them to identify situations when we would use each item.

Ask a couple of kids to answer this question: **Why is it important to know the purpose of something we want to use?** Discuss their responses. Affirm that knowing something's purpose ensures we use it correctly.

Encourage the kids to think about why it might be important to understand our purpose for living on the earth. Emphasize that God has created us all for a purpose, even if we don't completely understand it right now. Share that today's lesson teaches us how we can know God created us with a purpose in mind.

Note: If you would like to use a skit-based introduction, see the script for In the Attic found after the conclusion.

I Have Purpose Because God Created Me (Genesis 1:27)

Encourage kids to suggest things that they have made or built themselves. (Examples: a model, a puzzle, a bird-house, a painting, a treehouse, and so forth.) Write their answers on the board or on a large sheet of paper. Talk about how they felt when they completed their projects. Affirm that we tend to care about things more if we build them with our own hands.

Select a volunteer to read Genesis 1:27 aloud. Ask: **What does that verse tell you about how people were created?** Emphasize that God made all of us—and that He made us in His image. Ask: **Do you think God cares as much about the things He has made as we care about the things we have made?** Point out that God cares more for us than we could even imagine.

Talk about how being made in His image gives us a unique value in God's eyes. Point out that no one is better than anyone else, but God has a plan for every individual. Share that knowing God has a plan for us is one way we know our lives have purpose.

I Have Purpose Because God Loves Me (1 John 3:1)

Write the word "love" on a large sheet of paper. Explain that sometimes this is how we think of love—basic and simple. Say: **But God's love is better than that.**

It's deeper and bigger and stronger than anything we can imagine here on earth.

Read 1 John 3:1 aloud to the kids. Ask: **What does this verse say about God's love for us?** Point out that God loves us enough to adopt us—to make us a part of His family. Affirm that people who put their faith in Christ become children of God. Share that this incredible love should lead us to respond to Him in worship and praise.

Write “love” multiple times on the paper until all the space is filled (or have kids do it). Share that God's love fills the page. Say: **Actually, it fills more than the page. His love could fill every page of every book—and there still wouldn't be enough pages to hold it!** Explain that because God's love is so great, we can be His kids—and that personal relationship with Him gives our lives meaning and purpose.

I Have Purpose Because God Includes Me in His Mission (Ephesians 2:10)

Give the kids a piece of molding clay and encourage them to create something special. After a few minutes, give them a chance to show off their work. Ask: **Would you consider your art a “masterpiece” or not? Why?** Discuss their responses.

Select a volunteer to read Ephesians 2:10. Explain that the word “workmanship” refers to a great piece of art—a masterpiece. Say: **That means God sees you as a masterpiece in the making. You're not perfect, but He sees beauty in you and knows you are valuable.**

Point out that we not are just created to be masterpieces. We are also created to do good works. Explain that God is at work around us, and He wants to include us in what He is doing. Emphasize that while good works can never make God love us more than He already does, they can help us point others to Him. Say: **Another reason we can know our lives have purpose is that God wants us to be involved in His mission to make a difference in the world.**

Conclusion

Prior to the lesson, find pictures of the following things:

- The United States Bullion Depository in Fort Knox, Kentucky—the heavily guarded site where more than \$100 billion in gold bars has been stored for several decades
- The Hope Diamond—one of the world's most famous diamonds, which is currently on display at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington and is considered priceless
- *The Mona Lisa*—Leonardo da Vinci's painting, on display at the Louvre in Paris, is estimated to be worth more than \$750 million

To conclude the lesson, show kids the pictures and explain the value of each item. Point out that these represent some of the most valuable things in the world, but they are not nearly as valuable in God's eyes as our lives.

Challenge kids to remember that God made them, loves them, and wants to use them for His glory. Remind them

that their lives have purpose because of what God has done—and is doing—in their lives.

SKIT-BASED INTRODUCTION: *IN THE ATTIC*

Possible Props: An old vinyl music album or album cover

Setting: Bethany and her grandmother are going through things in the grandmother's attic. Her grandmother is explaining all the memories associated with some of the items they come across.

Bethany: Wow, Grandma. This is kind of like going on a treasure hunt. There's stuff up here I've never seen before!

Grandma: To be honest, there's stuff up here I haven't seen in years. I can't believe I've held on to some of it for all this time. Most of it is so old it's not even useful anymore.

Bethany (*holding up the album*): Grandma, what's this?

Grandma: That's an album, Bethany.

Bethany: A what?

Grandma: An album—a record with music on it. You would put this on a spinning record player and it would play music. See all those songs listed on there? Those are the songs on the album.

Bethany: It kind of looks like a big DVD.

Grandma: That's true. I guess for my generation, it was similar—except it was for music instead of movies. Your generation gets its music from the computer. We listened to albums.

Bethany: So why don't people use these albums anymore?

Grandma: Something newer and better came along. Over time, people didn't need albums. They didn't serve a purpose anymore. I guess that's why this one ended up in my attic.

Bethany: That's kind of sad when you think about it. I mean, being useless—sitting up here just collecting dust. I'd hate to be an album like that.

Grandma: That's something you will never have to worry about, Bethany. People always have a purpose for their lives. It may take them a while to find it, but it's there.

Bethany: What makes you say that?

Grandma: Well, that's how God made us. He didn't create people just to sit around and collect dust. He made us with a purpose in mind—something that would help people know Him better.

Bethany: So do you think God has a purpose for my life, Grandma?

Grandma: Absolutely! You may not have it all figured out, but give it time. As you get older and keep learning more about God, He will let you know what He has planned for you.

Bethany: No dust on me, right?

Grandma: That's right . . . now please help me move this box over to that corner.

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WHAT IS GOD LIKE?

NOTES FOR THE LEADER

As you prepare for this Explore God lesson, reflect on the key question for this session, “What is God like?” It’s important that kids learn from an early age that God is real and that He wants us to know Him personally. This lesson will be a great chance to encourage kids to start practicing disciplines that will help them get to know God better, such as reading their Bibles, praying, and being with other believers. Here are a few additional ideas for adapting the experience to your particular situation:

- This lesson focuses on how God wants us to know Him better. Find ways to emphasize that God is both incredibly great and incredibly personal. He is beyond us (transcendent), but He wants to fellowship with us (imminent). Highlight God’s closeness without watering down His majesty.
- Some ideas in today’s passage also connect with what the kids learned in Lesson 1 about their purpose in life. As you have opportunities, remind the kids what they learned about God’s love, their value to Him, and His desire to have a personal relationship with them.
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BIBLICAL TRUTH

The Bible is God’s perfect Word, so we need to know and obey what it says.

LIFE TRUTH

Because the Bible is God’s Word, it helps me know God and follow His ways.

LESSON OBSERVATIONS FOR THE LEADER

Psalm 139:1-3

In this psalm, David states that God knows us. However, this is no mere human knowledge. This is a deep-down, intimate knowledge that goes beyond anything humans may know about one another. He knows us like no one else knows us. He has no need to “search” us

because He is already acquainted with every aspect of our lives. Instead, the phrasing points to digging for valuable treasures in the earth. That illustrates His degree of familiarity with us. He knows us at the deepest level imaginable.

His knowledge is all-encompassing. No area of our lives is off-limits to Him. David's choice of words shows that God knows about every action we perform and even every thought we have. He knows about all our fears and our worries, along with the little things we don't always think are important. He even knows the things we try to hide.

God's intimate knowledge of our lives should encourage us to be careful regarding our conduct. But it also should foster appreciation. When we do what's right (and are accused of wrong), He knows and defends us. When we do what's wrong (and try to hide it), He knows and offers forgiveness and grace. God knows everything about us—and loves us just the same!

Psalm 139:13–14

One reason God knows us so well is that He made us. He created us and placed us in our mother's womb. He is the master craftsman who assembles every piece and part of each of us just as it should go. The image David uses is that of an expert quilter or knitter who can connect every stitch to make a perfect pattern. As a result, God knew us before we could even know Him or anyone else.

But David didn't just talk about God as Creator. He also emphasizes God as

Owner. We are His kids, and He invests so much in us because He cares so much for us. And He expects us to respond to that relationship appropriately—by surrendering our lives to His plans and purposes.

David praised God for His incredible creativity and marvelous work. The intricacy of the human body is a testimony to God's greatness, but it's also a living, breathing example of His intense passion for us. He has cared for us from the beginning. He will continue to care for us through eternity.

Psalm 136:23–26

The immediate context for these verses likely involved the Israelites reflecting on God's incredible actions on behalf of the nation of Israel. However, it is not a stretch to believe that God redeems and rescues individuals just as He does nations. We also find ourselves in lowly states and facing enemies too great for our own abilities. We need God to move on our behalf.

This divine action is what the psalmist meant when he said that God "remembered" His people. He had not forgotten them or their desperate situation. Instead, they were constantly in His thoughts, and their dilemma sparked His intervention.

The psalmist used language that would remind readers of slaves being redeemed at a local market. For each person in search of rescue and freedom, a price had to be paid. God paid that price for His people. Naturally, as

contemporary believers, we understand the price for us was paid when Jesus died on the cross. We have been rescued and redeemed from spiritual death and slavery through God's grace. Among the many things we can (and should) know about God, we can never forget that He is a kind redeemer who has rescued us—and longs to rescue others.

LEARNING PLAN

Lesson Introduction

For an activity-based introduction, enlist another class leader to bring a picture of himself or herself to the session. To start the lesson, show kids the picture of the other leader. Ask the kids if they recognize the person in the photo. Agree that it is a picture of the other leader.

Call that leader to the front of the room. Ask: **What's the best way to really get to know someone else—using a picture or spending time with the person?** Discuss their responses. Emphasize that in order to really know others, you need to spend time with them. Say: Pictures are nice, but they just aren't enough.

Share today's key question: What is God like? Explain that today's lesson focuses on some of the things we can know about God. Point out the Life Truth for the lesson: God is real, and I can know Him. Explain that we will be looking at three things we can know about God. Remind the kids that these aren't the only things we can know about God. Mention that they can get to know Him

even better by doing things like reading the Bible and praying.

Note: If you would like to use a skit-based introduction, see the script for Getting to Know You found after the conclusion.

God Knows Everything about Me (Psalm 139:1-3)

Give each kid a paper plate and some crayons or markers. Encourage them to draw a face on their plate that could be used as a mask. After a few minutes, allow the kids to show off their work and let a few of them explain how they created their mask.

Ask: **Why do people wear masks?** Discuss their responses. Highlight that most of the time we wear masks because we want to hide who we are or what we have done. Say: **Sometimes we don't actually wear a mask, but we still try to hide our feelings and our actions from one another.**

Select a volunteer to read Psalm 139:1-3 aloud. Ask: **What do these verses tell us about God?** Emphasize that God knows everything about us. Point out that He knows what we do and even what we think. Nothing is hidden from Him.

Share that even though God knows everything about us—good or bad—He still loves us. Say: **In fact, He could never love us any less or any more than He already does.** Affirm that this is something great to know about God.

God Made and Cares for Everything— Including Me (Psalm 139:13-14)

Prior to the lesson, write “True” and “False” on separate sheets of paper. Hang the sheets of paper on opposite sides of the room.

During the lesson, show kids the signs on the opposite walls. Explain that you are going to read several statements about the human body, and they need to decide if the statement is true or false. Say: **Move to whichever sign fits your response. If you think the statement is real, move to the “True” sign. If you think it’s not, move to the “False” sign.**

Read the following statements. *Note: All the statements are true.*

- Human noses can remember 50,000 different smells.
- There are 100,000 miles of blood vessels in an adult human’s body.
- The strongest muscle in your body is your jaw muscle.
- When a person is awake, the human body produces enough electrical energy to power a small light bulb.
- You use approximately 200 muscles every time you take a step.

Point out that every statement was absolutely true, which means the human body is an incredible thing. Allow a volunteer to read Psalm 139:13-14. Ask: **Who created your incredible body?** (Answer: God did!) Affirm that God designed the human body, but emphasize that God also created each one of us as individuals. Say: **God not**

only knew you, but He put all your pieces together and watched over you in your mother’s womb. He created you, and He cares about you!

Remind the kids that they are “fearfully and wonderfully made” (Psalm 139:14). But as great as their bodies might be, knowing that God cares about them and loves them is even better.

God Is a Kind Redeemer (Psalm 136:23-26)

Group the kids into teams of three or four. Say: **Pretend each of your teams is stranded on a desert island, and you have to figure out how to get home. Make a list of three things you would want to have on the island to help you get rescued.** Give the teams about five minutes to make their lists. Then allow each team to share their results and explain why they chose those items.

Point out that while we aren’t trapped on a desert island, the Bible says that we all need to be rescued. Read Psalm 136:23-26 aloud. Talk about humanity’s low state of living in sin—with no way to rescue ourselves. Highlight that God chose to act on our behalf. He decided to redeem us—to pay the price for our freedom. Say: **God did what we couldn’t do ourselves so we could be rescued from sin.** Emphasize that another great thing to know about God is that He is an awesome Redeemer!

Briefly share God’s offer of redemption and salvation through Jesus’s death and resurrection. Let the kids know that if they want to make a decision to trust

Jesus as their Savior, you and the other leaders will be available to talk with them after the lesson.

Conclusion

Encourage the kids to think about their best friends. Ask: **How did you get to know that person so well?** Remind kids about the photograph from the lesson introduction. Point out again that the best way to get to know someone is

to spend time with them—to talk with them and do things with them.

Ask: **What are some things you could do to get to know God better?** Discuss their responses. If they are not mentioned, highlight such things as reading the Bible, praying, and spending time at church with other believers. Encourage kids to do the things they can to get to know God even better.

SKIT-BASED INTRODUCTION: *GETTING TO KNOW YOU*

Possible Props: Bench and two old-fashioned fishing poles

Setting: Brandon and his father are sitting on the dock fishing and talking about different kinds of fish.

Brandon: Dad, how long have you been fishing?

Dad: A long time. In fact, I was probably about your age when your granddad first took me. Back then, we sat on the bank of a creek, but it was just as much fun as it is today.

Brandon: Is that why you know so much about fish?

Dad: I guess. I mean, I'm not a professional fisherman, but I have learned a lot about different kinds of fish over the years.

Brandon: Like what kind of bait to use, right?

Dad: There's that, but there are other things too. For example, certain fish like to swim in certain parts of the lake. That might even change depending on the time of year.

Brandon: That's pretty cool.

Dad: Well, it just comes with spending a lot of time getting to know what fish do and what they don't do. Come to think

of it, that's pretty much how you learn anything about people, too. You have to spend time with them.

Brandon: Yeah, I guess that's right. I wouldn't know anything about you or Mom if I never spent any time around you. And Caleb's my best friend, so we know a lot about each other.

Dad: See, that's what I mean. No matter whom you want to know, you've got to spend time with them. In fact, that's even true for God.

Brandon: But you can't even see God. And I know I'm talking to Him when I pray, but I never hear Him answer me. How can I get to know Him like that?

Dad: Well, you're right that we can't see God with our eyes, but we can see how He makes a difference in people's lives. And you might not hear an actual voice when you pray, but you can know what He says by reading the Bible. You might even learn more about Him from people you meet at church. Does that make sense?

Brandon: I guess so, but it's still kind of hard to understand.

Dad: Well, let's try something for a minute . . . What is one thing you know about God?

Brandon: He loves me.

Dad: That's right. Now, how do you know that?

Brandon: Well, the Bible says He does. And you and Mom have always told me He does.

And I guess Pastor Dave and my Sunday school teachers talk about it.

Dad: Well, that's how it works. You learned something special about God by spending time reading the Bible and hearing from people who already know Him pretty well.

Brandon: Sure, I get it! When I do stuff like reading my Bible, praying, and going to church, I'm spending more time with God. The more I do that, the more I learn about Him.

Dad: You've got it. And do you know what I've got?

Brandon: What?

Dad: A tug on my line! I think I've got a fish! Help me reel it in.

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WILL GOD ALWAYS BE THERE FOR ME?

NOTES FOR THE LEADER

As you prepare for this Explore God lesson, reflect on the key question for this session, “Will God always be there for me?” Some kids may have experienced difficult situations—even at an early age. They need to know that God is faithful when their lives are imperfect and painful. This lesson reminds kids that God has promised to stick with them regardless of their circumstances. Here are a few additional ideas for adapting the experience to your particular situation:

- Lesson 3 may touch on some sensitive issues in the lives of kids—memories and experiences that are painful for them. While leaders need to affirm God’s faithfulness, they also must be sensitive to those tender spots. If a child does not feel comfortable sharing, don’t press the matter.
- Make sure prayer is an important aspect of your Explore God sessions. One way kids understand that God is real and walks with them is through talking with Him. You can set a life-changing example for them by regularly praying for them and with them during the lessons.
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BIBLICAL TRUTH

Even when we go through hard times, we can know God is always with us.

LIFE TRUTH

When things go wrong, I can still trust God because He cares about me.

LESSON OBSERVATIONS FOR THE LEADER

Psalm 145:8-9

The psalmist makes it clear that God is merciful and compassionate to everyone—even those who do not follow His plan or accept His offer of salvation. Theologians refer to this as God’s “common grace.” While it should not be confused with God’s saving grace (as described in verses like Ephesians 2:8-9), it’s important to

understand how God extends common grace to every individual.

God displays common grace in several areas of our lives. For example, every human breath comes from God, and we also enjoy relationships with others because of His goodness. In the intellectual realm, we benefit from advances in modern medicine—whether discovered by a believer or a nonbeliever. In the arts, we are moved by creative music regardless of a composer’s spiritual condition. In nature, farmers of every background take advantage of the sun and the rain provided from the heavens.

But God’s goodness as displayed through common grace also has spiritual implications. Despite humanity’s general rebellion against God, He shows patience and allows us every opportunity to come back to Him. Individuals who recognize His general goodness may be drawn to Him. As believers, we may have the opportunity to make the most of His common grace as a doorway for sharing the gospel with others.

Romans 8:35–39

The Bible makes it clear that Satan is a liar. Jesus even called him the father of all lies (John 8:44). One of the lies Satan wants Christians to believe is that their failures can make God love them less. He wants to convince God’s people that their sins can separate them from God’s love. If we choose to believe these lies, our effectiveness as witnesses to the gospel can grind to a halt.

Paul addressed these lies head-on in the last several verses of Romans 8. He began by stating the question: “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?” Then he used a series of contrasts to suggest forces that we might think are powerful enough to break our ties with our heavenly Father. But life and death, angels and demons, things in the present and things in the future can’t do the job. Neither can human powers nor physical limitations like height or depth. In fact, nothing can separate us from God’s love.

When an individual accepts God’s offer of salvation through Jesus’s death and resurrection, an eternal bond is formed that cannot be broken. While we might *think* or *feel* like God has left us, the truth does not depend on us. The truth rests in the faithfulness and goodness of God. He has said that He will never leave us or forsake us (Psalm 37:25, 28; Hebrews 13:5).

Psalm 46:1–3

To understand the power of Psalm 46, a reader needs to understand its place in Jewish history. King Hezekiah probably wrote Psalm 46 after the events described in 2 Kings 18–19. The Assyrians had already overthrown the northern kingdom of Israel and had their sights set on Hezekiah’s southern kingdom of Judah. Hezekiah was feeling pressure from enemies outside the walls and dealing with his own doubts inside the walls.

Hezekiah turned to God for help, and the Lord answered him. Through the prophet

Isaiah, God told the king that he didn't need to worry about the Assyrians—despite their big boasts to the contrary. During the night, God's angel killed 185,000 enemy soldiers, leaving the Assyrians to limp back home in defeat.

God had proven Himself faithful in the middle of a difficult and dangerous situation. Hezekiah's challenge was big. It felt like the earth was coming apart at the seams and the mountains were collapsing around him. But he discovered that God was bigger than the Assyrian army.

Emotional earthquakes and tidal waves are not enough to shake God off His throne. He is still in control, and He still stands by His people. He remains a refuge and a present help in times of trouble.

LEARNING PLAN

Lesson Introduction

For an activity-based introduction, encourage kids to pair off with a friend. Tell the kids that one member of the pair will create a series of hand gestures and show the series to their partner. Then the second kid will need to repeat the series of gestures from memory. After one round, allow the kids to switch roles—have the second child make up the motions and the first child repeat them.

After the activity, ask the kids to think about what made it hard to repeat what their partners were doing. Ask: **What was it like trying to shadow your partner?** Discuss their responses. Ask: **Does your real shadow ever have trouble doing**

exactly what you do? Affirm that our shadows imitate what we do perfectly as long as the sun is out, but even our shadows can't be around all the time.

Share today's key question: Will God always be there for me? Emphasize that only God has promised to be with us all the time—even when things go wrong. Explain that today's lesson focuses on some reasons we can know that God will always be with us regardless of what we're going through.

Note: If you would like to use a skit-based introduction, see the script for In the Dark found after the conclusion.

God Is Good (Psalm 145:8-9)

Prior to the lesson, make a list of several pairs of options from which kids can choose their favorites. (*Examples: sunny days or rainy days, basketball or football, dogs or cats, red or blue, the beach or the mountains, and so forth.*)

During the lesson, explain that you will be reading a series of options and that the kids will choose which one they like better by either standing or sitting. Say: **If you like the first one better, you need to stand up. If you like the second one better, you need to stay seated.** Read several pairs and allow the kids to respond to each by standing or sitting. For each set of options, let a couple of volunteers explain why they chose to sit or stand.

Point out that we usually make choices based on what we like the best or what we think will make us the happiest. Say: **But God isn't like that at all.** Encourage

a volunteer to read Psalm 145:8–9. Share that God really doesn't pick and choose. He loves everyone and wants the best for everyone. Say: **He shows kindness to everyone.**

Point out that rain blesses every farmer and medicines help sick people—whether they follow God or not. Share that those are examples of how God shows goodness and kindness to every person because He loves every person. Explain that we can use these examples of God's kindness to encourage others to give their lives to Him through Jesus if they haven't already.

God Always Sticks By Me (Romans 8:35–39)

Prior to the lesson, glue two pieces of construction paper together. Allow plenty of time for the glue to dry so that the pieces cannot be separated easily.

During the lesson, ask the kids to suggest some things that are sticky. (*Examples: gum, syrup, tape, and so forth.*) Write their responses on the board or on a large sheet of paper. If the kids don't mention it, remark that glue can be pretty sticky. Say: **In fact, that's what glue does. We use it to make sure things stick together.** Show kids the sheets of paper you've glued together. Explain that while you could try to separate the pieces of paper, you'd probably end up tearing them both in the process. Say: **Because of the glue, they are stuck together tightly.**

Tell the kids that God's love is a lot like glue. Read Romans 8:35–39 aloud.

Emphasize that Paul told the Christians in Rome that nothing could separate them from God's love. Share that some people in Rome were suffering because of their faith, but Paul wanted them to remember that even in hard times, God would be sticking with them. Say: **God is always with us and sticks by us no matter what.**

Show kids the glued sheets of paper again. Ask: **How close are these pieces of paper to one another?** Discuss their responses. Encourage the kids to remember that God is even closer to us because He loves us so much. Say: **Whether you're having a good day or a tough day, remember that nothing can separate you from God and His love for you.**

God Is Bigger Than Anything I Face (Psalm 46:1–3)

Show kids a magnifying glass and ask a volunteer to explain what it does. (*Note: If you cannot get a magnifying glass, show kids a picture of one.*) Explain that we use a magnifying glass to make things look bigger than they really are—usually so we can get a better look at them. Allow a few kids to share things that people might examine under a magnifying glass.

Point out that sometimes we deal with things that make us afraid. Share a couple of things that you were afraid of as a kid—like the dark, loud storms, or spiders. Say: **Sometimes our fear makes those things look even bigger than they really are. The dark seems darker or the storm sounds louder or the spider looks**

even bigger! It's like looking through a magnifying glass. But God wants us to remember something in times like that.

Direct a volunteer to read Psalm 46:1-3 and encourage the other kids to listen for some things that sound scary. Allow kids to share the scary things they heard. Affirm that the idea of the earth falling apart and mountains falling into the oceans sounds pretty scary. Say: **But don't miss the very first part we read. God is our strength and our help through those scary times. In fact, God is bigger than any scary thing we face.**

Point out that when we're afraid, we usually run to someone bigger and stronger. Say: **We find our parents during a storm or we get an older brother or sister to kill the spider.** Share that we feel safer when we're with someone who's bigger than what scares us. Encourage kids to remember that

God really is bigger than anything. Say: **He doesn't need a magnifying glass to look big. He *is* big—and He wants us to come to Him when we're scared.**

Conclusion

Encourage kids to think about people in the Bible who went through scary times. Mention individuals like Noah preparing for the flood, David facing Goliath, Paul spending time in jail, and Jesus praying in Gethsemane before His crucifixion. Ask: **How did each of these people deal with their fears?** (Answer: They all turned to God for help.)

Remind kids of the Life Truth for today's lesson: When things go wrong, I can still trust God because He cares for me. Share that all of us face hard times, but we don't have to face them alone because God loves us and has promised to be with us in every situation.

SKIT-BASED INTRODUCTION: *IN THE DARK*

Note: If your setting allows, this skit might be most effective with the lights turned down or off.

Possible Props: Two flashlights, couch or chairs

Setting: Emily and her mom are home alone when the power goes off one night during a big storm. Emily is not a big fan of storms—or of the dark. She's a little nervous, so Mom pulls the flashlights out as they start to talk about fear.

Emily: Mom, where are you?

Mom (*clicking on a flashlight*): I'm over here on the couch, Emily. Watch your step. I have a flashlight over here for you.

Emily: I wish Dad was here. What a time to be gone on a business trip!

Mom (*laughing a little*): Well, it might be nice just to have a little more company, but I'm not sure there's anything he could do. The lights would have still gone out, and we'd still be sitting here in the dark with our flashlights.

Emily: I guess, but I just feel safer when he's around. Ever since I was little, the two things that scare me the most are storms and the dark—and he's always been there to help me not be so scared.

Mom: And now you've got both of them at the same time.

Emily: Exactly!

Mom: I can understand that. When I was your age, I didn't like storms either. I guess I had watched *The Wizard of Oz* too many times, but I was sure the house would blow away and land in the next county.

Emily: So what did you do to feel less afraid?

Mom: Well, as I got older, I learned that most storms are just wind and rain. They make a lot of noise, but they aren't really dangerous. And I learned to pay attention to the weather sirens and the local news in case a bad storm was in our area.

Emily: Is that all?

Mom: Well, I also learned that God is with me—even during storms and even when it's dark. I learned that He loves me, no matter what. And I learned that He's really bigger than any problem I have. Remembering that really helps.

Emily: I guess so, but how do I know He's really with me?

Mom: Emily, He's *always* with you—even when you don't feel like He is. When you're scared, you can talk to Him about it because He cares about you. In fact, He wants you to talk to Him about what scares you.

Emily: So even on those nights when Dad's on a business trip, God's still around.

Mom: That's right. To be honest, everyone has limits. No human being can meet every need you have every time. Sometimes a person you count on can't be there or might even let you down. But God is always there, and He won't let you down.

Emily: Wow, that helps a lot. I still don't think I like storms or the dark very much, but at least I know I'm not alone when I have to deal with them.

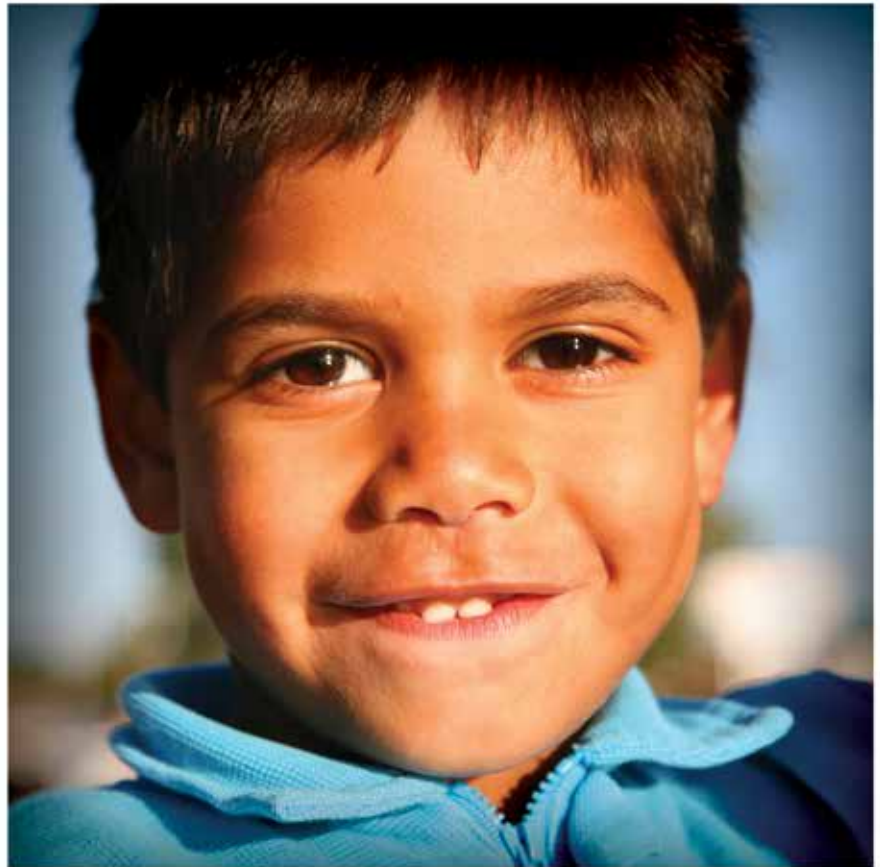
Mom: Well, I'm sure the lights will be back on pretty soon.

Emily: Probably so, but in the meantime, maybe we can play flashlight tag.

Mom: OK, you go hide and I'll count to fifty!

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4

WHAT DOES GOD THINK ABOUT OTHER GODS?

NOTES FOR THE LEADER

As you prepare for this Explore God lesson, reflect on the key question for this session, “What does God think about other gods?” When kids think about other gods, they might think of idols made of metal or stone. Let the kids know that people in some parts of the world still practice idolatry, but remind them that anything or anyone who takes over God’s role in our lives is a false god. Here are a few additional ideas for adapting the experience to your particular situation:

- This lesson will give you the chance to examine your own life and to identify some idols that have come between you and God lately. While you may not be comfortable sharing that information with your kids, take advantage of the chance to honestly evaluate where you are and what changes you might need to make.
- While the information about God being the only true God is incredibly important, this lesson also challenges kids to act on this truth. Specifically, they will be encouraged to share God and His love with those around them. As an option, consider bringing in a church leader, a missionary, or a representative from a local ministry to talk about how they share God with people in their work.

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BIBLICAL TRUTH

God is the only true God. Nothing else even comes close.

LIFE TRUTH

I should serve God and encourage others to follow Him too.

LESSON OBSERVATIONS FOR THE LEADER

Isaiah 43:11-12

The picture presented in Isaiah 43 is similar to a trial between the one true God and the foreign gods that were worshiped by other nations in Isaiah’s day. God called His people to serve as witnesses on

His behalf and invited the other nations to testify about what their deities had accomplished.

In the end, there really was no contest. God defines Himself as the only God. LORD (written in small caps) indicates a use of God's covenant name—the name by which He revealed Himself to the Israelites when He rescued them from Egypt. In response to that powerful act—and many others—the Jews could confidently affirm God's power and greatness.

In contrast, the other gods had no ground upon which to stand. They would never save anyone. They would never redeem a follower. That's because they aren't real—they never were and never will be. Only the LORD can claim to be the one true God.

Exodus 20:3-4

Because He is the only real God, He demands complete worship and allegiance. No other god deserves our attention because no other god is God. He made this clear when He gave the Israelites the Law that would govern their moral and ethical lives. As history soon showed, violating this basic principle of loyalty to God would bring devastating consequences to His people.

In the Hebrew phrasing, what is translated as "shall not" carries the idea of "don't ever." In other words, this represented a general command that applied to every circumstance rather

than a recommendation for certain situations. The people were expected to avoid idolatry in every way, shape, and form.

To emphasize this, the Lord expanded the command to the creation of anything that might represent Him. God directed the Jews not to make statues or images that symbolized His presence. God knew that if the people tried to visualize Him, they would end up worshiping the creation rather than the Creator—and that's exactly what happened. The best way to worship God is to recall His powerful works, not to find something that a human mind associates with Him.

These commands—maybe more than any other part of the Ten Commandments—put the Israelites at odds with their pagan neighbors. But God expected them to live in holiness, separated from the nations who needed to be driven out of the Promised Land.

2 Corinthians 5:20

When individuals accept God's offer of salvation through the death and resurrection of Jesus, they become new creatures through His power (see 2 Corinthians 5:17). The old things that once held so much allure lose their power, and new believers have an increased desire to reflect God to the world. They move from being enemies of God to being children of God. This is what reconciliation is all about. It represents a restoration with God.

But our responsibility as new creations does not end with our new relationship with God. Instead God calls us to share the message of reconciliation—the gospel—with others who need a relationship with Him. We are ambassadors on His behalf, designated representatives who represent Him on earth.

God longs to share this message with everyone who will hear. The Greek word for God making an appeal through us (*parakaleo*) is the same word Paul used in Romans 12:1 to describe the intensity of his challenge for believers to become living sacrifices. God urgently wants nonbelievers to come back to Him, and He has given His people the responsibility of sharing that message with them.

LEARNING PLAN

Lesson Introduction

For an activity-based introduction, give each kid a piece of paper and a pencil. Explain that you want them to write down three things about themselves—two that are true and one that is false. After a few minutes, allow a volunteer to share his or her statements. Encourage the rest of the kids to guess which statements are true and which one is false. When that kid is done, pick another volunteer. Have as many kids share as your time allows.

Point out that sometimes it can be hard to tell what's true from what's not. Ask: **How can you tell the difference between truth and a lie?** Discuss their responses.

Emphasize that though trying to fool some friends might be fun, it's usually very important to know the truth about something or someone. Point out that we can get in a lot of trouble—and maybe even get hurt—if we're tricked into believing something that's not true.

Explain that God wants us to know Him—and know why He is the only true God. Share today's Bible Truth with the kids: God is the only true God. Nothing else even comes close. Explain that today's lesson focuses on what God thinks about things and people who try to be God instead of Him. Affirm that we need to follow God because every other substitute falls short of Him—and we need to encourage others to follow Him as well.

Note: If you would like to use a skit-based introduction, see the script for No Other found after the conclusion.

God Is the Only Real God (Isaiah 43:11-12)

Prior to the lesson, collect a few \$1 bills and a stack of play money.

During the lesson, allow a volunteer to examine both sets of bills. Ask: **Which one do you think is real and which one is fake? Why?** Discuss their responses. Point out that in this situation it's pretty easy to tell the true from the false. Say: **But many criminals make fake money that is much harder to identify. Government agents go through special training so they can tell what's real and what's not. And it's been said that they focus mainly on the real thing because**

once they understand what's true, it's easier to pick out the fake.

Encourage a volunteer to read Isaiah 43:11 aloud. Ask: **What does God say about Himself in this verse?** Affirm that God claims to be the only God—and that no other god can claim His spot. Ask another volunteer to read Isaiah 43:12. Ask: **How does God prove that He's the only real God?** Point out that all the things He has done and said prove that He is God. Say: **He stands above all other gods, and He alone offers salvation. Those things mean that He alone is God.**

God Says No to Serving Other Gods (Exodus 20:3-4)

Prior to the lesson, collect several common items from around your house or church. Use these items to make a display table.

During the lesson, show the kids one of the items on the display table. Ask: **Would you worship this as your god? Why or why not?** Discuss their responses. Continue the activity until you have shown them all the items on the table. Share that we wouldn't worship any of these items because they have no real power.

Explain that while we might think it's silly to bow down to things or trees or statues, we still might let something or someone sneak in and take God's place in our hearts and lives. Read Exodus 20:3-4 aloud. Say: **An idol is anything that becomes more important to us than God.** Emphasize that we have to

be careful so we don't let something or someone take God's place at the front of our lives.

God Lets Me Help Others Come to Know Him (2 Corinthians 5:20)

Encourage the kids to suggest some of examples of good news that people would be excited to share. (*Examples: birthdays, weddings, winning a game, good grades, a baby's birth, and so forth.*) Record their answers on the board or a large piece of paper.

Point out that we really enjoy telling people about good stuff. Enlist a volunteer to read 2 Corinthians 5:20 aloud. Ask: **What good news does this verse encourage us to share with others?** (Answer: God wants us to tell others about Jesus.) Share that an ambassador serves as a go-between—passing along the message of one person to someone else. Say: **The message God wants us to give others is that He loves them and wants them to have a personal relationship with Him. That's possible because of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.**

Encourage the kids to look for chances to tell others that God is the only true God—the only God people can really trust.

Conclusion

Ask: **Would you trust a pilot to perform brain surgery? Why not?** Discuss their responses. Ask: **Would you trust a zookeeper to fly a plane? Would you trust a baseball player to build your house?** Affirm that no one would trust

those people to do those particular jobs because they've never been trained or taught how to do them. Say: **If we need someone for surgery or to fly a plane or build a house, we're going to get someone who's qualified for the job!**

Remind kids that only God is the one true God—He's the only One who deserves our worship and trust. Say: **When we let Him be God, He works in our lives and gives us the wisdom to share His message with others.** Encourage kids to remember who God is, what He does, and how much we can trust Him.

SKIT-BASED INTRODUCTION: *NO OTHER*

Reader 1: I am God, and there is no other.

Reader 2: Besides Me there is no Savior.

Reader 3: You are My witnesses. You have seen My works.

Reader 1: You saw the plagues I brought on the Egyptians.

Reader 2: You saw the Red Sea split in two.

Reader 3: You saw a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. You saw manna from heaven and water from a rock.

All: I am God, and there is no other.

Reader 2: So why do you worship sticks and stones?

Reader 1: So why do you bow down to statues made of metal?

Reader 3: Why do you put your friends ahead of Me and let your possessions take first place in your life?

Reader 1: I made it clear . . . have no gods before Me!

Reader 2: Don't make any idols that you think might look like Me!

Reader 3: Nothing and no one should ever take My place in your hearts.

All: I am God, and there is no other.

Reader 3: No other god.

Reader 2: No other Savior.

Reader 1: No other Provider.

Reader 2: No other Comforter.

Reader 3: No other Great Physician.

All: I am God, and there is no other.

Reader 1: I want you to know Me.

Reader 2: I want you to obey Me.

Reader 3: I want you to tell your friends about Me.

All: I want you to tell the world about Me.

Reader 2: I'm always going to love you.

Reader 3: I'm never going to leave you.

Reader 1: No else can make those kinds of promises.

All: Only Me. I am God, and there is no other.

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5

WHO IS JESUS?

NOTES FOR THE LEADER

As you prepare for this Explore God lesson, reflect on the key question for this session, “Who is Jesus?” The person of Jesus Christ—who He is and what He has done—is what separates Christianity from all other religions. So it’s important for kids to know what the Bible says about Jesus and why our response to Him is such a big deal. Here are a few additional ideas for adapting the experience to your particular situation:

- This lesson focuses on Jesus’s divinity, as well as His humanity. Philippians 2 tells us that Jesus set aside some of His heavenly privileges when He came to earth, but He did not forfeit any of His divine nature. As you talk about His complete humanity, make sure kids understand His complete divinity as well.
- This lesson gives you a great opportunity to talk about Jesus’s first coming and His second coming. Remind kids that Jesus came to earth the first time to die for our sins. Look for ways to weave the gospel message into this aspect of the story. Also share about the future glory of His second coming and encourage kids to live passionately for Him until He returns.
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BIBLICAL TRUTH

Jesus is God’s Son. He died for our sins, rose from the dead, and will come back some day.

LIFE TRUTH

Because of who Jesus is and what He has done, I can know Him and serve Him.

LESSON OBSERVATIONS FOR THE LEADER

Philippians 2:5-6

Philippians 2 begins with Paul’s challenge for believers to live in unity. Christians’ shared relationship with Jesus means that we are connected to each other, so we need to live with one mind and

one purpose. The best way to do that, according to Paul, is to follow Jesus's example of personal humility and servanthood.

Having the mind of Christ means putting the needs of others above our own desires. To illustrate the way Jesus did this, Paul relied on what many scholars believe is a portion of an early church hymn—what we know as Philippians 2:5–11. To truly imitate the mind of Jesus, we need to embrace the identity of Jesus. Specifically, we need to understand that He wasn't just a man. He was—and is—completely God.

Jesus existed before all creation as God. The Greek wording indicates that Jesus didn't just take on the shape or appearance of God. He possessed the very essence of God. Everything about Jesus was exactly like everything about God. He owned all power and authority and glory. Though He chose to limit some aspects of His heavenly existence temporarily in order to become a human, He never laid aside His divinity. Instead of forfeiting His divinity at Bethlehem, He added humanity.

Jesus was—and is—fully God and fully human.

Philippians 2:7–8

Theologians often refer to this passage as the *kenosis*, which comes from the Greek word for “empty.” As noted, for a time, Jesus humbly divested Himself of His glory and heavenly privilege. While He maintained His divine nature, He also

accepted a human nature (the nature of a servant rather than a king) so He could feel what we feel and experience what we experience—though without sin (Hebrews 4:15). While He chose to display His divine nature in numerous ways—such as through His teaching and His miracles—He always did so within the context of His humanity.

Some ancient people, such as the Docetists and the Gnostics, believed that Jesus only looked like a person. They believed that Jesus could not have had a physical body and maintained His divinity because everything physical is evil. However, the Church strongly rejected this teaching as false at the first Council of Nicaea in 325, embracing the theology of Jesus as fully God and fully human.

Jesus proved His complete humanity by suffering one of the worst deaths imaginable—execution on a Roman cross. His death left no doubt that He was human. His resurrection left no doubt that He was God. But His death and resurrection accomplished so much more. They also made it possible for broken people to find their way back to God.

Philippians 2:9–11

Of course, Jesus's death is not the end of the story—nor was His resurrection. While His first visit to earth was marked by humility and suffering, Jesus promised that He would return one day in final victory. That's because Jesus not only rose from the dead but rose to the

highest place of power and authority. Jesus returned to His position of glory at the right hand of God, and that is the Jesus the world will see when He comes back again.

The suffering Servant will be the reigning King.

Paul said that God gave Jesus “the name that is above every name.” That name is not so much a moniker as a reflection of Jesus’s nature and character. No other name—in heaven or on earth—can compare to Him in beauty, power, and majesty. That’s why, in Revelation 5:12, John wrote that Jesus deserves “power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing.”

The Bible says that because Jesus is worthy of all those accolades, every person will ultimately stand in judgment, bend their knee to Him, and confess His authority over their lives. Some bow to Jesus in adoration and worship during their time of earth. These are His children. Some will bow to Jesus in fear because they rejected Him during this life. All people will face the eternal consequences of their choice.

LEARNING PLAN

Lesson Introduction

Prior to the lesson, make a list of famous people and some of the things for which they are known. (Examples: *George Washington—first US president, Thomas Edison—invented the light bulb, Michael Jordan—famous basketball player.*) Make Jesus the last person on your list.

During the session, tell the kids that you are going to play a game where you give the answer and the kids have to come up with an appropriate question to fit the answer. Explain that you will pick a volunteer and read the name of a famous person. The volunteer will have five seconds to share something that person is known for—but the response has to be in the form of a question. (Example: *An appropriate response for Robert E. Lee might be: Who was a southern general during the American Civil War?*)

Pick a volunteer and read the first name. If the volunteer can’t come up with a question in five seconds, pick another volunteer. Once a correct answer is given, allow one or two others in the group to share other questions that would work. Play as many rounds as time allows.

To wrap up the game, encourage the group to suggest questions for the name Jesus. Allow a few volunteers to answer. Share today’s key question: “Who is Jesus?” Tell the kids that the most important thing we can know as Christians is who Jesus is and what He has done. Say: **Fortunately, the Bible has a lot to say about Jesus, and we’re going to look at some passages that tell us about Him today.**

Note: If you would like to use a skit-based introduction, see the script for Responsive Reading found after the conclusion.

Jesus Is God’s Son (Philippians 2:5–6)

Prior to the lesson, create a list that

compares two kinds of measurements. (Examples: *inches and feet, cups and pints, pounds and ounces.*) For some of the pairs, list the larger one first. For the others, list the smaller one first. Make sure the list includes several pairs.

During the lesson, line the kids up along the back wall of the room. Tell the kids that you will read off two kinds of measurement. Say: **If you think the first one I read is greater than the second one, take a step forward. If you think the first one is less than the second one, stay where you are.** Explain that if they get the question wrong, they will have to take a step backward. Point out that the object of the game is to move as far forward as possible before you read all the questions.

After the game, ask: **If I had said “Jesus and God,” would you have stepped forward or stayed where you were? Why?** Discuss their responses. Tell them that neither of those responses is really correct because Jesus is neither greater than nor less than God. Say: **He is equal to God because He *is* God.**

Pick a volunteer to read Philippians 2:5-6 aloud. Share that we often call Jesus God’s Son, but that does not mean that He is anything less than God the Father or the Holy Spirit. Say: **These verses remind us that He is equal to God in every way. That’s an important thing to know if we’re trying to figure out who Jesus is.**

Jesus Came to Earth as a Person (Philippians 2:7-8)

Give each kid a piece of paper and a pencil or pen. Say: **I’m going to give you a few minutes to make a list of every person you’ve talked to so far today. It could be a long talk or a short hello. If you have talked to anyone, those names need to go on the paper.**

Set a timer for three minutes and encourage the kids to work as quickly as possible. When they’re done, let a few volunteers share how many names they put on their lists. Ask: **Aside from talking to you today, what do all these folks have in common?** Discuss their responses. Point out that the most common thing they all share is that they are people—members of the human race.

Say: **When it comes to being humans, we have that in common with Jesus. Even though He is completely God, He also came to earth and lived as a human being.** Encourage the kids to read Philippians 2:7-8 to themselves and to look for words and phrases that show that Jesus was human when He came to earth. Let them share the results of their reading.

Highlight phrases like “born in the likeness of men,” “found in human form,” and “death on a cross.” Help the kids understand that Jesus came to earth to live as a human and to die on the cross for our sins. Remind them that His death—and His resurrection three days later—made it possible for us to have a relationship with God. If it feels natural, weave the gospel story into your conversation about Jesus being human.

Jesus Is Coming Back as King (Philippians 2:9–11)

Prior to the lesson, research some great comebacks in sports history. If possible, make a slideshow presentation based on these comebacks. If that's not an option, list them on a large sheet of paper and display it on a focal wall of the room.

During the lesson, share the information about these comebacks with the kids. Allow a few volunteers to share any comebacks that they have seen or even been a part of. Say: **Comebacks can be pretty exciting to watch. We can go from the disappointment of thinking we're going to lose to the excitement of knowing we've won!**

Point out that Jesus's first time coming to earth definitely had a low point when He died on the cross. It seemed that all was lost. Say: **But it didn't stay that way, because He was raised from the dead three days later.** Share that even that isn't the end of the story because Jesus promised He would come back to earth one day. Say: **And this time, He won't be coming to die. He'll be coming back as King.**

Read Philippians 2:9–11. Point out that God has raised Jesus to the highest position and given Him authority and power over all creation. He rules it all. Say: **One day, we will all bow to Him and celebrate that He is King. How wonderful it is to live our lives as children of the King!**

Conclusion

Give each kid two blank sheets of paper and group them into pairs. Say: **We're going to see how well you know your partner. I am going to read a statement, and one of you will write your response on the sheet of paper. When I say so, your partner will try to guess what you wrote on the paper.** Share that a team will get one point for a correct answer and that they will alternate questions.

Use these questions:

- What is your favorite color?
- What is your favorite place to go on vacation?
- What is your favorite subject in school?
- What is your favorite sports team?

Find out how well the pairs did with the questions. Congratulate any partners who got all four of the possible points. Say: **You may have known your partner well or you may not have known your partner at all. And that's OK. The closer two people are, the better they know one another.**

Explain that we need to spend a lot of time with Jesus so we can get to know Him better. Encourage the kids to think of ways they can learn more about Jesus and to commit to putting those into practice during the week ahead.

SCRIPTED INTRODUCTION: RESPONSIVE READING

Notes: Because this is a responsive reading, you will need to enlist a leader to read the questions. You also will need to make sure each kid has a copy of the reading or make a slideshow presentation for the lesson.

Leader: How do we know Jesus is God?

Group: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

Leader: What did the Old Testament prophets say about Jesus?

Group: “For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”

Leader: What did the people of Jesus’s day say about Him?

Group: “Some said John the Baptist, others said Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”

Leader: What did the disciple Peter say about Him?

Group: “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

Leader: What did Jesus say about Himself?

Group: “I am the way, and the truth, and the life
No one comes to the Father except through Me.”

Leader: Why did Jesus come to earth?

Group: “The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.”

Leader: How should we respond to His life, death, and resurrection?

Group: “If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.”

Leader: How should we act while we wait for Jesus to come back?

Group: “For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.”

Leader: How will Jesus return?

Group: “Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. . . . On His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.”

Leader: “You shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.”

All: That’s who Jesus is and that’s what Jesus does.

Note: The Bible verses quoted above are as follows: John 1:1; Isaiah 9:6; Matthew 16:14, 16; John 14:6; Matthew 20:28; Romans 10:9; Titus 2:11-13; Revelation 19:11, 16; Matthew 1:21.

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6

IS THE BIBLE TRUE?

NOTES FOR THE LEADER

As you prepare for this Explore God lesson, reflect on the key question for this session, “Is the Bible true?” This is a question some kids may be wrestling with right now, but all of them will face it as they grow older. To be confident in their faith, they need to be confident in the reliability of God’s Word. Here are a few additional ideas for adapting the experience to your particular situation:

- This lesson focuses on the reliability of the Bible. Many in our culture attack Christianity by attacking the inerrancy and reliability of Scripture. As you teach the kids about why they can believe the Bible, remind them that they also need to obey what it says.
- Make sure that the kids understand the role of human beings in writing the Bible. Emphasize that God is the author, but He allowed human writers to put down the words on paper. Those people didn’t come up with the ideas in the Bible. They were inspired by God, which means the Bible is reliable and trustworthy.
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LESSON OBSERVATIONS FOR THE LEADER

2 Peter 1:20–21

Great fiction writers can create elaborate plots and tell stories that stick around for generations. The imagination of a good author can go a long way toward creating a significant work of art. Some folks think that’s what happened with the Bible. A group of creative people wrote what was on their minds, and their work was collected

BIBLICAL TRUTH

The Bible is God’s perfect Word, so we need to know and obey what it says.

LIFE TRUTH

Because the Bible is God’s Word, it helps me know God and follow His ways.

over time. But the apostle Peter said that wasn't what happened at all.

In reality, the Bible is not something human beings could have ever come up with on our own. The interpretation and revelation of Scripture came from the mind of God. The prophecies were His work, not the work of the individual prophets.

That doesn't deny the role human beings played in recording the message of God's Word. Peter said the human writers were "carried along by the Holy Spirit" as they wrote (2 Peter 1:21). The wording is in passive tense, which means they were acted upon rather than performing actions of their own. The image is similar to a ship with a full sail moving under the control of the wind. The biblical writers were filled and guided by God's Spirit as they worked. He used their unique personalities and talents, but God was the ultimate source of the message.

That eliminates the possibility of Scripture being shaped by human wisdom or clever invention. It also ensures the reliability of the Bible because God, who is completely trustworthy, brought it into being.

Psalm 119:105

Psalm 119 stands out as the longest chapter in the Bible, and it's all about God's Word. Each verse emphasizes the power and reliability of Scripture.

Verse 105 uses the illustration of a lamp to highlight the guidance God's Word

provides. Walking in the dark can be dangerous. It can lead to anything from a stubbed toe to a life-threatening injury. But one thing is for sure: If we walk in the dark long enough, we will eventually stumble. We need a lamp to reveal the obstacles we might face. We need light to make sure we're heading in the right direction.

That's what the Word does in our lives. It protects us from obstacles and gives us the confidence to move forward. In ancient Israel, the lamps were not spotlights like we have on roads now. They were hand-held lamps that gave individuals just enough light to move one step at a time. God's lamp gives us just enough light to obey here and now. It guides us to move at His pace as we obey Him one step at a time.

But we do have to move forward. God didn't just give us His Word as a nice trapping of faith. He gave it to us to be a guide for living our lives each day. It's not just theory. It's practical application.

2 Timothy 3:16

Many individuals work hard to discredit the reliability of the Bible because they don't want to implement Scripture in their lives. If the Bible really is God's Word, it carries the weight and power of His authority. We really are obligated to do what it says. That's not a popular sentiment in a world where people prefer to do things their own way.

But Paul was clear. Scripture—all Scripture—is born in the very heart of

God. The statement that Scripture was “breathed out by God” reminds us again that the Bible has a divine origin, which means it is completely true and reliable in every area it touches.

The Bible we have was written across 1,500 years by at least 40 people, but it still tells the story of God’s redemption of humanity with incredible unity. Centuries of study and comparison by scholars have proven that God’s Word is accurate and trustworthy. The historical facts are just as true as what it teaches about faith. Because God is true, we can know His Word is true.

It’s also useful. Paul said that Scripture should be our guide in teaching accurate doctrine, rebuking and correcting those who have strayed from the path of righteousness, and training in Christian discipleship.

LEARNING PLAN

Lesson Introduction

For an activity-based introduction, ask the kids to name their favorite books. Write their responses on the board or on a large sheet of paper. After creating the list, distinguish between fiction books and nonfiction books. Say: **Fiction books are great, but they are made up in the heads of the writers. Nonfiction books, though, are true stories.**

Ask: **Do you think the Bible is true, or is it just a bunch of stories that came from a writer’s mind? Why?** Discuss their responses. Share with the kids

the key question for this lesson: “Is the Bible true?” Emphasize that the Bible is 100 percent true and accurate. Share that this lesson focuses on how we can know the Bible is true and how that knowledge should affect the way we live each day.

Note: If you would like to use a skit-based introduction, see the script for What’s Real? found after the conclusion.

God Gave Us the Bible (2 Peter 1:20–21)

Refer back to the list of books from the introduction. (*Note: If you did not use the activity-based introduction above, encourage kids to name their favorite books.*) Ask: **How do we know some of these stories are real and some are just made up?** Discuss the kids’ responses. Point out that most of the time we trust the writer to tell us if it’s a true story or one he or she created.

Choose a volunteer to read 2 Peter 1:20–21. Ask: **Based on these verses, where did the Bible come from?** Emphasize that nothing found in Scripture came from the hearts or minds of human beings. Say: **God used people to write the Bible, but He gave them the words. The Holy Spirit inspired them to put down on paper what God wanted them to say.**

Ask: **What are some things we know about God?** If it’s not mentioned, remind kids that God is completely trustworthy. He never lies, and He always wants what’s best for people.

Share that because God can be trusted, His Word—contained in the books He has given us—can be trusted as well.

I Can Trust the Bible to Guide My Life (Psalm 119:105)

Prior to the lesson, secure a GPS and bring it to class. *(Note: If you don't have access to a GPS, you can also pull up a map on your phone.)*

During the lesson, show kids the GPS and explain that drivers often use a GPS to find out how to get from one place to another. They trust it to give them the right directions. Ask: **Do you think a GPS could ever be wrong?** Discuss the kids' responses.

Explain that one way to get wrong directions from a GPS is to enter bad information. Say: **Sometimes people say that if you put garbage in, you will get garbage out. With a GPS, you have to enter the right stuff if you want to get helpful information out of it.** Ask: **We use a GPS to get directions for driving, but what do people use to get directions for their lives?** Point out that God gave us the Bible for that very purpose.

Read Psalm 119:105. Share that Psalm 119 is the longest chapter in the Bible, and every verse talks about how great Scripture is for our lives. Say: **Verse 105 says that God's Word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. It's like a flashlight on a dark night. It shows us where we should go and what we should avoid.**

Remind the kids again that the Bible

is reliable because God is reliable. Say: **Because He loves us and cares about us, we can be sure He put good information into the Bible so we could live the way we need to live.** Emphasize that to get the most out of the Bible, we have to do what it says. We need to know it and obey it. Encourage the kids to read the Bible and follow the instructions God gives us in it.

I Can Be Sure the Bible's Facts Are True (2 Timothy 3:16)

Play a game of Telephone with the kids. To start, gather the kids in a large circle. For larger groups, you can create multiple circles. Explain that you will whisper a sentence to the person on your right. That person will whisper the message to the kid on his or her right. The message will move around the circle until it gets back to you. Emphasize that each person can only whisper the message once, and each person must pass on the message they hear.

Whisper the following sentence into the first kid's ear: "Telephone talking takes tips to the town's tourists." Allow the message to make its way around the circle. Compare the end result with the original message you shared. Talk about how the message got changed as it went around the circle. If time allows, create a different sentence to play another round.

Point out that your group had trouble keeping a message straight between a few people over the course of a few minutes. Ask: **What do you think would happen to a message put together**

by dozens of people over the course of several centuries? Discuss the kids' responses. Explain that the Bible combines the work of about 40 different writers who lived over the course of at least 1,500 years. Say: **Centuries of study and research by Bible scholars have revealed to us the historical accuracy of God's Word. Plus, the way it changes lives is even more proof that it's true.** Ask: **How does that happen?**

Pick a volunteer to read 2 Timothy 3:16 aloud. Share that "breathed out by God" means that He is the source of everything in the Bible. Remind kids again that because God is faithful and reliable, we can count on His Word to be faithful and reliable. Say: **No matter what topic the Bible covers, it is true and reliable. Like the verse says, it's**

profitable for helping us become the kind of people God wants us to be.

Conclusion

Review the ways that kids can know the Bible is real and reliable. Ask: **Why is it important to know that the Bible is trustworthy?** Discuss the kids' responses. Emphasize that the Bible is our main source of information about Jesus's life and teaching. Say: **It also explains how our sins can be forgiven and how we can have a personal relationship with God through Jesus.** Point out that we can't really pick and choose what to believe in the Bible. Say: **If the Bible is not true, we really have no hope for salvation. But it *is* true, so we can have confidence in Him and in our faith.**

SKIT-BASED INTRODUCTION: *WHAT'S REAL?*

Props: This skit revolves around a girl trying to find information on the Internet, so a laptop might be helpful. The mom and daughter can be sitting at a table. Maybe scatter some notebooks or books to make it look like the girl is researching for a school assignment.

Mom: So, Addison, how's the research going?

Addison: Really good, Mom! I didn't realize just how much stuff you could find on the Internet!

Mom: That's true. When I was your age, we had to go the library and find books on whatever we were studying. Now you've got so much at the touch of your fingers.

Addison: I'm finding a lot of stuff, but I'm also noticing something else.

Mom: What's that?

Addison: Well, I'm not sure everything I'm reading is completely true. For example,

one site I was reading kept using the phrase “citation needed.” I think that means they aren’t quite sure where that information came from—or if it’s even right.

Mom: That’s exactly what it means. Anything that doesn’t have a citation really doesn’t have anything to back it up. It might be true, but it also could be completely made up.

Addison (*laughing*): That’s not very helpful. If I can’t trust it, I really can’t use it. I think my teacher would probably know the difference between what’s real and what’s not.

Mom: You’ve just discovered one of the biggest dangers of the Internet. You can’t believe everything you read. You might end up using something that just came from somebody’s very creative imagination.

Addison: Wow! Good to know. But it sure would be helpful if I could find one place where everything I read was completely true . . . some book that I didn’t even have to wonder about.

Mom: Well, I can tell you about a book that’s just like that. You can even find it on the computer if you’d rather read it that way. In fact, you actually have it in your room.

Addison: What is it?

Mom: It’s the Bible.

Addison: The Bible?

Mom: That's right. The Bible is completely true. Whatever it talks about—whether it's a story or a teaching—God is showing you the truth.

Addison: I know the Bible is important, but I've never really thought about whether everything in it is true or not.

Mom: That's something you probably need to think about. After all, it tells you a lot about God and about Jesus's life and teaching. The Bible is where we learn about our sin and what it means to be a Christian. If it's not real, that's a big problem.

Addison: Yeah, because if I can't trust one thing it says, then I really can't trust anything it says. Kind of like the stuff I found on some sites on the Internet.

Mom: You're right. But you really don't have to worry about that because the Bible has proven time and time again that it's reliable.

Addison: How?

Mom: First of all, it's God's Word, and He never lies. But that's not all. The Bible was written by about 40 people over the course of 1,500 years. Usually, that many people over all that time couldn't keep their story straight. But really smart people have studied what the Bible says and compared it to other things in history to see if it all lines up. And it does. It's completely trustworthy!

Addison: That's cool! It's also great to know that I don't have to wonder if I can trust it or

not. But I still wish I could find a book like that for my school assignment.

Mom: I can't help you with that . . . except for one piece of advice.

Addison: Dig deeper and keep studying?

Mom (*laughing*): You got it.

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HOW CAN I KNOW GOD?

NOTES FOR THE LEADER

As you prepare for this Explore God lesson, reflect on the key question for this session, “How can I know God?” This is the most important question any of us could ever answer. As you prepare, spend some extra time in prayer for the kids in your group who don’t yet have a personal relationship with God through Jesus. Here are a few additional ideas for adapting the experience to your particular situation:

- This lesson is intentionally evangelistic in nature. While you have had opportunities to share the gospel in other Explore God lessons, this lesson is specifically designed to share the good news of Jesus and invite kids to accept Jesus as their personal Savior.
- In this lesson, you will be reminding kids that none of us is good enough to earn salvation. Explain that good works please God, but that we should do them because we have a personal relationship with Him and want to share His love with others—not because we are trying to earn His love.
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LESSON OBSERVATIONS FOR THE LEADER

Romans 3:23

Nobody’s perfect. That was Paul’s message in Romans 3:23. But while we might take comfort in knowing we all make mistakes, the context of this verse is much more serious. Eternity hangs in the balance, and our imperfection leaves us on the outside looking in.

BIBLICAL TRUTH

God loves us and sent Jesus to die for our sins so we could have a relationship with Him.

LIFE TRUTH

I can know God by trusting Jesus as my Savior.

Everyone has fallen short. That includes the worst criminal or the cruelest dictator we can ever imagine, and it includes the sweetest church member we've ever come across. All have sinned. All have fallen short. "All" also includes each one of us. A man on a mountain may be closer to the sky than a man in a mine, but neither has any real chance of touching even the nearest star. That's the plight of humanity when we compare ourselves to God's standard of holiness. Even the best of us come up monumentally short.

God's glory is more than just a character quality. It defines who He is. He doesn't just set the standard; He *is* the standard. Originally, He created us to reflect His glory (His presence) through our lives, but our rebellion against Him warped that reflection. It falls short of reality, and we can't restore it in our own strength. We need help.

We need *His* help.

Romans 6:23

Volunteer work is great and noble, but it's not enough. To feed our families and to keep a roof over our heads, we need a regular paycheck. That means we have to go to work. That's just what mature adults do.

While we depend on the financial wages of our job to make ends meet here on earth, we also have another paycheck we're earning in the spiritual realm. Throughout Romans 6, Paul made it clear that we're in a battle between our fleshly inclinations and our desire to

please God. But the truth is, we can't reconnect with God in our own power. As a result, the wages we earn for all our human effort is death—physical death and spiritual death.

And that's how it's always been. Adam and Eve ultimately experienced physical death because of their choices in the garden. But it was the spiritual separation from God in the moment of their sin that sent them into hiding from God's presence. If we try to reach God in our own strength, our payoff is death and isolation.

In contrast to our work, God offers a free gift. By submitting to God, we experience eternal life through Jesus. We still will die physically, but His death and resurrection—which provides the assurance of our resurrection—changes everything.

Gifts aren't earned. They are given with grace and received with gratitude. We can never do anything to earn God's gift. His offer is based on His love and mercy, not our worth. We just need to accept humbly what He has offered.

Romans 10:12-13

So God has offered us an incredible gift. It's ours for the taking, but how do we receive it?

We call out to Him. That's the message of Romans 10:12-13. In Romans 10, Paul wrote again about the contrast between justification by the law (our good works) and justification by faith (complete reliance on Jesus). Since Adam and Eve's sin in Eden, the answer

has always been faith—trusting God to do for us what we could never do for ourselves. And that offer has always been available to everyone. Everyone sins, but everyone also has the same opportunity for salvation through Christ.

To make his point, Paul quoted Joel 2:32. The Jews of Joel’s day had been challenged to serve as a light to the world around them. They were called to set an example that would lead other nations back to God. The Israelites mostly failed in that regard, but that didn’t nullify the offer. Anyone could still have a relationship with God through faith in Him.

That’s still how it works today. We cannot save ourselves, but we don’t have to. If we trust that Jesus’s death paid the price we should have paid, we can have a personal relationship with God.

This truth has implications for our personal salvation, but it reaches further than that. It also has implications for evangelism. Since God has an open-door policy in terms of who can come to Him in faith, we have a responsibility to share His message with everyone, everywhere. We make the decision to follow Him ourselves, but we also need to show others the way.

LEARNING PLAN

Lesson Introduction

To start the lesson, give each kid a piece of paper and a pencil. Explain that you want them to write down three things

they really want to do or accomplish during their lives. Say: **For example, if you really want to visit Australia some day, that could go on the list. Or if you want to go to the Super Bowl, that could be on the list.** Give kids a few minutes to write down their three things.

Once the kids have made their lists, tell them to put a star next to the one that means the most to them. Say: **This would be the one that you really want to do more than all the others.** Allow a few volunteers to share their lists, including what they marked with the star. Ask the kids: **As you look at your list and your starred item, what do you think it would take to make those things happen? What would you need to do to make them a reality?** Discuss a few responses.

Ask: **If God kept a list like that, what do you think would be most important to Him? Why?** Share that above anything else, God wants to have a personal relationship with each person. Point out that God created us and loves us very much, but our sin keeps us from knowing Him like we should. Say: **But it doesn’t have to be that way.** Point out the lesson’s title: How Can I Know God? Share that this lesson focuses on how to start a personal relationship with God so we can get to know Him even better.

Note: If you would like to use a skit-based introduction, see the script for Two Gardens found after the conclusion.

Being Good Isn't Good Enough (Romans 3:23)

Prior to the lesson, collect four or five beanbags and stretch a long piece of tape on the floor.

During the lesson, select four or five volunteers. Give each volunteer a beanbag and place them about four feet from the tape on the floor. Say: **When I give the word, throw your beanbag across the line of tape.** Give the kids the signal to throw their beanbags. If kids come up short, let them try again until they make it. Then instruct the kids to take three steps back and to throw the beanbags from the farther distance. Repeat the process, moving the kids farther away from the tape each time.

After a few rounds, thank them and encourage them to take a seat. Say: **Some kids had an easier time getting the beanbags across the line than others. But if we kept moving back, we would eventually get to the point where none of us—not even the adults—could get our beanbags across the line of tape. It would be so far away that none of us could reach it.**

Allow a volunteer to read Romans 3:23 aloud. Say: **“All” includes everyone who has ever lived—even us. All of us have sinned. All of us have messed up. All of us have disobeyed God at some point.** Share that God is completely sinless, so our sin builds a wall between Him and us. Explain that none of us can get over that wall of sin on our own any more than we could throw a beanbag across the line from a mile away.

Point out that sometimes we try to be good because we think that will make God like us more. Say: **But the truth is, on our own, none of us can be good enough to even come close to God's goodness. We need help. Thankfully, God provided that help for us.**

Jesus Died for My Sins and Was Raised from the Dead (Romans 6:23)

Ask: **Do you get paid to do chores around your house? If so, which ones?** Write the kids' responses on the board or on a large sheet of paper. Point out that as they get older, the kids will have a chance to do other work that earns money. If possible, share what you do for a living. Talk about what you like about your job and why you like getting paid to do it.

Ask: **How is the money we earn for working different from the gifts we get for our birthday or for Christmas?** Discuss the kids' responses. Explain that true gifts don't require any work. People just give and receive them out of kindness and love.

Read Romans 6:23 aloud. Ask: **According to this verse, what are the wages—the payment—for the sins we commit?** (Answer: death.) Remind the kids that none of us can ever be good enough to earn forgiveness of our sins. Point out that when we try to get forgiveness through our own hard work, it really just drives us further away from God because our focus is on ourselves rather than God's grace.

Ask: **According to the verse, what is the free gift God offers us?** (Answer:

eternal life.) Share that God voluntarily sent His Son Jesus to live on earth and to die on a cross to save all of us. Emphasize that Jesus's death paid the price for our sin, so we don't have to live in judgment anymore. Say: **But that's not all. Three days later, God raised Jesus from the dead. That means that we can live forever with God. We just need to accept His gift. We need to take advantage of the gift God wants to give us.**

Explain that the Bible shares how we can do that.

I Need to Trust Jesus to Save Me from My Sins So I Can Have a Relationship with God (Romans 10:12-13)

Prior to the lesson, secure a globe or hang a map of the world on a focal wall.

During the lesson, ask a volunteer to come up to the globe or map and point to a country that God doesn't love. If the kid picks a country, affirm that God actually loves all the people in that country. If the kid doesn't pick a country, ask another volunteer to come up and try. Each time, emphasize that God loves the people in each country.

Allow a volunteer to read Romans 10:12-13 aloud. Point out that just like "all" in Romans 3:23 meant that everyone has sinned, "everyone" in these verses includes everyone who comes to God. Say: **We call to God by admitting that our sins have put up a wall and that we can't break down the wall on our own. We believe that Jesus's death paid the price we deserved to pay, and we**

believe and trust that God forgives us for everything we've done wrong. Share that whoever does that—regardless of their race or gender or background—becomes a part of God's family. Point out that this is how we come to know God and have a personal relationship with Him through Jesus.

Conclusion

Encourage the kids to think about how many choices they make in a day. Allow two or three volunteers to share some of the decisions they made before coming to class. Say: **Some of our decisions are pretty big deals, while others don't seem as important. Some take a lot of thought, and some we just make out of habit.** Emphasize that of all the millions of decisions we will make in our lives, none of them is more important than whether or not we will accept God's gift of forgiveness and salvation through Jesus.

Tell the kids to bow their heads for a minute and to think about whether they have made the decision to accept God's gift or not. Let them know that you and the other adults will be available after class to talk with anyone who has questions. After giving the kids a few minutes of silence, close the lesson in prayer, thanking God for wanting a relationship with us and making it all possible through Jesus's death and resurrection.

SKIT-BASED INTRODUCTION: *TWO GARDENS*

Props: No props are needed for this reading.

Setting: Three readers present the lines as directed below. The lines should be read in rapid succession.

Note: This reading might work best if the lines were memorized and quoted.

Reader 1: This is the story of two gardens.

Reader 2: The first one was really great.

Reader 3: The second was great too—just in a different way.

Reader 1: The first garden was beautiful. It had trees and plants.

Reader 2: It had birds and animals.

Reader 3: It had everything a person could ever want. And God would walk through it every evening.

All: It was perfect.

Reader 2: But something went really wrong!

Reader 1: Adam and Eve didn't obey God.

Reader 3: They did something He specifically told them not to do.

Reader 1: That's called sin. And because they sinned, they had to leave the garden forever.

Reader 2: Their sin created a wall between them and God.

Reader 3: An animal had to die. It would be the first of many sacrifices for people's sin.

All: Because we all have sinned and fallen short of God's standards.

Reader 3: But all those sacrifices pointed to a promise.

Reader 2: God said He would send a Savior to rescue people from their sins.

Reader 1: That brings us to the second garden.

Reader 2: It was near a hill with some crosses on it.

Reader 3: It was kind of pretty, but it was also in a cemetery.

Reader 1: It was nice, but it was full of tombs.

Reader 2: But one tomb was different than the others.

Reader 3: One tomb was empty.

All: That empty tomb is the most beautiful thing in the world.

Reader 2: While we were still sinners, God showed His love for us.

Reader 3: The payoff for sin is death, but Jesus paid that price by dying for us.

Reader 1: And whoever accepts His free gift becomes part of God's family.

All: The first garden brought sin and death, but the second garden gave us hope and life.

Reader 2: Whoever you are.

Reader 1: Whatever you've done.

Reader 3: Wherever you've been.

All: Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.