

YOUTH EDUCATIONAL ADVENTURES

Are You Ready

YE5A · Student Workbook

Seniors · Year 1: Life of Christ

Christian Educational Ministries — a faithful digital edition of the printed program

The Greatest Risk Ever

MEMORY VERSE

“The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father full of grace and truth.” - John 1:14

SCRIPTURES

Mark 14:61-62

John 1:1-14

John 1:14

John 3:16

John 6:38, 42, 51, 58

John 17:1-5

Philippians 2:2-12

Colossians 1:1-20

Hebrews 1:1-14

1 John 1:1-3

WORDS TO KNOW

FORERUNNER - a person sent before or going before to announce or prepare the way for another

WITNESS - to serve as evidence

THE LESSON

Dan was a thinker. Many thought of him as an egghead. He observed people and drew his own conclusions from his observations. It seemed to Dan that those who loved other people had strenuous demands put on them. These demands required sacrifice and self-denial. Not only that, he observed, love produced jealousy, arguments and sorrow. From these observations, Dan concluded that love costs too much. He didn't want his life encumbered with the sacrifices love requires.

Dan noticed that people strive for success. And success, he perceived, was followed by many disappointments and often failure. Ambitious people become greedy and petty. “Why mess up my life trying to succeed,” he thought? This was simply more than Dan was willing to strive for.

Dan's analysis didn't stop there. When he considered charitable acts, such as giving to the poor and helping the needy, he found that these too had their problems. This world had just too many ungrateful receivers. Sometimes, they even turned on those generous people who gave to them. This wasn't for Dan either. "Why not just play it safe and keep everything I have," he thought.

God had a decision to make. Should He take some risks or play it safe as Dan did? The One who became Jesus Christ shared all the glory in the universe with Him. Your mind simply can't comprehend how great things were for Him before this earth was ever created. He had far more than anyone could want or need. Yet God, and the One who became His Son, decided to no longer play it safe. It was time to take the greatest risk ever. That risk was to share their glory. They devised a plan which included the creation of a world and man to inhabit it. It was a risky plan that would include sacrifice and self-denial. It would cost the One who became Jesus Christ everything. But He could see the end of it all and He was willing to take the risk.

So that Eternal Being, who became God's Son, stood above the circle of the earth and thundered into the darkness of space, "Let there be light, and there was light." Jesus was the One who created Adam and Eve and breathed into their nostrils the breath of life. He was the One who called Moses from Mount Sinai, delivered the nation of Israel from the land of Egypt, and opened the waters of the Red Sea. In short, Jesus was the God Israel knew and worshiped in the Old Testament. All of this happened before Jesus was born as God's baby Son. John 1:1 tells us that "BEFORE ANYTHING ELSE existed, there was Christ, with God. He has always been alive and is himself God. He created everything there is – nothing existed that he didn't make" (TLB). In other words, Jesus created the solar system, the Milky Way galaxy, the earth, the universe and man!

Man was the risky element in this creation. Sin entered the world through Adam and Eve. Since the "wages of sin is death," man was now eternally lost and without hope. God didn't play it safe. He sent John the Baptist as a forerunner or a witness to the fact that Jesus is the "light" of the world, the hope for mankind. Then Jesus arrived on the scene. He took the greatest risk and divested Himself of all His glory to become our Savior. He no longer sat on a throne at the right hand of God. In order for Him to be our Savior, He had to become human so that He could die for our sins. All human beings are at risk and Jesus Christ was no exception. He got hungry and thirsty like you do. Pain and sorrow were as common to Him as they are to you. All the glory He had before the existence of time ended when He became human.

As He walked the streets of Jerusalem and across the shores of the Sea of Galilee, people didn't recognize Him as the Son of God. He risked everything, including recognition that He was the Son of God.

Why did Jesus do this? He did it all for you. God wanted a family so badly that He was willing to take the greatest risk ever. He wants to share His glory with children created in His own image.

You are so important to Him. Unlike Dan, God was willing to take the risk.

Dan played it safe and was unwilling to love. He knew that love would require self-denial and sacrifice – it cost too much. He squelched his ambition in order to prevent messing up his life with failure. He was afraid to give to the needy and help others for fear his charitable acts would go unappreciated. But Jesus was willing to give up everything for ungrateful, weak human beings who get sick, use drugs, mess up their lives with divorce, commit crimes, start wars, hate other people, etc. Why would He do such a thing? Because He loves you so much. Jesus knew that His love for you would cost Him everything, but He said that you are worth it! “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whosoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16 NIV Study Bible for Kids). Now read that scripture one more time and substitute your name for “world” and “whosoever.” Jesus risked everything for you. All you have to do is to repent of your sins, believe on Him and follow Him every day of your life. The price you pay is nothing compared with the greatest risk ever. You have all eternity to gain and nothing worthwhile to lose.

STUDENT PRAYER

Most Holy Father,

Thank you that you and your Son were willing to risk everything that I might share in your glory for all eternity. Jesus did it willingly because He wants me to be a part of your family. Help me to repent of my sins. Give me the strength to live a life that is pleasing to you each day.

In Jesus’ name I pray.

Amen.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Sunday - John 17:1-5

Monday - Mark 14:61-62

Tuesday - Philippians 2:5-12

Wednesday - 1 John 1:1-3

Thursday - Hebrews 1:1-14

Friday - Colossians 1:1-20

Saturday - John 6:38, 42, 51, 58

Activity

Use your concordance and this lesson to find a Scripture to answer the following questions. Then write the answers on the lines below.

WHO?

Who was Jesus' forerunner?

WHAT?

What was made that Jesus didn't make?

WHERE?

Where did sin enter the world?

WHEN?

When did Christ first exist?

WHY?

Why did Jesus give up everything to become human?

In Lesson 10, at the end of this book, you will be expected to know the entire chapter of 1 Corinthians 13. If you will memorize a few verses each week, you will be ready to recite this beautiful chapter ten weeks from now. Please use the King James Version or the version printed in Lesson 10 (page 33) for this memory work.

A King is Born

MEMORY VERSE

“And she brought forth her first born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.” - Luke 2:7

SCRIPTURES

Isaiah 7:10-16

Isaiah 9:2-7

Matthew 1:18-25

Luke 1:26-80

Luke 2:1-52

Luke 2:7

WORDS TO KNOW

CONSUMMATE - complete a marriage by sexual intercourse

ANCESTRAL – inherited from an ancestor

IMPROVISE - to make do with tools or materials at hand to fill an unforeseen need.

THE LESSON

Angie and Kyle started dating and grew to love one another. They loved each other so much that they wanted to spend the rest of their lives together. So they became engaged to be married. But straight out of the blue, Kyle got the shock of a life time. Angie confessed to him that she was pregnant. Kyle knew it wasn't his baby, for they had never had sex. The father of the baby was not willing to marry Angie, and she really didn't want to marry him. Even though she had made a terrible mistake, she still loved Kyle and wanted to marry him. Kyle loved Angie more than any other person alive. What was Kyle to do?

Mary and Joseph faced a similar problem with a big difference. What was the difference and how did they handle it?

Last week we learned that John the Baptist was a forerunner to Jesus coming on the scene. He was a witness for Jesus and His mission. Even before John the Baptist was born, Gabriel appeared to Mary and said, “Congratulations, favored lady! The Lord is with you! Very soon now you will become pregnant and have a baby boy. He is to be named Jesus. He will actually be the Son of God.”

Mary was disturbed and confused. She had never had sex with any one. How could this be when she was still a virgin? That's the big difference between Mary and Angie. Angie was not a virgin. Mary and Joseph were betrothed, but the marriage had not been consummated. When Joseph learned of Mary's pregnancy, he was equally as disturbed as Kyle was when he learned of Angie's pregnancy. What should he do? Should he marry her? Should he put her away quietly? Women could be stoned for having sex out of marriage in those days. Joseph was a good man and didn't know how to cope with this difficult situation.

While Joseph lay thinking about all of this, an angel appeared to him in a dream. "Joseph, son of David," the angel said, "don't hesitate to take Mary as your wife! For the child within her has been conceived by the Holy Spirit. . . This will fulfill God's message through His prophets – Listen! The virgin shall conceive a child! She shall give birth to a Son, and he shall be called 'Emmanuel'" (Matthew 1:20-23 TLB). We don't know what Kyle did with his dilemma, but we know Joseph did an honorable thing and stayed with Mary. Nothing had been stolen from their marriage. Mary had not given her virginity to another man.

Nazareth was under Roman domination. Caesar Augustus, the Emperor, decreed that a census was to be taken. Everyone was required to return to his ancestral home for this registration. So Joseph and Mary had to go to Bethlehem to register. This was a most awkward time since Mary was about nine months pregnant. And these were not the days of big comfortable, air-conditioned cars. Trips like these were made on foot or at best, on a donkey.

Bethlehem was very crowded when they arrived. Joseph couldn't find an inn where they could stay. The best he could do was get Mary settled into a stable before Jesus was born. Talk about roughing it, they did! There was no hospital or delivery room. Mary didn't even have a bassinet to put Jesus in. Apparently, they were good at improvising. After Jesus was born, Mary laid Him in a manger – a trough where cattle were fed hay.

Outside the village, shepherds were guarding a flock of sheep. This gives evidence that Jesus could not have been born on December 25th for it would have been too cold in that area for shepherds to be in the fields at night. It's likely that His birth took place about the time of the Feast of Tabernacles.

Suddenly the landscape lit up from the appearance of an angel. The shepherds were terrified. But the angel told them "Don't be afraid, I bring you the most joyful news ever announced, and it is for everyone! The Savior – yes, the Messiah, the Lord – has been born tonight in Bethlehem!" This angel was joined by a host of angels praising God.

The shepherds made their way to Mary and Joseph and found Jesus lying in a manger. Then the shepherds went everywhere telling everyone about this wonderful event.

Why was it important, yes even necessary, that Jesus give up eternity and His glory to become a little baby? Flesh has its limitations. Humans get hungry, tired, sick and even die. Before Jesus could qualify to be your Savior, He had to suffer pain, frustrations, sorrow, and temptations just as you do. He learned what it was like for His religious beliefs to be different from other kids His age. He learned what it was like to give up recreational pleasures to keep the Sabbath holy. He learned what it was like to say no to sex. He did it all so He would know what it's like for you. He was tempted just like you are, but He never gave in to temptation. He was willing to wait for His reward of being King of kings and Lord of lords. He understood the principle of "deferred gratification." This means a person gives up smaller things now to have something much greater later.

Jesus gave up everything, including His life, to be your Savior and King. But He wants you to share His glory and His kingdom with Him. This is worth waiting for. It's worth saying no to sin and yes to Jesus Christ!

STUDENT PRAYER

Thank you, Father, for sending your Son Jesus Christ. He gave up everything. He experienced the same temptations, humiliation, desires and pain that I know. He knows how much it hurts and He's there to help me through it all. Help me to be willing to wait for the reward you have for me.

In Jesus' name I pray.

Amen.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Sunday - Matthew 1:18-25

Monday - Luke 1:26-54

Tuesday - Luke 1:55-80

Wednesday - Luke 2:1-24

Thursday - Luke 2:25-52

Friday - Isaiah 7:10-16

Saturday - Isaiah 9:2-7

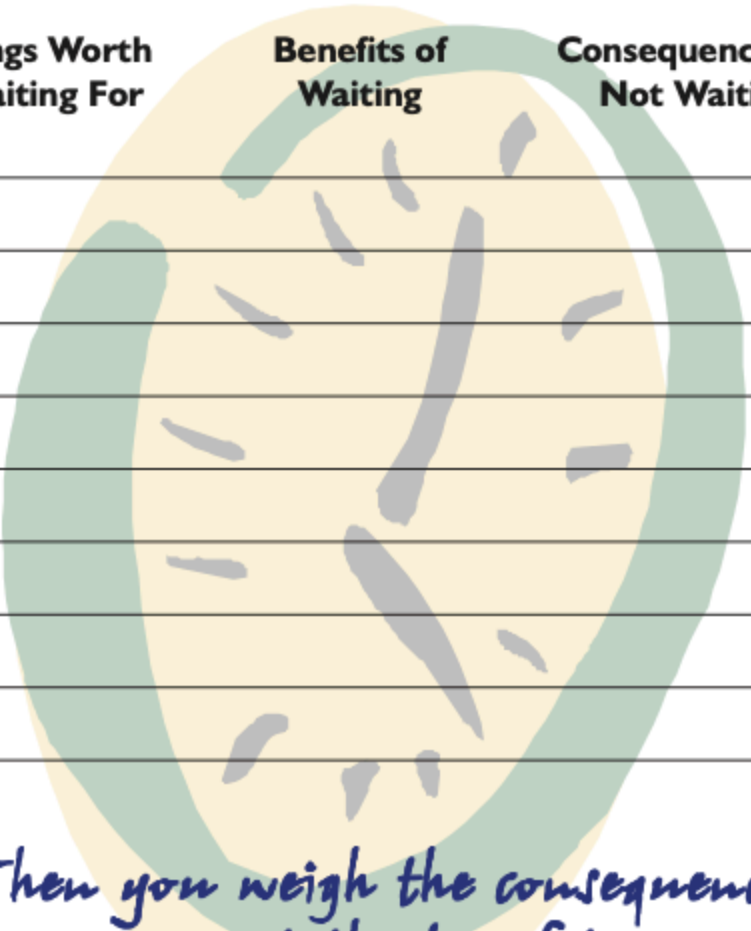
Activity

On the lines below, write down as many things that you can think of that are worth waiting for. Then write down the benefits of waiting and the consequences of taking matters into your own hands and having it now.

**Things Worth
Waiting For**

**Benefits of
Waiting**

**Consequences for
Not Waiting**



*When you weigh the consequences
against the benefits,
which is best for you?*

Join the Family

MEMORY VERSE

“Peter replied, ‘Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off – for all whom the Lord our God will call’” (TNAB). - Acts 2:38

SCRIPTURES

Isaiah 40:3

Matthew 3:1-17

Matthew 28:18-20

Mark 1:1-11

John 3:22-23

Acts 2:38

Acts 2:38-47

Acts 8:1-16

Acts 11:16-18

WORDS TO KNOW

DENOUNCE - to accuse publicly

PHARISEE - a member of an ancient Jewish party who carefully observed the written law and accepted the oral law

SADDUCEE - a member of an ancient Jewish party who accepted only the written law and rejected the oral law

THE LESSON

King Herod was trying to kill Jesus. An angel appeared to Joseph in a dream and told him to take Mary and Jesus to Egypt where Jesus would be safe. They were to stay there for further instructions. So Joseph left with his family that very night. After Herod's death, it was once again safe for Mary and Joseph to take Jesus to Nazareth. They temporarily made their home there. When Jesus came out of Egypt this was a fulfillment of a prophecy in Hosea 11:1.

Jesus' cousin, John the Baptist, began preaching out in the Judean wilderness. His theme was, "turn from your sins because the Kingdom of God is coming soon." John's ministry was

prophesied in Isaiah 40:3 long before this happened. John was an unusual person who ate locusts and wild honey. He wore a leather belt around the waist of his robe that was woven from camel's hair.

People from around Jerusalem, all around the Jordan Valley and every section of Judea went to the wilderness to hear John preach. He must have been a dynamic, convincing speaker because people confessed their sins and were baptized with water. But he told them that Jesus would come after him baptizing with the Holy Spirit.

However, not everyone who heard John was baptized. John denounced the Pharisees and Sadducees with a strong rebuke. He told them to prove that they had turned from their sins by doing worthy deeds. The Pharisees relied on who they were related to rather than a changed heart to get them into God's Kingdom. After all, they were related to Abraham – the father of the faithful. Somehow, they thought this made them special to God. God made every single one of us and put us in our own particular family. He's not concerned with who our relatives are. It's what's in our heart and what we do that count with God.

Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan River where John was baptizing. He wanted John to baptize Him, but John felt totally unworthy to baptize the Son of God and didn't want to do it. Jesus explained to John that He must be baptized to fulfill all righteousness. So John consented to do the honors. Jesus didn't need to repent. He had never sinned. Baptism is commanded of God, and Jesus set us an example by being obedient in every way. He felt it was necessary to be baptized.

Such a beautiful thing happened after John baptized Jesus in the Jordan River. The heavens were opened to Him and He saw the Spirit of God coming down in the form of a dove. Then a voice from heaven said, "this is my beloved Son, and I am wonderfully pleased with Him." Why was God so pleased with Jesus? Because everything He did was in obedience to His Father.

Several questions may have come into your mind about this lesson. You may be wondering if you should be baptized. Are you old enough? What does baptism offer you? Will it really make a difference in your life? Are you going to miss out on a lot of fun if you're baptized? What's wrong with putting it off a little longer? Our memory verse tells us to "Repent and be baptized, every one of you." There are no exceptions made here.

What are your rewards for being baptized, and are they worth it? You will receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit. God's Spirit is a gift that will help you each day to be the kind of person you want to be. It is a Spirit of power. You can do more and be more if you have God's Spirit. It will eventually bring you into God's Kingdom. This is the ultimate gift. It is the epitome of everything good. Nothing in the world and in our daily lives compares with it.

Satan wants you to put off baptism. He can make you think you'll miss out on fun if you repent and are baptized. But the Bible says just the opposite. Continue reading in Acts 2:39, "And He pleaded with them, 'Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.'"

God does not promise a painless existence or unending earthly happiness. But He can save you from the hurt, the pain, and the penalties of this "corrupt generation." There is no sin that does not carry a penalty. For example, sex outside of marriage can give you any number of sexually transmitted diseases, including AIDS. Whether it is breaking the Sabbath, stealing or disobeying your parents, sin carries a penalty that will hurt you. By putting off repentance and baptism, you are only delaying a meaningful relationship with Christ. Real happiness will never come apart from obedience to Jesus Christ.

Then what do you have to do before you are baptized? Remember, we're told in Acts to repent. Repentance is a change of heart and a change of behavior. Ask God to forgive your sins and to cleanse your heart with His Holy Spirit. Then talk with a minister about being baptized.

STUDENT PRAYER

Our God and our Father,
Thank you for the perfect example set by Jesus Christ. Even though He never sinned, He fulfilled all righteousness by being baptized. This world is so evil and corrupt. I need your help each day. I want to follow you. Please help me to repent of my sins. Give me a change of heart which leads to the right kind of behavior. I want to have the kind of relationship and help from you that I can only have by being baptized and receiving your Holy Spirit. Please give me the faith to be baptized and follow you.
In Jesus' name.
Amen.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Sunday - Matthew 3:1-17

Monday - Matthew 28:18-20

Tuesday - Mark 1:1-11

Wednesday - Acts 2:38-47

Thursday - Acts 11:16-18

Friday - Acts 8:1-16

Saturday - John 3:22-23

Activity

Life is full of decisions and you must decide what is most important to you. In the blank spaces, write your own specific, personal goals. Place a number between one and 15 beside each goal indicating its priority in your life. One means it comes first and 15 means it comes very close to last.

- _____ To have as much fun and pleasure as possible
- _____ To have a happy marriage
- _____ To own a nice home, car, furniture, etc.
- _____ To be efficient and successful in my job
- _____ To know and understand the Bible
- _____ To make a lot of money
- _____ To be an effective witness for Christ
- _____ To have a growing relationship with Jesus
- _____ To be a dedicated baptized Christian
- _____ To graduate from college
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Defeating Temptation

MEMORY VERSE

“Temptation is the pull of man’s own evil thoughts and wishes. These evil thoughts lead to evil actions and afterwards to the death penalty from God. So don’t be misled, dear brother” (TLB). - James 1:14-15

SCRIPTURES

Matthew 4:1-11

Matthew 26:36-46

Mark 1:12-13

Luke 4:1-13

1 Corinthians 10:12-13

Hebrews 2:18

Hebrews 4:14-15

James 1:12

James 1:14-15

WORDS TO KNOW

CONCEIVE - to form a notion or idea of, imagine

JUSTIFY - to defend as warranted, to declare innocent or guiltless

VULNERABLE - susceptible to temptation or corrupt influence

THE LESSON

The alarm went off in a department store as four teens fled the scene of the crime. Security officers raced to the young men’s department to see why the salesperson had pushed the alarm. Four boys, each with an armload of Tommy Hilfiger clothing, bolted and ran as fast as they could. By the time the saleslady communicated the problem and a description of the four boys to the officers, the thieves were no longer in sight.

Why did these four kids steal many hundreds of dollars worth of designer clothes? James 1:14-15 tells us that “each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and sin, when it is full-grown gives birth to death” (NIV). How do you think these kids justified in their minds the taking of all those clothes? Maybe they thought they had a right to look cool and be well dressed like other kids.

How could it be a wrong desire just to want to look good? Were these kids trying to cut corners and not pay the price in order to just look cool?

Could these thugs justify their actions by saying the department store makes so much money that it would never miss a thousand dollars worth of stolen goods? The department store owner had to work hard to build such a business. These thieves, like other kids, could work and earn money to buy their clothes.

Maybe these thugs justified their actions by saying “everybody does it.” Think about that for a moment. What if everyone decided to shoplift a few things every time they went shopping? What would that do to prices?

As far as we know, these boys didn’t get caught. Does that mean they have all of those stylish clothes with no penalty? The Bible says, “The wages of sin is death.” Yes, there is a very real penalty to be paid. What effect did shoplifting have on their character?

Jesus was human the same as you are. He got hungry and cold. He felt pain the same as you do. Good looking clothes would have looked as good on Him as they do on those teenage thugs. But Jesus never had an evil desire. After Jesus was baptized, Satan wanted nothing more than to find some evil or wrong desire in Jesus. But Jesus knew Satan was after Him, so He charted a course of action to be as spiritually prepared as possible when Satan tried to tempt Him. To be prepared would require having a very close relationship with His Father. So He went off alone to fast and pray. All the physical things could go hang – even food and water. Jesus wasn’t concerned with what looked good on Him, what tasted or felt good. What Jesus wanted more than anything else was to qualify to be your Savior. And this required that He be sinless.

The Spirit of God led Jesus out into the barren wasteland of Judea – a place where He could be alone and commune with His Father. For forty days He ate nothing. Can you imagine how hungry and physically weak He must have been? Satan must have thought that Jesus’ weakened physical condition would leave Him vulnerable to temptation, especially food. So He sought Jesus out and said, “If you are God’s son, tell this stone to become a loaf of bread.”

Think about that for a moment. Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin. He grew up knowing He was the Son of God. When He was baptized the Holy Spirit descended in the form of a dove and a voice from heaven said, “this is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased.” If someone questions whose son you are, wouldn’t your first inclination be to prove it? But Jesus resisted that temptation. He knew it was wrong to obey any of Satan’s suggestions. Jesus replied by saying, “It is written in the Scriptures, ‘Other things in life are much more important than bread!’”

Then Satan took Jesus up and showed Him all of the kingdoms of the world. Satan told Him, “I will give you all these magnificent kingdoms with all of the glory that goes with them, if you will

only worship me.” Who could resist such a temptation? Satan was offering Jesus rulership over every nation on this earth. That’s a lot of importance! However, Jesus knew the Scriptures very well. He knew how evil it would be to worship Satan. He quickly said, “We must worship God, and Him alone.”

Satan lost big time. But he still wouldn’t give up. He took Jesus to a high roof on the Temple and said, “If you are the Son of God, jump off! For the Scriptures say that God will send his angels to guard you and to keep you from crashing to the pavement below!” Satan knew how to appeal to the ego. What he tried to get Jesus to do seemed to be without risk – just jump off the roof of the Temple and angels would be there to protect Him. But Jesus recognized that Satan was trying to tempt Him with a wrong desire, and He wasn’t about to follow Satan’s suggestion. He responded by quoting another Scripture. “Do not put the Lord your God to a foolish test.”

Satan saw the determination in Jesus to obey His Father – He saw real character. He ended his temptation and left Jesus for a while. Angels came and ministered to Jesus.

There will be times in your life when everything in you cries out to give in to temptation. You may be tempted to shoplift so that you can look cool. Or you may think that you won’t get caught if you give in to sexual desires just this one time. You may not be prepared for an exam and be tempted to look at someone else’s paper. Peers may be as persistent as Satan was with Jesus. Sometimes friends can make it seem like so much fun to try drugs or alcohol. What should you do when you are tempted to sin? Remove yourself as quickly as possible from the temptation. Pray and think of Scriptures which will strengthen you. Remember, sin brings death. Focus your mind on God’s word.

STUDENT PRAYER

Gracious Father,

Thank you for Jesus’ perfect example. He resisted sin even when He was the weakest physically. He was able to focus on the big picture – being my Savior. Help me to always think about the consequences that yielding to temptation will have for me, my family and friends. I want to obey you.

In Jesus’ name I pray.

Amen.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Sunday - Matthew 4:1-11

Monday - Mark 1:12-13

Tuesday - Luke 4:1-13

Wednesday - Hebrews 4:14-15; 2:18

Thursday - 1 Corinthians 10:12-13

Friday - James 1:12

Saturday - Matthew 26:36-46

Activity

Jesus quoted a scripture to Satan every time He was tempted. Being familiar with many scriptures can give you strength at a time of temptation. Below is a list of common temptations teenagers face. Use your concordance and find a scripture that will help you resist each of these temptations. Write out the verse. Memorizing each scripture will make it instantly available when wrong desires entice you. You'll find many of these scriptures in the book of Proverbs.

Sex _____

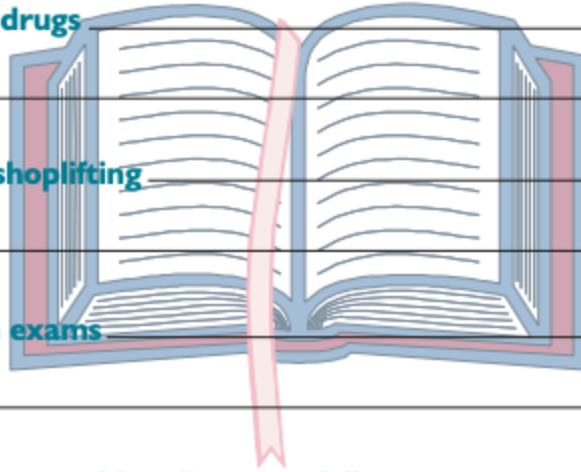
Drinking or drugs _____

Stealing or shoplifting _____

Cheating on exams _____

Disobeying or speaking disrespectfully to parents _____

Breaking the Sabbath _____



The First Miracle

MEMORY VERSE

“Wine gives false courage; hard liquor leads to brawls; what fools men are to let it master them, making them reel drunkenly down the street!” (TLB). - Proverbs 20:1

SCRIPTURES

Proverbs 2:1-5

Proverbs 20:1

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

Matthew 4:23-24

Matthew 14:35-36

Mark 6:53-56

Luke 6:17-19

John 2:1-11

John 4:46-48

John 20:30-31

1 Corinthians 6:9-10

WORDS TO KNOW

INTOXICATED - to temporarily diminish physical and mental control by means of alcohol, a drug or another substance

OBNOXIOUS - highly objectionable or offensive

THE LESSON

Everyone loves a wedding. Wed-dings are romantic, usually beautiful, and can be such a gala, festive occasion. It was no different in Jesus' day. Mary, Jesus' mother, was a guest at a wedding in Cana, a village in the hills of Galilee. Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding as well. This wedding took place a few days after the baptism of Jesus. The Bible doesn't tell us who the bride and groom were. They could have been relatives or just friends.

Since weddings in Palestine were a community celebration often lasting for several days, the family carefully planned the events giving much attention to every detail. Refreshments were provided for all the guests. To fail to provide adequately for the guests could mean social disgrace. But even with the best of plans, things go wrong. Somehow, they failed to have enough

wine on hand for this wedding feast. Making such a social blunder could haunt the newly married couple.

Mary, Jesus' mother, learned about the problem. She may have known that the Holy Spirit descending upon Jesus after His baptism gave Him new miraculous powers. So Mary went to her Son with the problem. Jesus said that He couldn't help her now and said, "It isn't yet my time for miracles." He didn't want to be distracted from His task.

Although Mary listened to Jesus, she also knew that He would take care of the problem because she, His mother, had requested it. She told the servants to do whatever Jesus told them to do. Six large stone water pots, used for Jewish ceremonial purposes, were standing there. Jesus told the servants to fill them with water. After this was done, He said, "Dip some out and take it to the master of ceremonies."

The master of ceremonies tasted it and found it to be an excellent wine, better than what they had already served. He commented that usually the best wine is served first and the lesser quality served later.

Wine had the same effect on people then that it has today. It is an adult beverage that when used responsibly can make a feast more enjoyable. But wrongly used, alcohol can become a curse. It may seem cool to go to a keg party. Drinking may seem like a quick fix for disappointments or a source for courage. But teens are not old enough to experiment with alcoholic beverages.

Take a little time and think about the teens you know in school who have a drinking problem. Are they nicer, more likable people when they're drinking? Or, do they become loud and aggressive saying things they would never say while sober? Has this created problems with their friendships? Do they have difficulty with their grades? Do they miss days of school or work because they are hung over or alcohol is beginning to take its toll on their health? Proverbs 20:1 says "wine gives false courage, hard liquor leads to brawls; what fools men are to let it master them, making them reel drunkenly down the street!" (TLB).

Now take a little time and think about adults who have drinking problems. Do you have friends whose parents are alcoholics? Are their families happy? Do they have financial problems? Do they have difficulty holding a job or getting the promotion that should come their way? Is this the kind of mom or dad you want? Is this the kind of person you want to become?

The leading cause of death among adolescents is drinking and driving. The earlier in life you start using alcohol and other drugs, the more likely you are to become dependent on them. It takes less alcohol to produce intoxication in teens than in adults. As a teenager, you can become addicted to alcohol faster than an adult. Addiction can occur within one or two years of regular use by adolescents. Addictions are difficult to overcome and most addicts don't succeed. These

substances can take away your dreams, ruin your family, job and health. But worse than that they can rob you of eternal life.

Then why is it okay for your mom and dad to enjoy a glass of wine occasionally with dinner and it's not all right for you? Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 shows us that there is a right time for everything. The time has not come for teens to drink alcoholic beverages – they are simply too young. There are a lot of things that are okay for parents that aren't all right for teens.

Then what is the significance of Jesus turning water into wine? Jesus honored His mother by fulfilling her request at this wedding feast. But He didn't come into the world to alter or somehow resolve the inconveniences of life's everyday problems. He came to do the Father's will, to teach us God's way, and eventually die for our sins.

Could it be as the Expositor's Bible Commentary says, "Jesus had come to bring about conversion: water to wine, sinners to saints"?

STUDENT PRAYER

Dear Father,

Thank you for Jesus honoring His mother with such a beautiful miracle. Help us to understand its full significance. We know teens who misuse alcoholic beverages and are addicted to substances you never intended we use. Help me each day to look beyond the temporary pleasure of today. You have better things for me. I want to know the joy of being in your kingdom.

It's in Jesus' name I pray.

Amen.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Sunday - John 2:1-11

Monday - John 4:46-48

Tuesday - Matthew 14:35-36

Wednesday - John 20:30-31

Thursday - Matthew 4:23-24

Friday - Luke 6:17-19

Saturday - Mark 6:53-56

Activity

The way we talk to ourselves reflects how we feel about ourselves. When we start to focus on the bad feelings, this becomes self-defeating behavior. The key to overcoming self-defeating behavior is to replace it with positive Christ-like “self-talk.” This will reflect openness, confidence, love and a willingness to try. Now replace each of these self-defeating phrases with a positive behavior statement and use your concordance to support it with a scripture. (We’ve provided clues to help you find a scripture.) Write your new statement and the verse with the scripture on the lines below.

Self defeating phrases:

1. No one likes me. (clue: friendly)
2. I never do anything right. (Clue: strengthen)
3. I just don’t care. (Clue: prize)
4. I’m so unattractive. (Clue: adorning)
5. I’m too dumb to learn. (Clue: teacher)
6. I’m tired of trying. (Clue: overcome)

Positive “Self-talk”:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

Lazarus is Raised

MEMORY VERSE

“Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?” - John 11:25-26

SCRIPTURES

Matthew 25:31-34

John 1:6

John 3:16

John 5:24-30

John 11:1-45

John 11:25-26

1 Corinthians 15:50-53

Galatians 3:6-29

1 Thes. 4:13-18

Revelation 20:1-15

WORDS TO KNOW

FELLOWSHIP - a friendly relationship; companionship; camaraderie; the fellowship among friends

THE LESSON

We all enjoy a good smelling fragrance. And we all know how expensive they can be. One day Mary poured costly perfume on Jesus' feet and wiped them with her long hair. The fragrance permeated the entire house. Judas, the disciple who betrayed Jesus, didn't like it a bit that Mary was being so extravagant.

The perfume was worth a fortune and he thought it should have been sold and given to the poor. Considering the price of expensive perfume, Jesus was very important to Mary – she loved Him very much. Jesus had a deep love for Mary, Martha and Lazarus their brother. These four were such good friends that it wasn't unusual for Jesus to visit their home in Bethany.

Lazarus became ill, so Mary and Martha sent a message to Jesus telling Him that His good friend was very sick. When Jesus received this message, He said that the purpose of Lazarus'

illness was to glorify God, it was not for him to die.

A couple of days passed and Jesus told His disciples, "Let's go to Judea." The disciples were willing to go with Jesus, but they were not at all enthusiastic about returning to Judea. The Jewish leaders had tried to kill Jesus only a few days earlier. So they not only feared for Jesus' life, but for their own lives as well.

Jesus was determined to return to Jerusalem in spite of the danger. He told His disciples that Lazarus was asleep and He would go and waken him. Once again the disciples were on a different wave length. They assumed that Jesus meant Lazarus' health had improved and that he'd had a good night's rest. But Jesus said plainly, "Lazarus is dead."

As Jesus approached Bethany, Martha came out to meet Him. When she saw Jesus, she could hardly contain her grief and disappointment: "Lord, if only you would have been here, my brother would not have died."

Now, Martha knew without a doubt that Jesus could have prevented Lazarus from dying! Yet, when she and Mary sent word to inform Him that Lazarus was ill, Jesus stayed where He was for two more days. Why would He do this?

Jesus understood her grief and responded, "Your brother will rise again." Martha believed Jesus. She knew Lazarus was a righteous man and he would rise again in the resurrection. But this wasn't what Jesus was talking about. While she believed that Jesus could have prevented her brother's death, she didn't have the faith to believe that Jesus could raise him from the dead.

Seeing Martha's lack of faith, Jesus was even more direct, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live even though he dies, and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" (John 11:25- 26).

Jesus remained on the outskirts of the village while He sent Martha to go get Mary. When Martha got there, she found friends and family members trying to comfort Mary. As Mary reached Jesus, she fell at His feet weeping. "Lord if you had been here, my brother would not have died!" Jesus looked at her as she wept. He looked at Mary's friends and family who were also weeping. Deeply moved and troubled, Jesus asked, "Where have you laid him?"

He was led to Lazarus' grave – a cave with a large stone laid across the entrance. Jesus too, became overwhelmed with emotion and He wept. Why did Jesus weep when He knew that He was going to resurrect Lazarus? He wept because of their unbelief and their seeming inability to fully believe in Him.

"If there was one thing Jesus wanted, it was that they believe in Him. For their salvation's sake, they would have to come to understand who He really was.

“Roll the stone aside,” Jesus commanded. Martha immediately objected because by now the smell would be terrible. Lazarus had already been dead four days. Jesus asked her, “Didn’t I tell you that you will see a wonderful miracle from God if you believe?”

They rolled the stone back and Jesus looked up to heaven and prayed. Then He shouted, “Lazarus, come out!”

Can you imagine the faces of Martha, Mary and those who were with them when Jesus gave this command? Can you imagine their shock, amazement and even fear? What was He daring to do? Would God give Jesus such authority and power?

Some of those who were there had actually witnessed healings and miracles performed by Jesus. Others had heard the numerous reports. But this was something they had never considered. As their minds raced with anticipation, a figure wrapped in burial clothes began to emerge. It was Lazarus! Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead.

At last, many of the Jewish leaders who were with Mary and saw this miracle finally believed on Christ. What about you? Do you believe that Jesus is your Savior? Do you believe that Jesus can bring people back to life? Do you believe He can resurrect you? What do you have to do before He will?

John 3:16 says, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have eternal life.”

He loves you the same as He loved Mary, Martha and Lazarus. He’ll do the same for you that He did for Lazarus. But you must believe that Jesus is the resurrection and the life with a faith that is consistent with Christ-like behavior.

STUDENT PRAYER

Dear Father,

Thank you for providing a way that I might have eternal life. Help me to believe in Jesus with a faith that is consistent with Christ-like behavior.

In Jesus’ name I pray.

Amen.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Sunday - John 11:1-45

Monday - Galatians 3:6-29

Tuesday - 1 Corinthians 15:50-53

Wednesday - Matthew 25:31-34

Thursday - John 5:24-30

Friday - 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Saturday - Revelation 20:1-15

Activity

Write the initials of your three best friends on the lines provided. Then write yes or no on the lines under their initials as you read the list of character traits these friends may or may not have. Then ask yourself if each friend is the kind of person you want shaping your life. Are they the kind of person you should be hanging out with? Do you need to make any changes in the friends you choose?

	Friend #1	Friend #2	Friend #3	
	_____	_____	_____	Character traits:
1.	_____	_____	_____	1. Follows the crowd no matter what.
2.	_____	_____	_____	2. Pressures you to do things you shouldn't.
3.	_____	_____	_____	3. Hangs out with the wrong crowd.
4.	_____	_____	_____	4. Hangs out with a good crowd.
5.	_____	_____	_____	5. Resists peer pressure – especially when it's wrong.
6.	_____	_____	_____	6. Respects your religious beliefs even though they may not agree with you.
7.	_____	_____	_____	7. Would still be your friend if the world fell apart.
8.	_____	_____	_____	8. Is your friend only because you are popular or generous.
9.	_____	_____	_____	9. Cares enough to tell you when you are wrong.
10.	_____	_____	_____	10. Is not quick to get angry.

Would You Touch Him?

MEMORY VERSE

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written: ‘for your sakes we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered’” (The NIV Study Bible for Kids). - Romans 8:35-36

SCRIPTURES

Leviticus 15:25-27

2 Kings 20:1-21

Ecclesiastes 9:11

Matthew 9:2-8

Matthew 9:18-22

Mark 5:21-34

Luke 5:18-26

Luke 8:43-48

Romans 8:35-36

Romans 8:35-39

WORDS TO KNOW

CHEMOTHERAPY- the administration of chemical drugs given usually for cancer

HEMORRHAGE - the escape of large amounts of blood; heavy bleeding

THE LESSON

Kevin was a runner and one of the most popular kids in his high school. As he tried to beat his latest record on the track that day, he was aware of severe recurring pain in his leg. The doctors recommended surgery to correct a problem in his back. But as he healed from surgery, the pain didn't go away. The doctor ordered a CAT scan. The bad news showed his leg was full of cancer.

The next step was chemotherapy. These treatments cost Kevin his hair. This wasn't easy for a teenager to deal with. As Kevin suffered and struggled with hope of being well someday, he became painfully aware of what all of us have to deal with – life is only temporary. Pain and

suffering are very real. His situation worsened until the pain was unbearable. Kevin slipped into a coma. His pulse weakened and the family gathered around his bed as he drew his last breath.

Kevin was young and before the pain set in, life looked great. He, like most high school kids thought cancer and death were things older people dealt with. He felt immune to this happening to him. But Ecclesiastes 9:11 tells us time and chance happen to all men. Even teenagers are not immune to cancer or a fatal disease.

It's been five years since Kevin died of cancer. His family and friends had a long, hard grieving period and still miss him. But God's Word assures us that nothing can separate us from God's love (Romans 8:35-36). Kevin won't be left in the grave – someday God will resurrect him.

Jairus, who was a leader of the local synagogue, had a daughter who was at the point of death. He fell down before Jesus pleading with Him to heal his little daughter. Jesus started towards Jairus' home and a crowd of people followed.

In that crowd was a woman who had suffered twelve years with a hemorrhage. She had gone to many doctors and like Kevin, they were not able to heal her. This type of bleeding usually produces anemia. But her weakened condition didn't take away her faith that Jesus could heal her. As a matter of fact, she had faith that if she could only touch Jesus' garment she would be healed. She probably felt it would be wrong to touch Jesus' person because her bleeding made her ceremonially unclean (Leviticus 15:25-27).

This woman slowly made her way through the crowd toward Jesus. As she got close to Him, she reached out her hand and touched the edge of His cloak. Upon touching it, she immediately felt a sensation within her body. Her bleeding had stopped! Think how joyful and excited she must have felt.

However, this excitement was abruptly interrupted. Suddenly Jesus stopped walking, turned to the crowd and asked, "Who touched my clothes?" As if her healing wasn't amazing enough, Jesus' awareness of what had just occurred was even more mind boggling. Even His disciples were puzzled by His question. With a crowd so large pressing against Him, how could Jesus ask such a thing? But Jesus' eyes continued to scan across the crowd. He knew what had just occurred for He felt some of God's power leaving Him. Overwhelmed and afraid, the woman knew that she could not ignore Jesus' question. Her conscience wouldn't allow it. After all, she was the one Jesus was looking for!

The woman made her way to Jesus and fell at His feet, trembling with fear. Then in the presence of all the people, she explained why she had touched Him and how she had been instantly healed. Then Jesus called her "daughter" – the only place in the gospels where Jesus addressed a woman by that word. He made it clear that her faith had healed her not only physically, but

spiritually as well. He told her to, “Go in peace.” The peace He was speaking of comes only through a complete relationship with God.

Jairus’ daughter died before Jesus got to her. So an even greater miracle was performed by Jesus when He went to Jairus’ home with Peter, James and John. He raised her from the dead. One of the lessons we can learn from this study is that Jesus cares about you. He’s the first place we should go to when we have sicknesses or troubles. He has all power and all compassion.

God may not relieve your pain as fast as He healed the woman who touched Him. But He loves you and cares about you personally. He wants a close relationship with you. That close relationship can only come when you obey Him and have daily contact with Him in prayer and Bible study. He wants you to reach out to Him. He wants you to touch Him so that He can touch your life. He will never leave your side.

STUDENT PRAYER

Dear Father,

You are such an awesome God! Your miracles are most encouraging to me. Through them I can learn how much you love me and that you will never leave my side. Help me always to have a very close and personal relationship with you.

In Jesus’ name.

Amen.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Sunday - Matthew 9:18-22

Monday - Leviticus 15:25-27

Tuesday - Mark 5:22-25

Wednesday - 2 Kings 20:1-21

Thursday - Luke 8:43-48

Friday - Luke 5:18-26

Saturday - Matthew 9:2-8

Activity

You have relationships with friends, family, teachers, and even pets. But there is one relationship which is more important than any other – your relationship with the One who created you, your Savior Jesus Christ. He wants to have a relationship with you, but He can't do it alone. Relationships are two-sided. It takes time to develop a relationship with your friends. It also takes time to get to know Jesus and to build a special relationship with Him. God and Jesus Christ want to touch your life. Bible study is a time they reach out and touch you. Take some time right now and look up these scriptures and write them out in your own words to help you know how to build a relationship.

Psalm 55:17 _____

James 5:14 _____

Mark 12:30 _____

A Walk on Water

MEMORY VERSE

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; Not of works, lest any man should boast.” - Ephesians 2:8

SCRIPTURES

Matthew 8:23-27

Matthew 14:1-33

Mark 6:45-52

John 6:15-21

Romans 4:4

Galatians 2:16

Ephesians 2:8

Hebrews 11:1-40

WORDS TO KNOW

INCEST - sexual intercourse between persons too closely related to marry legally

ATROCIOUS - very cruel, evil, brutal

AERODYNAMICS - the branch of mechanics that deals with the forces exerted by air or other gases in motion

THE LESSON

King Herod arrested John the Baptist, threw him into prison and put chains on him. This was done to please his wife, Herodias, who was previously married to Herod's brother. John told Herod it was wrong to marry her because it was an incestuous relationship (The Expositor's Bible Commentary, page 338). Herod was too much of a coward to kill John for saying that. He feared the people would riot because they believed John was a prophet.

Herod's birthday party must have been a real blast. Herodias' teenage daughter performed a dance. It pleased Herod so much that he vowed to give her anything she wanted. Herodias didn't let this opportunity slip by. She wanted John dead! So she told her daughter to ask for John's head on a tray. Herod shouldn't have made this foolish vow. Herod didn't want to be thought of as weak. So he would not go back on his vow and John was beheaded. The girl presented his head to her mother on a tray.

The disciples heard about this atrocious event and got John's body and buried it. When Jesus heard about His cousin's brutal murder, He must have been deeply grieved. He tried to get away to a private place, but the people followed. They were hungry and tired, and Jesus had compassion on them. He turned a boy's five loaves of bread and two fish into enough food to feed 5000 men plus women and children.

After Jesus performed that miracle, He again felt an urgent need to get away and pray. He made His way into the hills to be alone and sent His disciples to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. Darkness fell as He prayed late into the night. The murder of John must have weighed very heavily on Him.

A strong wind came up and the Sea of Galilee was exceptionally rough that night. The disciples were still in their boat trying desperately to cross the lake. The fierce winds tossed their boat about like a top. Their progress was slow and difficult because of the strong winds and high waves.

Between 3 a.m. and 6 a.m., which is the third watch, Jesus decided to go to His disciples. He had no boat, but that didn't deter Him from going. He proceeded to go to His disciples by walking on the water.

As Jesus made His way towards them, the disciples saw a figure on the water and were terrified. They didn't recognize Him and thought He was a ghost. Jesus heard them when they cried out, "It's a ghost." Jesus shouted back to them, "Take courage, it is I. Don't be afraid."

Peter was the impetuous kind and usually spoke before he thought. He yelled back at Jesus, "Lord, if it's you, tell me to come to you on the water." Jesus responded, "Come." So, Peter got out of the boat and began walking towards Jesus on the water.

Can you picture this scene? High waves are furiously splashing against the boat that Peter is in, causing it to bob up and down on the rough sea. Then he goes over the side of the boat and stands up on the choppy water. But instead of sinking, the water under his feet seems to be as solid as the ground. Peter begins to walk on water.

What an experience! People marvel that an airplane can fly. But the flight of an airplane can be explained by physics and aerodynamics. Walking on water can't be explained away by science!

As Peter walked towards Jesus, he noticed the wind and the waves. Overcome with doubt and fear, Peter lost faith and started to sink. The water would no longer support him. Afraid that he might drown, he cried out, "Lord, save me."

Jesus immediately reached out His hand and caught Peter. Holding him while still on the water, Jesus said, "You of little faith, why do you doubt?" There is no record of Peter's response, if there was one. After all, what could he say?

Jesus and Peter climbed into the boat and immediately the wind died down. The disciples were amazed and worshiped Him saying, “Truly you are the Son of God.” The disciples had experienced a lot in their travels with Jesus. They had seen Him heal the sick and lame and raise the dead. Surely, they remembered the time when fearing for their lives, Jesus quieted a violent storm on the Sea of Galilee with a simple command. But this experience was somehow different. It reaffirmed all that He taught them and all that they believed about Him.

As you think about this lesson, ask yourself what you would have done if you had been in Peter’s shoes. Would you have trusted Jesus or would you have doubted? Would you have remained focused in your faith or would you have given in to fear?

To Peter’s credit, at least he tried. He did walk a little distance on the water. Although he failed, he learned from this experience. Because Peter never gave up, God was able to turn him into a man of great faith.

Are you willing to turn your life over to Jesus? Are you ready to trust Him and His Word? Just remember that He can help. He can help you rise above your sins, personal problems and adversities. There is no problem that can’t be overcome if you turn your life over to Jesus. So are you ready to trust Him. Are you ready to walk on water?

STUDENT PRAYER

Dear Father,

You sent your Son and He overcame the world. Thank you for His help and example. There is no problem that is too difficult for Him. With your help, I can have faith and overcome my problems. Please grant me the faith to put you first in my life and to trust you completely.

It’s in Jesus’ name that I pray.

Amen.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Sunday - Matthew 14:22-33

Monday - Hebrews 11:1-40

Tuesday - John 6:15-21

Wednesday - Mark 6:45-52

Thursday - Matthew 8:23-27

Friday - Galatians 2:16

Saturday - Romans 4:4

Activity

What do you think?

Complete these questions at home before class.
Answering these questions will give you confidence for the
Sabbath School discussion.

1. Jesus lived a perfect life, yet He felt the need to pray. How often should you pray?

2. How can prayer help you in your faith?

3. List ways that Peter's experience in this story applies to your life.

4. What kinds of difficulties did the disciples experience while crossing the Sea of Galilee?

5. What time of the night did Jesus leave the mountain to go to His disciples?

6. How did Jesus get to His disciples when they were out in the middle of the Sea of Galilee?

7. What were the disciples' reactions and what did they think when they saw Jesus coming?

8. Why did Peter begin to sink when he walked on water?

9. Would you give Peter any credit because he believed Jesus enough to try walking on water?

10. Do you think that God will be there to help you when you try to obey Him as Peter did?

Is God Fair?

MEMORY VERSE

“So the last will be first, and the first last. For many are called, but few chosen” (NKJ). -
Matthew 20:16

SCRIPTURES

Job 34:12-15

Matthew 16:24-28

Matthew 19:30

Matthew 20:1-16

Matthew 20:16

Matthew 27:18

Luke 10:1-8

1 Corinthians 3:1-9

Colossians 4:1

1 Timothy 5:17-18

Revelation 22:13

WORDS TO KNOW

ENVY - a feeling of discontentment aroused by someone else's possession of things one would like

DENARIUS - a form of money when Jesus was on the earth; a full day's wages

THE LESSON

How would you like it if you worked for a full day and got paid the same as someone else who worked along with you for only one hour? Would you think it was unfair? But what if you had agreed to the salary before you even started? Would you still think your employer was unfair? What does the Bible teach about this?

In Matthew 20:1-16 Jesus told a story we call the “Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard.” In His day a “denarius,” was the payment for a full day's work. In the story, a wealthy landowner decided to hire workers to harvest his field. One morning he went out and hired several workers. They agreed to work for the going rate of a denarius for the entire day. The workers thought this was a fair price so they went to the vineyard and began harvesting the grapes.

A couple of hours later, the landowner saw some men standing around near the marketplace with nothing to do. He told them to go work in his vineyard and at the end of the day he would pay them what was fair. These men trusted his word and believed they would be paid fairly. They went to the vineyard to work, not even knowing exactly how much they would be paid.

The wealthy man did the same thing again at lunchtime, when the working day was already half over, and again at 3:00 in the afternoon. By 5 p.m. he had quite a number of people working in his vineyard. When he came across more men who were standing around with nothing to do, he asked them, “Why haven’t you been working today?” The men replied, “Because nobody hired us.” So he told them to go to his vineyard and he would pay them what was fair when the work was finished.

By the time the sun set and the work was through, there were several men to be paid. The owner of the vineyard asked his assistant to gather the men together so they could receive their wages. He instructed his assistant to pay the men who came at the end of the day first and the ones who came at the beginning of the day last.

What do you think was going through the minds of the ones who had been working all day long when they saw the ones who came at 5 p.m. getting paid a denarius? What would you have thought? You might have thought the boss changed his mind and decided to pay everyone a denarius per hour instead of per day. But then how would you feel once that denarius was put into your hand and you realized that everyone was getting paid the same amount, regardless of how long they worked?

These workers who had been in the field all day complained to the landowner when they were only paid a denarius. They said, “Those fellows worked only one hour, and yet you’ve paid them just as much as those of us who worked all day in the scorching heat.”

The man answered, “Friend, I did you no wrong! Didn’t you agree to work all day for the price I offered? Take it and go. It is my desire to pay all the same; is it against the law to give away my money if I want to? Should you be angry because I am kind?”

Jesus was the one telling this story and He is the one who said the landowner was being kind. Why do you think He said this? Because the man was generous to those who didn’t get to work for the full day. They were willing to work, but nobody else would hire them. They needed the money as much as anyone and probably had families to feed.

Was the landowner cheating those who worked the full day? No, because they agreed on their wages even before they started working. So, why were the ones who worked all day angry?

Could they have been jealous that someone else got as much as they did? Everyone likes to think they are special, they have done the best job or that they have worked the hardest. These men

were envious because the workers who came late and didn't work as many hours as they did got paid the same.

"A relaxed attitude lengthens a man's life; jealousy rots it away" (Proverbs 14:30 TLB). Think about that verse. Have you ever been envious of someone for winning a contest or a game? How did you feel when someone else went out with your girl friend or boy friend? Did you have a relaxed attitude about it or did you agonize over it until it almost made you sick? What can you do about it? Philippians 2:3 says "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves"(NIV). It may not be that you think too little of the other person, but you may think too highly of yourself. That's where humility comes in. Envy not only hurts the one who is feeling it by poisoning their heart and attitude, it also has the power to kill! As a matter of fact, it was envy that killed Jesus.

In Matthew 27:18 we are told that Pilate knew the Jewish leaders had arrested Jesus out of envy because of His popularity with the people. Envy was one of the reasons Jesus was killed.

God is kind and wants to bless His people. He doesn't want anyone to be covetous or envious or jealous. These emotions can hurt you. Unchecked bitterness and resentment can consume you. God is willing and ready to help you overcome envy and to be kind as He is kind. Are you ready to let Him?

STUDENT PRAYER

Dear Father,

Thank you for the parables Jesus told and the lessons we learn from them. Please help me to be aware of the times I feel jealous or envious and help me to overcome these feelings. Thank you for your enduring kindness and love for your creation. Please remind me to show kindness and generosity to others as the landowner in this parable did and as you do for us.

In Jesus' name I pray.

Amen.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Sunday - Matthew 20:1-16

Monday - Matthew 19:30

Tuesday - Matthew 16:24-28

Wednesday - Colossians 4:1

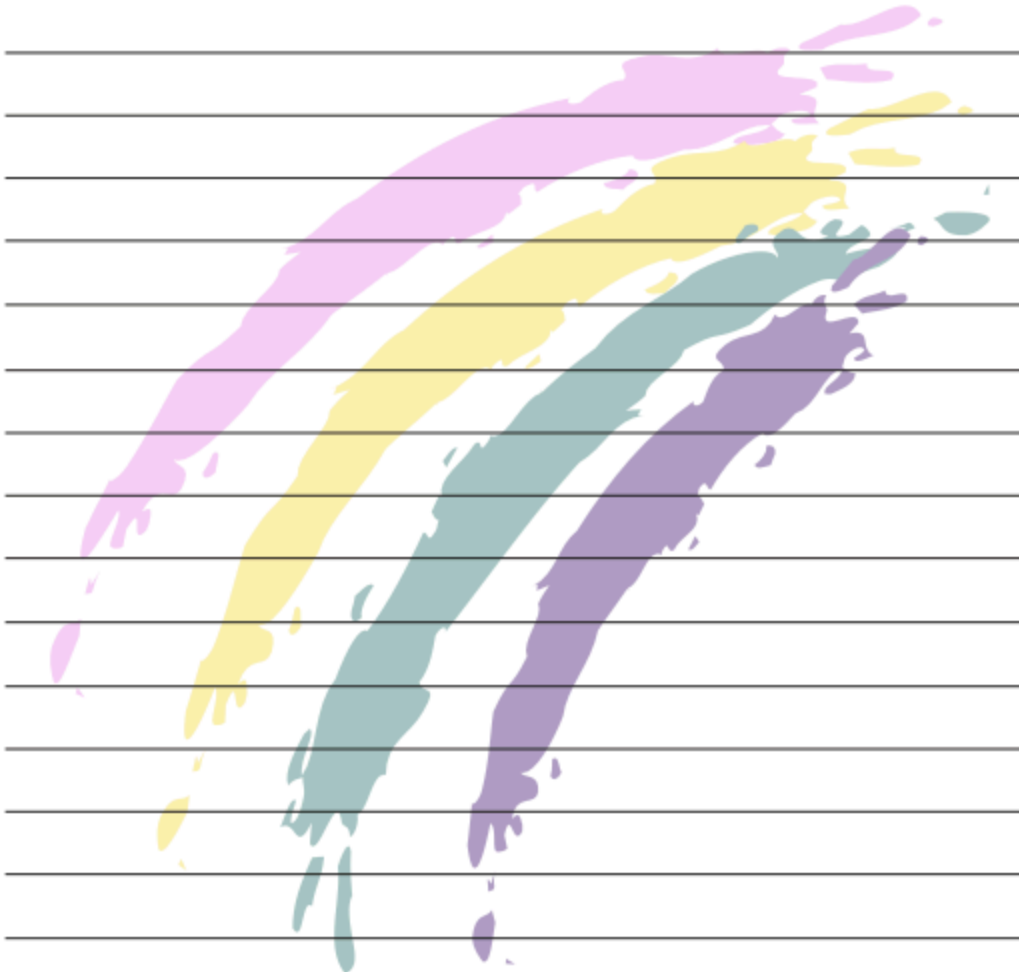
Thursday - 1 Corinthians 3:1-9

Friday - 1 Timothy 5:17-18

Saturday - Luke 10:1-8

Activity

On the lines below, write a paragraph about someone or something that you are envious of. Make a promise to yourself to consciously overcome those feelings by taking positive action toward that person or situation. Remember, you can overcome jealousy with kindness. Also remember, once you make a promise, God expects you to follow through with it. God doesn't want us to be like the early workers who agreed to work for a certain price and then later wanted more.



Who Should I Love?

MEMORY VERSE

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity. - 1 Corinthians 13

SCRIPTURES

Leviticus 19:18

Matthew 10:40-42

Matthew 22:34-40

Matthew 25:41-46

Mark 12:28-34

Luke 6:30-38

Luke 10:25-37

Luke 14:13-14

1 Corinthians 13

Ephesians 2:4-7

WORDS TO KNOW

SAMARITAN - an inhabitant of ancient or modern Samaria

LEVITE - a member of the tribe of Levi, especially one appointed to assist Temple priests

THE LESSON

One day, an expert in the law decided to test Jesus. So he asked Him what must he do to inherit eternal life. Jesus responded by asking him what the law said. He said, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind and, Love your neighbor as yourself.”

Jesus told him if he would do this he would live forever. The man continued to test Jesus by asking ‘Who exactly is my neighbor?’ In reply to this test question Jesus gave the Parable of the Good Samaritan.

A Jewish man was on his way to Jerusalem when he was attacked by robbers, who stripped and beat him and left him by the road half-dead. A priest came along, and after seeing him, crossed over to the other side of the road. He didn’t even want to walk on the same side of the road! A Levite came by and did the same thing. It wasn’t until a Samaritan came by and saw this poor bleeding man that anyone had enough compassion to stop and help. He cleaned and wrapped the wounds, put the man on his donkey and took him to an inn where he could be cared for. Even though the Samaritan had probably never seen this Jewish man before, he gave the innkeeper two denarii and instructed him to take care of him. He felt such a responsibility for the injured man that he told the innkeeper he would be coming back that way and would repay him for any further services.

A very significant aspect of this parable is that this good man was traveling in Judea where Samaritans were generally despised so much that the two different races didn’t speak to one another. In spite of that, he went out of his way to help this Jew. He had a respect for human life regardless of the nationality. Respect for people shows you value them and feel a measure of responsibility for them. It didn’t matter to this Samaritan that he was from a different group, race or religion. When a person needs help, should we allow personal ties or social systems to prevent us from helping? James 4:17 says, “Remember, too that knowing what is right to do and then not doing it is sin.”

God’s Spirit in us will cause us to look beyond personal characteristics or nationalities as the Good Samaritan did. Since God created all mankind, shouldn’t you, as a Christian, feel a responsibility for others regardless of their race, nationality, religion, gender or social standing?

Now spend a few minutes meditating on the love chapter in this easy to read translation.

Love is . . .

If I can speak beautifully and can sing like an angel, but don’t love others, I sound like a child banging on a piano or screeching radio.

If I'm very smart, almost a genius, if I can figure out the hardest math problems and understand sentence diagrams, but don't love others, I am nothing.

Love will stand in line and wait its turn. Love looks for the good in others. Love doesn't always want what others have, and it doesn't brag about what it does have.

Love is polite, even when the other person is rude. Love doesn't always have to be first.

Love doesn't get angry over the small things, and it doesn't remember one reason after another to be hurt.

Love isn't happy when someone else fails but is happy with the truth.

Love will always protect others, especially those who are often picked on or teased.

Love always believes the best about others and is steady and true.

Love never gives up. Preaching will stop someday. So will speeches. Knowledge will come to an end.

Today we only know part of what there is to know. We can preach and speak only with a small part of understanding, but when perfection comes then what is imperfect will go away.

I am now young, and so I talk and think and speak like a teenager. When I become an adult I will put adolescent ways behind me.

Now we see only a poor reflection, like in a mirror;

Then we will see face to face. Now I only know part of what there is to know; then I will know fully and will be fully known.

Only three things really matter in life; Faith, Hope and Love.

But the greatest of these is LOVE.

This translation is from the New Adventure Bible with minor alterations. (New International Version Study Bible for Kids)

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Sunday - Luke 10:25-37

Monday - Leviticus 19:18

Tuesday - Matthew 10:40-42

Wednesday - Luke 6:30-38

Thursday - Matthew 25:41-46

Friday - Ephesians 2:4-7

Saturday - Luke 14:13-14

Activity

Homeless people are apart of our community. The church has a responsibility to these people. So do you. Are you ready to consider their needs and give them help? Answering the questions below can help prepare you for a rewarding service. As you begin, take an inventory of your opinions. How different or similar are homeless people to you?

Circle the statement that best shows your opinion.

**Very different
from me**

**Somewhat
different**

**Somewhat
similar to me**

**Very Similar
to me**

Homeless people make me feel (circle the ones that express your feelings). . .

Pity

Superior

Ill at ease

Compassion

Angry

Disgusted

Indifferent

Love

Irritated

You may not see a homeless person you can help this next week. But there are ways you can reach out and help the poor and helpless in your community and church. Places such as hospitals, soup kitchens and the Salvation Army are looking for people who are willing to serve. Outline below a plan to help the poor and less fortunate people this next week.
