

# THE QUEST: GROWING CLOSER TO GOD IS OUR QUEST

This week we are focusing on people as God's prized creation, made in His image. Despite the rebellion of sin, because of God's great love for us, He made a plan to rescue us by sending His Son, Jesus.

**KEY VERSE:** "Ask, and it will be given to you. Seek, and you will find. Knock, and the door will be opened to you." Matthew 7:7

**BIBLE STORY PASSAGE:** Genesis 1—3

## TEACHING POINTS

- Talk about a quest. The Quest for Kids is about the adventure, or quest, of knowing more about God.
- Review Genesis 1—3. Emphasize how people are God's prized creation. He created us in His image, declared us very good, and desires to have a lasting relationship with us. Despite the rebellion of sin, because of God's great love for us, He made a plan to rescue us by sending His Son, Jesus. God desires to bring us back into a restored relationship with Him, so that we may know God, continue to grow closer to Him, and walk with Him day by day.
- Talk about how important questions are to people. Asking questions is one important way we learn about the world around us. God wants us to ask Him questions. It shows we want to know and understand Him more and are seeking to find answers. God asks us questions to draw us closer to Him. As an example, read Genesis 3:8-11 looking for the questions God asked Adam. Explain that questions God asks people and questions people ask God are an important part of growing closer.

## BIBLE STORY

Read today's Bible story about Adam and Eve in Genesis 1—3. Ask the following review questions:

**Q1:** How did God create everything?

**A1:** He spoke everything into existence. (Genesis 1.)

**Q2:** How did God describe everything He created?

**A2:** God said, "It is good." People were described as "very good." (Genesis 1.)

**Q3:** How are man and woman a special creation of God?

**A3:** Man and woman are created in the image of God. (Genesis 1:27)

**Q4:** How did the serpent deceive or trick Eve?

**A4:** Told her the fruit would make her like God (Genesis 3:3)

**Q5:** After Adam and Eve ate the fruit, what did they do when they heard God in the garden?

**A5:** They hid in the garden. (Genesis 3:8)

**Q6:** What question did God ask Adam after Adam hid?

**A6:** Where are you? (Genesis 3:9)

**Q7:** What hope did God give Adam and Eve?

**A7:** God promised that He would send a Savior, and God clothed them. (Genesis 3:15,21)

## GO DEEPER

**Q8:** What words could you use to describe God?

**A8:** Loving, forgiving, kind, eternal, righteous, holy, and others

## PRAY AND JOURNAL

- Complete pages 10-11 together as you pray and write about what God is teaching you.

## ACTIVITY

- Guide your child to create a board game to review today's story and truths.

# THE QUEST: FOLLOWING GOD'S PLAN

This week we are focusing on following God's leading, whether anything is too hard for God, and the ultimate promise that God will right every wrong at some time. The Gospel will be presented to kids after discussing Abraham's faith.

**KEY VERSE:** "For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened." Matthew 7:8

**BIBLE STORY PASSAGE:** Genesis 12:1-5 and 15:1-6

## TEACHING POINTS

- Growing closer to God is a quest that lasts a lifetime.
- God planned each person's journey before the person was ever born.
- God sent His Son Jesus to be the Savior and bring people back to Himself.
- Today we will learn how Abraham spent his life growing closer to God.

## BIBLE STORY

Abraham's story takes up several chapters in Genesis. Read together Genesis 12:1-5 and 15:1-6 to find ways Abraham obeyed God. Ask the following review questions:

**Q1:** Where did God tell Abram to go?

**A1:** To a land He would show Abram (Gen. 12:1)

**Q2:** Who did Abram take with him?

**A2:** Sarai, Lot, and his servants (Gen. 12:5)

**Q3:** How many children did God promise to Abram?

**A2:** More than the stars in the sky (Gen. 15:3)

**Q4:** How did Abram respond to God's promise?

**A4:** He believed what God said (Gen. 15:6)

## GO DEEPER

**Q5:** What do you think God wants us to learn from the story of Abram?

**A5:** God is pleased when people obey Him. God can do anything.

**Q6:** What kinds of plans might God have for your life?

## PRAY AND JOURNAL

- Complete pages 16-17 together as you pray and write about what God is teaching you.

## ACTIVITY

Make a GCTGTM (Growing Closer to God Text Message) Shelf Minder:

- Form a body shape from chenille stems.
- Abbreviate a message about growing closer to God to be like a text message (such as LOL for laughing out loud). Write it on a small rectangle of paper.
- Tape the message to one hand of the body shape.
- Place the shelf minder on a book shelf, a table, or other flat surface in your home.

# THE QUEST AND FEAR: TRUSTING AND DEPENDING ON GOD

This week focuses on trusting and depending on God during times of fear. Jesus has power over anything we might fear and over all creation. Kids can learn that Jesus is stronger than anything that might be standing in their way of trusting God.

**KEY VERSE:** “Who among you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone?” Matthew 7:9

**BIBLE STORY PASSAGE:** Matthew 8:23-27

## TEACHING POINTS

- Read Matthew 8:26 together to introduce the question Jesus asked the disciples.
- Talk together about times you are afraid and how you can trust God to care for you.
- Continue on the quest to learn more about trusting and depending on God.

## BIBLE STORY

Read about the disciples on the lake in Matthew 8:23-27. Ask the following review questions:

**Q1:** What was happening to the boat?

**A1:** It was sinking (Matthew 8:24)

**Q1:** What was Jesus doing during the storm?

**A2:** Sleeping! (Matthew 8:24)

**Q3:** What did Jesus do to the storm?

**A3:** Made it stop (Matthew 8:26)

**Q4:** How did the disciples feel?

**A4:** Amazed (Matthew 8:27)

## GO DEEPER

**Q5:** What do you think God wants us to learn from the story of the disciples and the storm?

**A5:** Jesus is in control of everything and we have no need to fear.

**Q6:** Why might God not always take what we fear away?

**A6:** To help us learn to trust Him as we go through the fear and to remember His presence at all times.

## PRAY AND JOURNAL

- Complete pages 22-23 together as you pray and write about what God is teaching you.

## ACTIVITY

Make truth spinners:

- Guide your child to write on the shiny side of a used CD (with a permanent marker) two or three things he might do to increase his dependence on God.
- Place the CD on top of a marble so that the marble pushes up slightly through the hole in the CD. Twist the marble and watch the CD spin.
- Time how long the CD will spin. Try to make it spin longer.
- Remark that the spinner is fun but it is also a reminder that you and your child are on a lifetime quest with God, the One who is in control of everything.

# THE QUEST DURING DIFFICULT TIMES: CLINGING CLOSE TO GOD

This week we are focusing on what difficult times are, how God comforts people during those times, and His promise to ultimately take care of things. Kids will learn who they can go to for help.

**KEY VERSE:** “Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake?” Matthew 7:10

**BIBLE STORY PASSAGE:** Various passages from Genesis 37—50

## TEACHING POINTS

- Today we will learn how to grow closer to God even during difficult situations.
- Ask your child if he can think of a difficult situation in his life. Pray with him and ask God to take care of him and lead him through that difficult time.

## BIBLE STORY

Read Genesis 37:12-36 about Joseph being sold into slavery.

Ask the following review questions:

**Q1:** Where did the brothers put Joseph?

**A1:** In a pit in the wilderness (Genesis 37:21)

**Q2:** What was Joseph wearing when his brothers trapped him?

**A2:** A colorful robe (Genesis 37:23)

**Q3:** What did Joseph’s brothers do to him when they heard the caravan coming?

**A3:** Sold him as a slave (Genesis 37:28)

## GO DEEPER

**Q4:** What was difficult for Joseph in this story?

**A4:** His brothers hated him and he was taken to a foreign country as a slave.

**Q5:** What do you think God wants us to learn from the Bible story?

**A5:** God will always be with us during hard times and will comfort us.

## PRAY AND JOURNAL

- Complete pages 28-29 together as you pray and write about what God is teaching you.

## ACTIVITY

Make “My Quest Paper Gliders”

- On a large paper strip, print two ways to grow closer to God. On a shorter strip, print *My Quest: Growing Closer to God*.
- \*Slide one paper clip into an end of a straw with the narrower part of the clip inside the straw. Do the same on the other end.
- Roll both paper strips into circles and slide them into different clips on the straw with the circles lined up one behind the other.
- Toss the glider and try to say the words of Matthew 7:10 before it lands.

# THE QUEST AND OTHERS: GROWING CLOSER TO GOD THROUGH SERVICE

This week focuses on how Jesus is faithful to forgive and redeem us, calling us to follow Him. As we follow Him, we are called to serve Him by serving others.

**KEY VERSE:** “If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him.” Matthew 7:11

**BIBLE STORY PASSAGE:** John 21:15-25

## TEACHING POINTS

- Together read Matthew 7:11 to introduce how much more God cares for people than anyone else does.
- Today we will learn how to grow closer to God by serving Him and others.

## BIBLE STORY

Read today’s Bible story about Jesus and Peter in John 21:15—25.

Ask the following review questions:

**Q1:** How many times did Jesus ask if Peter loved Him?

**A1:** 3 (John 21:15, 16, 19)

**Q2:** What did Jesus tell Peter three times to do?

**A2:** Take care of His sheep (John 21:15, 16, 17)

**Q3:** Who was Peter to follow?

**A3:** Jesus (John 21:19)

## GO DEEPER

**Q4:** What do you think God wants us to learn from the Bible story?

**A4:** Even when we sin, Jesus is faithful to forgive us and call us to serve Him.

**Q5:** How can people serve God?

**A5:** By obeying Him and caring for others

## PRAY AND JOURNAL

- Complete pages 34-35 as you pray and write about what God is teaching you.

## ACTIVITY

Perform an act of service by choosing one of these activities or another of your choice.

- Prepare and send a care package to a soldier.
- Work together at a shelter to sort clothing, serve a meal, or distribute groceries.
- Take cold bottled water to police departments, fire stations, or first responders.
- Gather gently used toys and deliver them to a family shelter.

# THE QUEST AND PROMISE: GOD WILL GO WITH US TO THE END

This week focuses the fact that this journey lasts a lifetime. One major way people can grow closer to God all during their lives is to study God's Word because it has wisdom for them no matter their ages or circumstances. King David recognized the importance of God's Word and worked to do all he knew to do.

**KEY VERSE:** Review Matthew 7:7-11

**BIBLE STORY PASSAGE:** 1 Samuel 16—17

## TEACHING POINTS

- Together read Psalm 119:105 to introduce the importance of God's Word to people.
- Ask, "Why do you think remembering Bible verses and stories is important?"
- Share favorite Bible verses with each other.
- Today we will learn how the Bible helps us grow closer to God for our entire lives.

## BIBLE STORY

Read today's Bible story from this activity book or 1 Samuel 16—17. Ask the following review questions:

**Q1:** Who had God chosen to be the next king of Israel?

**A1:** David (1 Samuel 16:12)

**Q2:** What instrument did David play and compose songs to God using?

**A2:** A harp or lyre (1 Samuel 16:18)

**Q3:** How did God show He was with David?

**A3:** The Spirit of the Lord was on David. (1 Samuel 16:13)

**Q4:** What did David do in today's Bible story that showed He was willing to trust God?

**A4:** David fought Goliath. (1 Samuel 17)

## GO DEEPER

Discussion Questions

**Q4:** What do you think God wants us to learn from the Bible story?

**A4:** God gives us direction for what to do and how to grow closer to Him.

**Q5:** How long does a person's quest for God continue?

**Q5:** For a lifetime!

## PRAY AND JOURNAL

- Complete pages 42-43 together as you pray and write about what God is teaching you.

## ACTIVITY

Create a Bible memory plan:

- Together print the words of these verses (or others you choose) on different index cards: 1 Corinthians 16:8; Psalm 13:10; Psalm 119:105; Ephesians 6:14; Ephesians 6:15; Ephesians 6:16; Ephesians 6:17; Ephesians 6:18; 2 Timothy 3:16; James 1:22.
- Cut light-weight cardboard into an easel shape. Stack the index cards and display them on the stand.
- Memorize the verse on the first card. Place it at the back of the stack. Choose another card the next day.
- Review the cards often.

# SHARING THE GOSPEL WITH KIDS

Some kids who study *THE QUEST FOR KIDS* may not have made a personal decision to accept Jesus as Savior yet. This study could present you with just the right setting for sharing God's plan with kids. Consider these thoughts as you get ready to share.

- The ultimate goal of teaching the Bible is for a person to accept Jesus as his Savior when the Holy Spirit leads him to realize that he has sinned against God and is spiritually lost. The Holy Spirit is the leader in the experience, but believers have the responsibility of following the Spirit's leading.
- Some kids have already become Christians. Others will come to that decision at different times. Kid's workers lay the foundation for making that decision while at the same time not rushing a child into a decision she is not ready to make.
- Becoming a Christian is an individual matter and discussions about conversion are more effective when conducted individually. The child will feel freer to share true thoughts and feelings.
- Remember that each person comes to this decision as the Holy Spirit leads. People respond at different ages and with different backgrounds. Strive to know the kids you teach as individuals.
- The questions a child asks can signal a teacher that the child is considering the decision to follow Jesus. When she asks her questions, answer simply and without pushing the child to do more than she is ready to do. More than anything, these questions indicate the child's awareness of his need for God.
- If a kid indicates a desire to become a Christian, ask her to tell you what she feels. Use questions that require thoughtful answers rather than just yes or no. Use language the child understands.
- You might want to use these questions: Why do you want to become a Christian? What do you think a person has to do to become a Christian?
- Use your Bible as you share the gospel. After reading a Bible verse, be ready to explain the verse in your own words. Help the child understand unfamiliar terms such as repent. Refer to *The Gospel: God's Plan for Me* to help you know Bible verses to share and kid-friendly ways to explain how to become a Christian.
- Help the child know how he can respond. Use directions such as: Tell God you know you have sinned and are sorry. Ask God to forgive you for your sin, for wanting your way instead of God's way. Ask Jesus to become your Savior (the One who keeps you from being separated from God) and Lord (the One in charge). Again, refer to *The Gospel: God's Plan for Me* for good ways to help kids know what they can do.
- One common misconception for kids is that being baptized makes them a Christian. Be sure they know the difference between becoming a Christian, being baptized, and joining the church.
- Include parents or caregivers when possible. Tell them what led you to discuss salvation with their child. Explain where you think the child is in his spiritual journey e.g. becoming aware of a need for God, is thoughtfully considering how to respond, made a decision to accept Christ, or wants to be baptized.)
- Don't forget that children are very literal. Avoid symbolism.
- Prepare yourself ahead of time so you are ready to answer kids' questions as they arise. Be ready with Bible verses ready to use.
- Pray, pray, pray. Ask God's leadership as you help boys and girls grow in their understanding of salvation.