

books

3&4

# explore

## Leader's Guide



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# explore

A Discipleship Series for Preteens

## books

Experience God's Power in You

**3&4**

Encounter Your Mission for God

# explore leader's guide

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# introduction

*Explore* is a discipleship resource for your church's intentional ministry to preteens—those who may no longer consider themselves children but are not yet teens.

Your preteens are on the verge of becoming teens and embarking on a culture that is in need of an infusion of followers of Christ. Intentional discipleship as provided in *Explore* will help ground them in their faith, establish routines that will move them in their spiritual formation, and prepare them to face a world desperately in need of the Savior.

The *Explore* discipleship series is written in a small group format to provide opportunity for deeper, relational connections. It's progressive in design, moving students from an internal confirmation of their faith, to a commitment to a fellowship of believers, on to service within the fellowship, and finally to personal ministry outside the doors of the church. It's intentional in that it combines personal teaching moments that are highly interactive and reflective with corporate celebrations.

*Transition* is a key word to describe the life of preteens. Their bodies are transitioning as they move from child-size to adult-looking bodies. Their minds are transitioning as they move from concrete to abstract thinking. They are developing the ability to reflect, interpret, and assimilate. Socially, preteens are moving from being family centered to being friend centered. Spiritually they are moving away from the borrowed faith of their parents and teachers to a personalized faith that they own.

## This Time of Transition

"What you believe by the time you are 13 is what you will die believing . . . most people's minds are made up and they believe they know what they need to know spiritually by age 13. Their focus in absorbing religious teaching after that age is to gain reassurance and confirmation of their existing beliefs rather than to glean new insights that will redefine their foundations" (George Barna).

This time of transition is a prime opportunity to instill biblical truths and to give your preteens an opportunity to confirm their faith. Preteens are capable of powerful commitment and have the ability to process deep spiritual insights, if given the opportunity and motivation. Here are some key things to remember when sharing biblical truth with preteens:

- They desire authentic relationships with adults who are transparent.
- Boys often respect male leaders greater than female, while girls usually respect either equally. Make sure you have male volunteers as part of your preteen ministry.
- They need you to answer the question "So what?" so they can understand why.
- They are active and loud as they sort out who they are and where they fit in.

- They are very self-conscious and desire a great deal of attention.
- They need routine and clear guidelines, but seek independence.
- They need to talk and question.
- They have drastic mood swings and waffle between levels of maturity.
- Girls are all about friends and are into make-up, fashion and appearance.
- Boys want to play and care little about personal appearance.

## What Is the *Explore* Discipleship Series?

The *Explore* series is comprised of four student books, each containing six weeks of discipleship lessons for preteens, for a total of twenty-four weeks worth of material. Each set of six lessons culminates in a celebration. There are also two leader's guides, one for student books 1 and 2 and one for student books 3 and 4.

The outline of lessons for the entire 24-week course is:

### book ①

#### ***Uncover the Truth about God***

1. God
  2. The Bible
  3. Jesus
  4. Humanity
  5. Salvation
  6. Baptism
- Celebration: Baptism

### book ③

#### ***Experience God's Power in You***

1. Bible Study
  2. Prayer
  3. Evangelism
  4. Fellowship
  5. Service
  6. Stewardship
- Celebration: Student Leadership

### book ②

#### ***Discover Your Place in God's Plan***

1. The Trinity
  2. Temptation
  3. Bible Study and Prayer
  4. Holy Living
  5. Worship
  6. Membership
- Celebration: Student Membership

### book ④

#### ***Encounter Your Mission for God***

1. Fruits of the Spirit
  2. Spiritual Gifts
  3. Spiritual Disciplines
  4. Compassion
  5. The Call
  6. Missions
- Celebration: Mission Experience

Christian character development is a lifelong process. No one is too young or old to start or stop growing deeper in their life with Jesus. It is a privilege to disciple every person intentionally. If we want our youth, young adults, parents, grandparents, and culture to behave like Jesus, now is the time to explore the truths of God and His Church with our children.



## note to leaders

*Explore* is a small group discipleship tool for the students in transition between your children's ministry program and youth group. The material provides for twenty-four weeks of teaching and four weeks of celebrations. This can be done by using two of the books in the fall semester for twelve weeks of programming and two of the books in the spring semester for another twelve weeks. It can also be used over two years providing a six week program each fall and spring for two years.

This small group can meet during the traditional Sunday school hour, during a midweek programming hour, or on Sunday evening. The books are also an excellent resource for setting up a time of independent programming—a time set apart from the typical ministry schedule for the purpose of intentional discipleship with preteens. Establishing a unique time of discipleship for preteens also allows flexibility in finding a time frame and location that works best for the group.

The Leader's Guide for each lesson contains the following elements in this order:

**Thesis:** A single sentence that summarizes the entire content of the lesson into one thought.

**Main Points:** Three sentences that summarize the primary teaching points for each lesson.

**Lesson Preparation:** Provides leader instructions for what to do prior to teaching each lesson.

**Connect:** Helps create a relational environment, giving the students and leader an opportunity to catch up on life.

**Warm Up:** Provides a "hook" and introduces the concept for the lesson to gain the interest and attention of students.

**Engage:** Presents the Bible teaching component, including biblical background.

**Relate:** Provides the real life application, answers the "so what?" question and makes the theme personal.

**Question:** Launches the group into asking interactive and exploratory questions about the content and relational elements of what was presented so that they can process and internalize.

**Prayer:** Offers a suggested prayer to pray with the students.

**Unwind:** Creates group connection and lightens the atmosphere before sending them home.

**Challenge:** Provides a tangible outcome that practically relates the concept to the students' real world. Also includes a challenge verse to study each week with the goal being they will commit the verse to memory.

Additional resources to enhance each lesson can be found at [www.wesleyan.org/explore](http://www.wesleyan.org/explore).

Of these elements, *Engage*, *Question*, and *Challenge* appear in the student book. The students are asked to use their book as a reflection journal, completing the content and following the challenges.

There is enough material provided in each lesson for a full 90 minutes of programming. If your time is shorter than that, pick and choose the elements that work best for your group and fill your time allotment. The elements that parallel the student's book—*Engage*, *Question*, and *Challenge*—would be the foundational elements you would begin with and build the rest of your teaching time from.

The Bible verses referenced throughout *Explore* are quoted from the *Live Bible*. We strongly encourage you to make available for each student a copy of the *Live Bible* so that you and your preteens can be literally on the same page. In a small group it is a challenge to have a Bible study with a leader and students using different Bibles and especially different translations. The Leader's Guide contains the corresponding page number for each biblical reference to help you find the verses quickly. The *Live Bible* is written in the New Living Translation which is most appropriate for this age level, providing easier readability and comprehension for preteens.

book ③

# Experience God's Power in You

Leader's Guide



explore

*In this book students will learn—*

- How studying God's word can unleash God's power in your life.
- Ways you can share the good news of salvation with others.
- Why it's important to fellowship with other Christians.
- How you can use your talents and abilities to serve Jesus.
- What it means to be a good steward of God's gifts.

You are on an amazing journey of faith—let's *Explore* it together!





# 1. Bible Study

**We will experience God's power when we study His Word, the Bible.**

## Main Points

When studying the Bible, it's important to ask who, what, where, when, and why.

When studying the Bible, it's important to ask what each passage tells us about God.

When studying the Bible, it's important to ask how this Scripture impacts your life.

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## Lesson Preparation

Background: Read Ephesians 1:17–21; Hebrews 4:12; Psalm 25:9–10; 119:34; 125; and 130.

Items needed: *Live Bible* (one per student), student books, pens, riddles, glasses filled with water, cotton balls, and pictures of various items (information about Web-based stock photos can be found at [www.wesleyan.org/explore](http://www.wesleyan.org/explore)).

## Connect

When you hear the word *powerful* what image comes to your mind?

What's the most powerful animal you've ever seen?

What makes that animal powerful?

Who is the most powerful person you know?

What makes that person powerful?

Do you consider yourself powerful?

**You can be! As Christians we can experience God's power in us. We're going to *Explore* through the next six lessons how to have God's power. One way to experience God's power is through studying the Bible.**

plan

ask

# Bible Study

## Warm Up

*Before class, look online for age appropriate riddles. You can find some suggested Web sites at [www.wesleyan.org/explore](http://www.wesleyan.org/explore). Or, check out a book of riddles at your local library.*

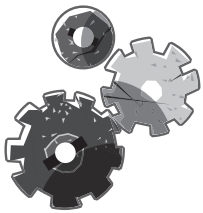
Riddles can be both fun and confusing. Listen to these riddles and see if you can guess the answer.

*Share a few riddles with your class.*

Do any of you have a riddle that you would like to share with the rest of the class?

*Allow a few minutes for them to share any riddles they know.*

**For many people, the Bible seems like a riddle—confusing and hard to understand. Today, we’re going to learn how to study the Bible in a way that makes it easier to understand.**



**say**

## Engage

You can experience God’s power when you study His Word, the Bible. Hebrews 4:12 says, “For the word of God is alive and powerful” (p. 1216, *Live*). Many of us would like to experience God’s power but aren’t sure how to study His Word. We can learn some simple skills for studying the Bible that will help us understand and experience God’s power every time we read His Word.

### ***I Can Know It Is True***

1. As you begin to dig into God’s Word, start by asking five questions: who, what, where, when, and why. Take time to look at *who* the main characters are or *who* is speaking, *what* is going on or being taught, *where* and *when* the story is taking place, and *why* this passage is important. The answers to these questions give us a better understanding of the entire passage and help us to see both the words *and* their meaning. God wants us to take the time to understand His Word. See what it says in Deuteronomy 6:4–13; Psalm 125; and Ephesians 1:17–21.
2. When studying the Bible, it’s important to ask what each passage tells us about God. The Bible teaches us who God is. It’s His story from Genesis to Revelation, and Scripture reveals more about God’s character. The Bible helps us to see His love, power, forgiveness, and holiness more clearly. When you read the Bible, always ask what the passage reveals about God. We can discover who God is by reading the Bible. Discover something about Him in Psalm 25:9–10; Daniel 9:8–9; 1 John 3:1–3; and John 3:16–17.
3. When studying the Bible, it’s important to ask how this Scripture impacts your life. God’s Word has the power to change our lives. The Bible is not just recorded history but is alive, active, and current today. The Bible helps us

change bad habits into good ones, put others before ourselves, and love God with everything we have. When studying the Bible, we should always keep our hearts open to what God might want to teach us through His Word and be willing to change the things in our lives that are not pleasing to Him. Discover how God's Word can impact your life in Romans 12:1–2 and 2 Timothy 3:16–17.

**The same God who worked in and through the lives of the people recorded in the Bible, is at work today. When you read His words, seek to discover what they are saying to you.** The Bible does not have to be confusing and hard to understand. Take the time to study it using these methods, and you will find it easier to understand and enjoyable to read. If you open your heart and mind, the Holy Spirit will help you truly see what God is saying to you.



### Check It Out

*Read together Psalm 119:1–8 (p. 600, Live).*

Psalm 119:2 says, “Joyful are those who obey his laws and search for him with all their hearts” (p. 600, *Live*).

➤ When we search and study God's Word, we can experience God's power. What is the difference between just reading the Bible and truly searching and studying it?

*Reading the Bible simply requires that we understand what we are reading and does not involve life change. However, when we study the Bible, we seek to understand it fully and apply it to our lives. Studying the Bible also helps us grow closer to God.*

Psalm 119:105 says: “Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path” (p. 603, *Live*).

➤ How is the Bible like a light?

*It shows us the way to go, helps us make the right choices when we can't see the answers, and helps us avoid obstacles we can't see on our own.*

### Relate

*Have the preteens break off into pairs. Give each pair a glass of water that is filled to the brim and some cotton balls.*

Our glasses of water are full. Do you think there's room for anything else? We're going to see if the glass will hold any cotton balls. Make a guess as to how many cotton balls each glass can hold without spilling.

*Record each pair's estimate.*



# Bible Study

In your pair, take turns placing a cotton ball on top of the water. Remember to count the number of cotton balls as you add them.

*Compare their results to their original guess.*

We thought the glasses were full, but we kept adding more and more cotton balls. Just like these glasses of water, we can always learn more about God as we study His Word.



## Question

Bible study is more than just reading; it involves opening yourself up to discover the power of God's Word in your life. It involves learning new things about God and being willing to let Him change you through what you have learned. Let's put what we have learned into practice.

➤ Read Genesis 1:1—2:4, and then answer the following questions.

### Part 1

- Who is the main character?

*God.*

- What is going on in this passage?

*God is creating the world.*

- Where does this story take place?

*The heavens and the earth.*

- When does this story take place?

*In the beginning.*

- Why is this passage important?

*It teaches us how the earth was created and who created it.*

### Part 2

What does this passage teach us about God?

*God is powerful. God is creative. God created us. God was pleased with all He created.*

## Part 3

What impact does this Scripture have on your life?

*Encourage them to reflect and respond.*



## Prayer

Dear Father,

We praise You for giving us the Bible. Thank you for giving us a way to grow closer to You. Help us make a habit out of studying Your Word so that we never stop experiencing Your power. Amen.

## Unwind

*Before class, print several close-up pictures of different objects. For help finding Web-based images, see [www.wesleyan.org/explore](http://www.wesleyan.org/explore) and teacher helps for this lesson. Print and place the pictures around the room. Pair up the preteens.*

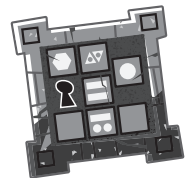
We're going to discover how much you really see.

*Have each group take a quick look from a distance at each picture and record their observations. Then have them look closely and study each picture, now recording what they see or observe in the pictures. Once the preteens have had a chance to examine each picture, share what the pictures are and compare it to their earlier observations.*

When you studied the pictures more closely, you saw things that you missed with a quick look. **God's Word requires study and careful consideration so you won't miss any of His truth for you.**

## Challenge

This week study Mark 2:1–12 using the techniques you learned today. Answer the questions who, what, where, when, and why in your notebook. Also record what this teaches you about God and how it applies to your life. Be ready to share with the class what you learned.



## Explore

Romans 12:1–2 says,

And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him. Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect (p. 1121, *Live*).



**For additional electronic resources, go to [www.wesleyan.org/explore](http://www.wesleyan.org/explore).**

## 2. Prayer

**Prayer is direct communication with God.**

### Main Points

Prayer is a time for talking and listening.

Prayer is a time for asking and submitting.

Prayer is a time for praise.

**plan**

### Lesson Preparation

Background: Read Psalm 116:1–2; John 10:27; Matthew 26:39; and Psalm 136.

Items Needed: *Live Bible* (one per student), student books, a scented candle to burn prior to their arrival (or a scented air freshener if candles are not permitted by fire code), a variety of scented candles, a cell phone, a bag of different colored marshmallows, different colored toothpicks, and a cloth.

**ask**

### Connect

*Have the strong scented candle burning or spray air freshener in the room before the students arrive.*

How did your do study of Mark 2:1–12 go?

Who would like to share one thing they learned about God from studying this passage?

*Be prepared to share what you learned about God.*

When you walked in the room did you smell anything different?

What did it smell like, and how did it make you feel?

*Be prepared for some silly responses, but encourage honesty.*

Before you came, the room was filled with (fill in what scent) and it made the room different.

Do you have a favorite candle scent?

*Pass around samples of different scents such as apple, cinnamon, or flower scent if you have them available.*

How does it make you feel when you smell your favorite candle?

**In the book of Revelation, sweet smelling incense (which is similar to the sweet smells of our candles) is symbolic for all the prayers of God's people. This week we're going to investigate more about offering our prayers to God.**

## Warm Up

*Show the preteens your cell phone or a picture of a cell phone.*

Communication is a huge part of our everyday lives. One way we communicate with other people is over the phone. Good communication is an important part of friendship. How would you feel if the only way to communicate with your friend was to go through someone else? What if you couldn't talk directly to your friend but had to give your parents a message, and it was their responsibility to relay it to your friend?

## Engage

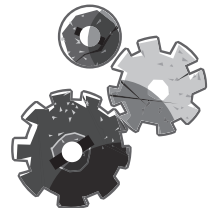
Let's all bow our heads, close our eyes, and fold our hands so we can pray.

*Have them do this and then pause before going on.*

That is one ritual we tend to think of when it comes time for prayer. Thankfully, prayer doesn't require our eyes being closed, hands folded, or heads bowed. Prayer doesn't even require fancy words or the need to be lengthy to be meaningful. **Instead, prayer is personal, authentic, real, and powerful. Prayer is direct communication with God.**

## I Can Know It Is True

1. Prayer is a time for talking and listening. Prayer is our way of communicating with God. We can talk to God about anything, anytime, and anywhere. God loves us and wants us to be open and honest with Him about what we're thinking and feeling. However, prayer isn't just about talking. It's also about listening. After we talk to Him, He wants us to open our hearts and minds to hear what He has to say back to us. We can read about talking and listening to God in Psalm 116:1–2; Proverbs 2:1–2; and John 10:27.
2. Prayer is a time for asking and submitting. One element of prayer is asking God for the things that we need or want. Jesus taught us how to pray in Luke 11:2–4, where He tells us to ask for food, forgiveness, and help. It's important to remember, though, that once we've asked God for something, we should then submit to God and His will. *Submission* means to trust that



# Prayer

God knows what's best for us and to gratefully accept any answer He gives us. We can read about Jesus' submission to God's will in Matthew 26:36–46 and His instructions to us in Luke 11:9–13.

3. Prayer is a time for praise. God is always there for us to depend on and is always listening to and answering our prayers. God deserves our gratitude and praise. During prayer, we should take time to praise God for who He is and everything He has done for us. We can read a popular psalm of praise in Psalm 136.

God loves us and wants to hear from us. God has given us the freedom to come directly to Him with our concerns, needs, wants, thoughts, and praises. **Prayer helps us grow closer to God.**

read

## Check It Out

Psalm 46:10 says, "Be still, and know that I am God! I will be honored by every nation. I will be honored throughout the world" (p. 558, *Live*).

- What does it mean to be still before the Lord?

*To sit and listen, to meditate on His Word—the Bible, to wait for His answer before making decisions, and to reflect on what He has taught you.*

Psalm 63:1–4 says, "O God, you are my God; I earnestly search for you. My soul thirsts for you; my whole body longs for you in this parched and weary land where there is no water. I have seen you in your sanctuary and gazed upon your power and glory. Your unfailing love is better than life itself; how I praise you! I will praise you as long as I live, lifting up my hands to you in prayer" (p. 567, *Live*).

- Praising God seems easy when things are going our way, but when life gets tough, we often forget to offer our praises to God. Make a list of five things that you can praise God for. When you're going through a tough time, remember these five things and keep praising God!

## Relate

*Before class, assemble a small tower out of different colored marshmallows and different colored toothpicks. Place the tower somewhere where it won't be seen—behind a screen or curtain or under a cloth.*

God loves for us to communicate with Him through prayer. We're going to practice communicating now.

*Place the bag of colored marshmallows and colored toothpicks on a table on the opposite side of the room from the pre-made marshmallow tower. Make sure the preteens don't see the pre-assembled tower.*





*Pick one preteen to be the communicator. His or her job will be to look at the pre-made tower and relay to the rest of the group how to replicate the tower. The rest of the group may ask the communicator questions and talk back and forth but may not look at the pre-made tower. The communicator may not help build the tower. The task is finished when an exact replica has been made.*

## Question

**For a relationship to grow, direct communication is vital.** That's why God allows us to go directly to Him with our prayers. God loves us and wants us to have a growing and personal relationship with Him.



➤ What impact has prayer had on your relationship with God?

*Be prepared to give a personal example of how prayer has affected your relationship with God.*

➤ In what ways does God talk to us?

*Through the Holy Spirit, through other people, through His Word, in a still small voice.*

When we ask God for the things we want or need, we always hope that He answers us by saying "Yes." But sometimes He says, "No." When He doesn't give us the answer we hope for, submission may be hard. When we submit, we give God full control over the situation.

➤ Take a moment to write a request to God. At the end of the prayer add this phrase, "No matter what, I will trust and praise you."

*Give students time to write in their books.*

First Thessalonians 5:17 says, "Never stop praying" (p. 1187, *Live*). God wants us to make talking to Him a holy habit and a lifestyle. A holy habit is something that is done naturally and routinely. Prayer becomes a holy habit when it is part of our lifestyle and we pray throughout the day: to start the day, on our way to school, during a test, watching TV, and before we fall asleep.

➤ Explore these examples of people who made prayer a priority:

Daniel made prayer a habit by praying three times a day. Check out Daniel 6:7–10. How have you made prayer a holy habit?

*Be prepared to give an example.*

David was known as a man after God's own heart. David made prayer a lifestyle by talking to God regularly throughout His day. Check out Psalm 142.

# Prayer

How have you made prayer a lifestyle?

*Be prepared to give an example.*



## Prayer

Dear Father,

We praise You for being such an amazing God and allowing us the chance to talk to You. Help us to make prayer more than something we do occasionally. Help prayer become part of our lives so we can grow close to You. Amen.

## Unwind

We're going to play a game that involves listening. I'm going to call out a color, and you must do the motion that corresponds with that color. We will begin with a few colors and I will add more as we go. When I say "Red," you sit down. If I say "Green," you spin in a circle. When I say "Purple," you jump up and down.

*Call out the colors in a random order. Begin slowly with plenty of time to do the actions and gradually pick up the pace. Continue to add more colors to make it more difficult. Say "Yellow" to have the preteens lay on their bellies. Say "Orange" to have them yell "Hike." When you say "Pink," they can put their hands on their hearts. Lastly, for "Blue," they must reach up to the sky.*



## Challenge

It's great to keep track of the things you want to pray for and anything you want to praise or thank God for. In your book is a sample of a prayer journal. Use it this week and see if you can make prayer a holy habit.

## Explore

Matthew 6:9–13 says,

Pray like this: Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy. May your Kingdom come soon. May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us today the food we need, and forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us. And don't let us yield to temptation, but rescue us from the evil one (p. 952, *Live*).



***For additional electronic resources, go to [www.wesleyan.org/explore](http://www.wesleyan.org/explore).***

# 3. Evangelism

**God expects every believer to tell others about Jesus.**

## Main Points

Your life should be a living testimony of God's love to others.

You can change your world by telling others about Jesus.

The Holy Spirit will give you the power and wisdom to share Jesus with others.

---

## Lesson Preparation

Background: Read Luke 10:25–37; Matthew 5:12–16; and Mark 5:1–20.

Items Needed: *Live Bible* (one per student), student books, index cards, a pie pan, warm milk, liquid food coloring, dish soap, and scrap paper.

## Connect

How was your prayer time last week? Did you find journaling your prayers and praises helpful or difficult?

*Allow for responses and offer encouragement for them to keep at it.*

Most things that are beneficial require work and a commitment to keep at it even though it's hard. Bible study and a strong prayer life are both like that—beneficial but difficult to get started. Sharing your faith is like that as well.

**Today, you're going to discover how you can experience the power of God when you tell others about the most important message ever—Jesus.**

## Warm Up

Each of you has a story to tell about what your life was like before and after you came to know Jesus. I will give you an index card to answer a few questions about your life. As you answer the questions, don't show your cards to each other or say your answers out loud. I'll collect all of the cards and then read them one by one in random order. As I read the cards, the group will decide which preteen matches the "story" on the card.

plan

ask

# Evangelism

*On the card, have each preteen record where they were born, their favorite color, favorite school subject, pet's name, number of siblings, and favorite video game.*



say

## Engage

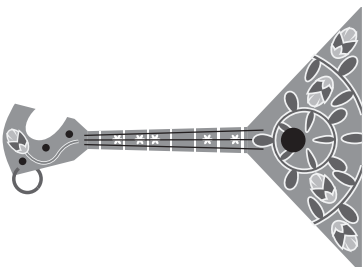
God expects every believer to tell others about Jesus. God doesn't expect you to lead every person that you come in contact with into a relationship with Him, but He does want you to be ready. We see this in 1 Peter 3:15, which says, "If someone asks about your Christian hope, always be ready to explain it" (p. 1236, *Live*).

## ***I Can Know It Is True***

1. Your life should be a living testimony of God's love to others. When you love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength and love others as yourself, your life becomes a reflection of God's love. Actions such as obeying authority, loving your enemies, or forgiving those who hurt you are all a powerful testimony of how God has changed your life. It wouldn't be possible to do those things with your own strength, only the power of the Holy Spirit makes it possible. Read about being a testimony of God's love in Luke 10:25–37.
2. You can change your world by telling others about Jesus. When you hear a great story or get awesome news, you want to tell someone. Once you've experienced the love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ, you should want to tell someone. In fact, the Bible says it's your responsibility to share Jesus with others. One way to share about Jesus is to tell your life story—your testimony. Share with them what Jesus did for you. Then tell them what Jesus did for them, for us all, by telling them His story and helping them understand Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. Through you, Jesus will change the world one life at a time! Read what happened when Paul and Silas told others about Jesus in Acts 16:25–34.
3. The Holy Spirit will give you the power and wisdom to share Jesus with others. The most important thing you can do when sharing Jesus is to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit leads by nudging us to say or do something, by creating an opportunity, and by preparing someone else's heart to hear. The Holy Spirit will give you the wisdom to know when you should share with someone and what to say. We can read about the help of the Holy Spirit in Acts 1:8 and Romans 15:13.

Jesus spent His life telling people about God and expressing God's love through His words and actions. Before He returned to heaven, He promised to send us the Holy Spirit so we could continue what He had started.

**Telling others about Jesus and being an example of God's love is our privilege and responsibility.**



## Check It Out

Matthew 5:14–16 says, “You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father” (p. 951, *Live*).

➤ How can your life be like a light for God?

*When you show others God’s love through your good deeds, people will want to experience His love themselves. They will see you are different and want to know why. Your joy will be contagious.*

➤ How can you express God’s love to others through your words?

*Be encouraging and build others up with praise, pray for others, express gratitude, invite people to church, and choose not to lie, swear, or gossip.*

➤ How can you express God’s love to others through your actions?

*Serve, give, forgive, obey authority, spend time with others, show kindness, and make godly choices.*

## Relate

**God calls us to spread His good news to everyone. Nothing should stop us from being a living testimony for God.**

*Put the pie pan where all the preteens can gather around. Fill the pan over half full with warm milk. Give each preteen a chance to put a drop of food coloring in the pan. The more color options the preteens have the better the effect. Next, allow the preteens to drop one drop of dish soap on top of their color. Watch as the colors begin to spread all over the pan.*

Just like these colors spread all over the pan with the help of dish soap, we’re expected to spread the good news about Jesus with the help of the Holy Spirit.

## Question

First Peter 3:15 says, “Instead, you must worship Christ as Lord of your life. And if someone asks about your Christian hope, always be ready to explain it” (p. 1236, *Live*). God wants you to always be ready to share Jesus with others. One thing you can do to be ready is to write your personal story ahead of time and practice telling it to others.



➤ Take some time and answer the following questions in your book. These questions will help you organize your story. Keep your answers short and simple!

# Evangelism

*Prepare your own story before class and share it as an example. Questions are under Your Story of Salvation in the student books.*

What was your life like before you had a friendship with Jesus?

What made you realize that you needed to have a friendship with Jesus and what did you do about it?

What's your life like now that you have a friendship with Jesus?

*The following questions are under Your Life Story in the student books.*

What's the hardest thing you've had to face, and how did God help you through it?

What's one prayer that you have seen God answer?

➤ It's also important to be prepared to share the plan of salvation. What are some easy ways to share the plan of salvation with someone?

*Check out the additional Web resources for ideas at [www.wesleyan.org/explore](http://www.wesleyan.org/explore).*

**It's important to start with prayer before we share Jesus with others. Ask God for specific opportunities to tell others about Jesus. When the opportunities come your way, take a moment and ask the Holy Spirit for His wisdom and power.**

**pray**

## Prayer

Dear Father,

Thank you for giving Jesus, Your only son, as a sacrifice for our sins. Thank you that we can have eternal life when we accept Him as our Savior. Help us tell others this good news. Help our lives be a testimony of Your love. Amen.

## Unwind

*Split the preteens into four teams and divide the room into four areas. Give each team a stack of scrap paper.*

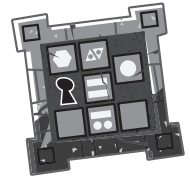
God expects every believer to spread His love to those around us. I have given you a stack of paper. Each piece of paper represents God's love. We are going to have a competition to see which team can spread God's love the most. You have one minute to make as many paper wads out of your scrap paper as you can. When I say, "Go," you will have three minutes to throw your paper wads into the other teams' areas without crossing the boundaries.

*Count the number of paper wads in each area after the time is up. The team with the least amount of paper wads in their square is the winner.*

You did great spreading God's love around you!

## Challenge

Practice telling your story to two people this week. They can be your friend, pastor, or someone in your family. After practicing, pray that God will give you the opportunity to share your testimony with someone else. Remember to rely on the Holy Spirit to give you the wisdom on what to say.



## Explore

These verses are a great way to share the good news with someone else.

Romans 3:23 says, "For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard" (p. 1113, *Live*).

Romans 6:23 says, "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord" (p. 1115, *Live*).

Romans 5:8 says, "But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners" (p. 1114, *Live*).

First John 1:9 says, "But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness" (p. 1248, *Live*).

***For additional electronic resources, go to [www.wesleyan.org/explore](http://www.wesleyan.org/explore).***





# 4. Fellowship

**Fellowship with other Christians is vital to our faith.**

## Main Points

The development of strong, close friendships with other Christians is an important part of spiritual formation.

We fellowship with other believers when we share our needs, concerns, and joys.

Fellowship comes with responsibilities and benefits.

**plan**

## Lesson Preparation

Background: Read Ephesians 1:3–11; 2:1–10; and Acts 2:41–43.

Items Needed: *Live Bible* (one per student), student books, 3 x 11 inch strips of paper with FELLOWSHIP written on one side (see [www.wesleyan.org/explore](http://www.wesleyan.org/explore) for a reproducible copy), paper clips, and thread.

**ask**

## Connect

Describe the experience you had practicing your testimony this past week. What was the hardest part of sharing your story?

*Encourage responses and share your own personal experiences.*

Think of a time when you were feeling sad and didn't have anyone to talk to.

*Give time for students to think.*

Now, think of a time when you were feeling down and had a friend to listen to your problem.

*Give time for students to think.*

Which situation would you rather find yourself in: the one with a friend close by or the one without a friend?

*Give time for students to respond.*



**It's important for each of us to develop friendships with other people. Today, we'll Explore the benefits of close friendships, specifically with other believers.**

## Warm Up

I want each of you to take a moment and think about a favorite memory of your best friend.

*Give them time to think of a memory and the chance to share it aloud if they wish.*

Part of what makes memories unique and special are the people with whom we share them. How would your favorite memory change if there was no one else to be a part of it? **God knows the importance of relationships and wants us to make fellowship with other believers a priority in our lives.**

## Engage

God didn't create us to live life alone. He created us to live and experience life together, especially with other believers.

### ***I Can Know It Is True***

1. The development of strong, close friendships with other Christians is an important part of our spiritual formation. During Jesus' ministry, He surrounded himself with a group of close friends called His disciples. Jesus knew the importance of having close friends that He could share life with every day. God wants us to do the same thing. He wants us to have friends that will support us in making wise choices, hold us accountable when we mess up, and encourage us to learn more about God. Discover how to be a good friend in Proverbs 18:24; John 15:12–13; and 1 Peter 3:8.
2. We fellowship with other believers when we share our needs, concerns, and joys. An important part of fellowship is being authentic with one another. True fellowship can only happen when we're honest about who we are and what's going on in our lives. God wants us to be open about our hurts, struggles, needs, doubts, and fears. When we're honest about these things, we give other believers the opportunity to support, help, and care for us. God also wants us to share our joys and blessings so that others may celebrate and praise God with us. Read about how we can fellowship with one another by sharing our struggles and joys in Romans 12:12–16; 2 Corinthians 1:3–7; and James 5:16.
3. Fellowship comes with responsibilities and benefits. True fellowship is more than just sitting next to our friends at church or hanging out for refreshments after service. Fellowship requires us to love, forgive, encourage, support, serve, give to, and pray for other believers. Fellowship requires a lot from us, but it also comes with great benefits. God promises to be with us as we fellowship with one another. God also speaks to us when we fellowship



# Fellowship

with other Christians through their Godly counsel and wise teaching. Friendship, accountability, support, and genuine love are just a few of the other benefits of true fellowship.

Read about some of the responsibilities and benefits of fellowship in Matthew 18:20 and Colossians 3:12–15.

Paul says in Romans 1:12, “When we get together, I want to encourage you in your faith, but I also want to be encouraged by yours” (p. 1110, *Live*). That’s what fellowship is all about—encouraging one another in our faith and relationship with God. **Fellowship with other Christians is vital to our faith.**

read

## Check It Out

Galatians 6:2 says, “Share each other’s burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ” (p. 1162, *Live*).

➤ What does it mean to share each other’s burdens?

*Read Galatians 6:1–3 (p. 1162, Live) to your students. It means doing whatever we can to help others when they are going through difficult times. This may require us to give our time and service or just take time to listen.*

James 4:11 says, “Don’t speak evil against each other, dear brothers and sisters. If you criticize and judge each other, then you are criticizing and judging God’s law. But your job is to obey the law, not to judge whether it applies to you” (p. 1231, *Live*).

➤ How can judging one another destroy fellowship?

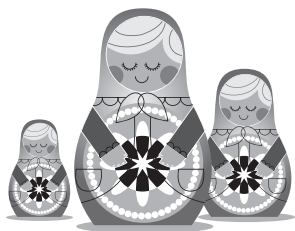
*It prevents us from being real and honest about what we’re going through. Judging others breaks down friendships. God wants us to help each other change our sins and faults, not make each other feel ashamed and alone in their struggles.*

## Relate

*Place two paper clips and a piece of paper cut into a strip about 3 x 11 inches with the word FELLOWSHIP written evenly across it in front of you. Turn the paper so that the word FELLOWSHIP is facing the preteens. Bend—without creasing—the right end of the paper back towards you until you can read the letters FELLOW. Place one paper clip over the letters O and P. Next, bring the free end back around so that the strip is in the shape of an S. Place the other paper clip over the letters F and W. Make sure the paper clip only holds two folds of the paper and does not cover the H. Quickly pull the ends of the paper away from each other. The paper clips will fly off the paper and connect in mid-air.*

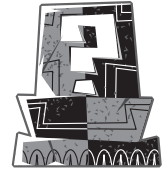
This trick reminds us that true fellowship connects us with other Christians.

*Allow students the opportunity to perform the trick.*



## Question

➤ **Our closest friendships must be with people who love God.** What are some godly characteristics mentioned in Galatians 5:22–23?



“But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things” (Gal. 5:22–23, p. 1160, *Live*).

➤ How is someone whose love reflects Christ described in 1 Corinthians 13:4–7?

“Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance” (1 Cor. 13:4–7, p. 1138, *Live*).

➤ Would you use any of those words in Galatians or Corinthians to describe your friends? What about to describe you?

*Give students an opportunity to answer.*

➤ In true fellowship, we must share both our joys and our concerns. Most people will freely share their joys and triumphs but have a hard time sharing their struggles and difficulties.

➤ What prevents people from being open and honest about their struggles and difficulties?

*Fear of being judged or having people look down on them, afraid that people might not want to be their friend if they knew what they were really like, belief that no one else struggles, embarrassed to admit their struggles, or ashamed to let others down.*

➤ What can you do to help others feel more comfortable sharing their struggles with you?

*Be a good listener, choose not to judge, be more open about what is going on in your life, and show love to those who are struggling.*

## Prayer

Dear Father,

Thank you for speaking to us through other Christians and allowing us to be part of Your family. Help us build strong relationships with other Christians so that we can grow closer to You. Help us be able to share our needs, concerns, and joys with our Christian friends. Amen.



# Fellowship

## Unwind

*Have the preteens break into groups of four to five. Have each group bunch up as close as possible. Wrap thread around each group one time and tie it. Challenge the preteens to break free from the thread. Wrap each group again, this time go around them four times. Have them try to break free. Continue this routine each time adding more thread until the groups cannot break free.*

**This thread reminds us that we need to be connected to other believers to grow strong in our relationship with God.**



## Challenge

This week, ask another Christian if he or she would help you grow closer to God. Pick a time where you can talk to that person and ask each other the following questions:

Have you read your Bible this week? What did you read?

Have you been living in a way that would bring honor to Jesus this week?

Have you shared about God with anyone this week?

How can I pray for you this coming week?

Make this kind of fellowship a holy habit. Ask each other these questions every week!

## Explore

Colossians 3:12–15 says,

Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you.

Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony. And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are called to live in peace. And always be thankful (p. 1180–81, *Live*).



**For additional electronic resources, go to [www.wesleyan.org/explore](http://www.wesleyan.org/explore).**

# 5. Service

**Service is using our talents and abilities in Jesus' name.**

## Main Points

We are called to serve God and one another.

God has equipped each of us to serve in a unique way.

True service is done with an attitude of humility.

---

## Lesson Preparation

Background: Read Matthew 20:26, 28; Colossians 3:23; and John 13:1–17.

Items Needed: *Live Bible* (one per student), student books, two pieces of poster board, markers, ice cubes, thread, salt, pudding cups, spoons, napkins, and protective covering for children's clothes.

## Connect

How did it feel when you talked with another Christian about your relationship with God? Why do you think God uses other Christians to help us grow in our faith?

*Encourage students to respond.*

What is something you have done to help someone in need? How did you feel about helping someone else?

*Encourage students to respond, and be ready to offer a personal example.*

What are some areas in the church that are in need of people to volunteer and help?

*Brainstorm ideas together: cleaning, nursery, teaching, etc.*

What are some things you can do to help around the church?

*Allow time to think about this, not necessarily with discussion.*

The more we read Scripture and learn about God, the more we discover that He wants us to serve. **We experience the power of God when we serve like Jesus did.**

plan

ask

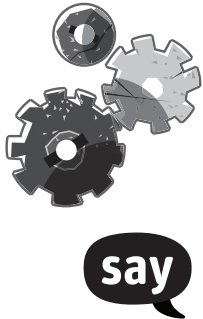
# Service

## Warm Up

*Divide your group into two teams. Give each team a piece of poster board and some markers.*

As a team, you will have three minutes to write down ways to serve someone.

*After three minutes, compare and discuss the ideas that were written.*



## Engage

To serve means to be useful, to offer assistance, or to give help. We all love to be served and have someone else do something nice for us. As Christians though, we're not called to *be* served but *to serve* others. **Service is using our talents and abilities to help others in Jesus' name.**

### *I Can Know It Is True*

1. We're called to serve God and one another. Once we become a follower of Jesus, we're called to a life of love and service. Our attitude should shift from a selfish attitude of "What can others do for me?" to the serving attitude of "What can I do for others?" Jesus spent His earthly life serving others. We are commanded to follow His example. Discover how Jesus served His disciples in John 13:1–17.
2. God has equipped each of us to serve in a unique way. When God created us, He equipped us with unique talents, abilities, interests, personality traits, and passions. When we became a Christian, He also blessed us with spiritual gifts. God wants us to use these unique traits to serve Him and others. There is no one else like you on earth, and no one is equipped to serve just like you can. Read about how God uniquely equipped us to serve Him and one another in 1 Corinthians 12:4–7; Ephesians 2:10; and 1 Peter 4:10.
3. True service is done with an attitude of humility. When we serve with an attitude of humility, we put the needs of others above our own. People are often willing to help if they're in the spotlight and receive recognition from others. God wants us to serve even if what we do goes unnoticed. When we serve with an attitude of humility, we also choose to give God the credit and glory for our accomplishments instead of taking the recognition for ourselves. We can read about the importance of serving with an attitude of humility in Matthew 6:1 and 1 Peter 5:5–6.



**When we humbly serve others with our unique God-given abilities, we bring glory and honor to God.**



## Check It Out

Matthew 20:26–28 says, “But among you it will be different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you must become your slave. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many” (p. 971, *Live*).

➤ God wants us to be more concerned with serving others than being served. Is there someone in your life that always seems to be serving you? How could you serve them this week?

*Give students an opportunity to write their answers.*

Colossians 3:23 says, “Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people” (p. 1181, *Live*).

➤ What difference would it make if you served others only to honor the Lord instead of serving others to receive praise from man?

*You would have a better attitude, always give your best, and not be concerned with recognition or how your service was received.*

## Relate

*Give each preteen an ice cube and a piece of thread. Have the preteens try to pick up the ice cube with the thread without tying the thread around the ice cube.*

We need help to pick up these ice cubes.

*Place about one inch of the end of the thread on top the ice cube. Sprinkle some salt on the end of the thread and ice cube. Wait for about ten seconds and proceed to pick up the ice cube with the thread. Allow the preteens a chance to experiment with the salt and ice cubes.*

Just like the salt helped us pick up the ice cube, we should use our unique talents and abilities to help others around us. What we have may seem small, but when used to serve others, it can make a huge impact.

## Question

Serving others can be as easy as holding a door open for someone or as difficult as going on a mission trip to a country where you don’t understand the language. No matter how simple or difficult the task, serving others always pleases God.





# Service

List two ways you could serve God and others in each of the following areas: your local church, your community, your school, and your home.

*Allow students time to write.*

➤ Even though service is about helping and giving to others, we often get rewarded, too. In what ways can serving others benefit us?

**pray**

*We will grow in our faith and relationship with God, grow in our relationships with others, develop our God-given talents and abilities, and feel confident in knowing that we made a difference.*

## Prayer

Dear Jesus,

Thank you for being the perfect example of serving. We pray that You can help us use our talents and abilities to serve others. Help us grow in our love for You, as serving becomes a habit in our lives. Amen.

## Unwind

*On a table, set two places—each with one pudding cup, a spoon, and a napkin. Divide the preteens into two teams. Pick one volunteer from each team to sit behind the table. Place a protective covering over the volunteer's clothing, such as a trash bag, old T-shirt, or poncho. Line up the remaining players in teams across the room. In a relay format, have each of the "servants" run down to the volunteer, feed one bite of pudding, and run back to the rest of the team. The first team to completely serve the pudding cup to the volunteer wins the race.*



## Challenge

This week find three different ways to serve someone. Be creative as you serve them without being asked. Remember to record what you did in your workbook.

## Explore

First Corinthians 12:4–7 says,

**help**

There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit is the source of them all. There are different kinds of service, but we serve the same Lord. God works in different ways, but it is the same God who does the work in all of us. A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other (p. 1137, *Live*).

***For additional electronic resources, go to [www.wesleyan.org/explore](http://www.wesleyan.org/explore).***



# 6. Stewardship

**Stewardship is a lifestyle of using all we have been given for the glory of God.**

## Main Points

Everything we have belongs to God.

Stewardship involves giving to God and others.

Stewardship involves taking care of all we've been given.

---

## Lesson Preparation

Background: Read Matthew 25:14–30; Mark 10:17–31; Matthew 22:21; and 1 Timothy 6:17–19.

Items Needed: *Live Bible* (one per student), student books, a large candy bar, a concrete block, round pencils, and scrap teaching materials.

## Connect

What are some ways you served last week?

*Allow each preteen to share at least once way they served.*

How did it make you feel when you served someone? How do you think it made the other person feel?

*Encourage students to respond.*

What's your favorite item that you own? How did you get that favorite item? What would you do if you had to give it up?

*Allow students to respond.*

**Today, we're going to *Explore* who gave us everything we have, and how we can use what we have for God.**

plan

ask

# Stewardship

## Warm Up

*Give the class a big piece of candy bar. Give them five minutes to decide as a group what to do with the candy bar. After a plan of action has been reached, ask the following questions.*

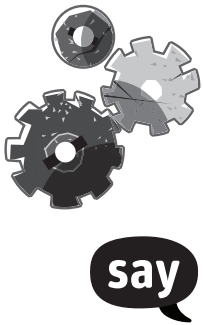
Was it easy or hard to decide what to do with the candy bar?

Why did you make the choice that you did?

*If they didn't offer to share the candy bar with you, ask them the following question:*

Why did you choose not to share the candy bar with me, even though I am the one who gave it to you?

If stewardship is caring for and using what you have been given wisely, do you think you were good stewards of the candy bar? Why or why not?



## Engage

Stewardship is a lifestyle of caring for and using all we have been given in a wise manner. Everything we have has been given to us by God. God wants us to use the things He has given us in a way that blesses others and honors Him.

### I Can Know It Is True

1. Everything we have belongs to God. Good stewardship begins by recognizing that God has given us everything we have. He has given us this day to live and breathe; it's a gift from Him. He has given us special talents and abilities to perform certain tasks. He has given us treasures, which include money and items that we own. All these things belong to God. We can read about a man who was unwilling to let God have control of all His possessions in Mark 10:17–31.
2. Stewardship involves giving to God and others. Since everything we have belongs to God, we should use our time, abilities, and possessions for Him. When we give God a portion of all we have, we can be an expression of His love and change the world around us. We can read about giving to God and others in 1 Timothy 6:17–19.
3. Stewardship involves taking care of all we have been given. God, the Creator of all things, has given us many blessings. These blessings might include this beautiful earth with its mountains, forests, and rivers. Perhaps you have a nice home with a cupboard full of food, or you possess a great mind, a beautiful singing voice, or amazing athletic ability. God wants us to enjoy and take care of all He's given us. We can read about taking care of what we have been given in Matthew 25:14–30.

**God has given us everything we have and we can honor Him by using His blessings wisely.**

read

## Check It Out

God promises to bless those who are good stewards of what He has given them. Check out these verses and make a list of all the blessings.

Matthew 6:31–33 says, “So don’t worry about these things, saying, ‘What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?’ These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs. Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need” (p. 953, *Live*).

*We don’t have to worry, because He will give us everything we need.*

Luke 12:33–34 says, “Sell your possessions and give to those in need. This will store up treasure for you in heaven! And the purses of heaven never get old or develop holes. Your treasure will be safe; no thief can steal it and no moth can destroy it. Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be” (p. 1028, *Live*).

*We will have treasures stored in heaven that cannot be destroyed.*

Hebrews 13:5 says, “Don’t love money; be satisfied with what you have. For God has said, ‘I will never fail you. I will never abandon you’” (p. 1225, *Live*).

*God will never leave us or fail us.*

## Relate

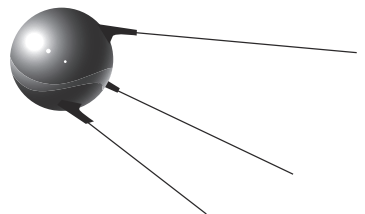
We must use what God has given us wisely. In this activity, you must figure out how to use the tools I give you wisely.

*Place a concrete block on the floor on one side of the room. Hand each preteen a round pencil.*

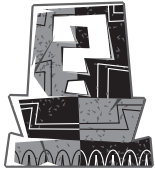
Your task is to push this block across the room using only the pencils.

*Allow time for the preteens to attempt different ways to push the block. The secret to pushing the block is to put several pencils underneath the concrete block, while keeping some leftover pencils to push the block. As you push, rotate the pencils that are under the block to the front after the block rolls over them.*

**You had to use your resources wisely in order to accomplish the task. God desires us to use what He has given to us wisely as well.**



# Stewardship



## Question

Why is it important to give to God first?

*God wants our best, not our leftovers. When we give to God first, we show Him that He is our top priority. If we wait to give to God, we might not have anything left to give Him.*

Sometimes we let things like selfishness keep us from being good stewards. What are other things that we let keep us from being good stewards?

*Examples are worry, fear, laziness, or feelings of inadequacy.*

What can we do about these things?

*We can pray, study the Bible, and put our trust in God rather than things.*

God wants us to use our time, abilities, and possessions to help others and glorify Him. What are two ways you can use your time to help others? List two ways you can use your abilities to bring glory to God. What are two possessions you can give to help others?

*After allowing students time to write, share one or two of your answers with the class. Give them a few minutes to share their responses as well.*

Satan tries to convince each of us that what we have to offer is too small to make a difference. Satan tells us these lies, because he knows that if every Christian chose to be good stewards the impact would be huge! **If every Christian gave God even a little bit of their time, abilities, and possessions, what impact do you think this could have on the world?**

*Allow students time to respond.*



## Prayer

Dear Father,

We praise You for giving us so many blessings. Thank you for providing for our needs and for calling us to use what we have for You. Help us use our time, talents, and treasures to bring glory and honor to You. Amen.

## Unwind

*Place a pile of scrap teaching materials in the middle of the room. This can include paper, tape, yarn, pencils, play-dough, paper clips, or whatever else you can find.*

Using the materials in the middle of the room, I want each of you to make the best ancient castle you can. Remember to share the materials with others. You have five minutes.

*Encourage the preteens to be creative. Emphasize using the materials and time given to them wisely.*

## Challenge

This week, give something you have back to God. Pray about your decision and record what you are giving in your workbook.

*Allow time for students to think about what they'll give back.*

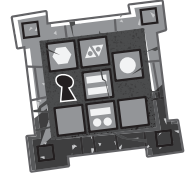
Then, after you've given your thing back to God, record how it felt to give it back to God.

## Explore

Use the mind God has given you for Him and memorize Matthew 6:31–33:

So don't worry about these things, saying, 'What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?' These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs. Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need (p. 953, *Live*).

***For additional electronic resources, go to [www.wesleyan.org/explore](http://www.wesleyan.org/explore).***



# Student Leadership Celebration

The student leadership celebration is a significant milestone in the spiritual life of your preteens. It is crucial to make it a meaningful celebration that included the preteen's family and church fellowship. The following pages provide an outline of recruitment and selection for the student leadership celebration, a sample celebration ceremony, and ideas for what to do after preteens accept student leadership.

## ***Recruitment and Selection***

1. With the church leadership team, determine the specific process, guidelines, and criteria for student leadership. Suggestions include: application process, gifts assessment, interview, mentor relationship, probation period, accountability and assessment, and supervision, and recognition.
2. Meet with your pastor to compile a list of areas appropriate for preteens to serve. Be sure to consult with other ministry leaders prior to the meeting to get their input and suggestions for possible positions within their ministries. Clearly define the responsibilities, duties, expectations, character qualities, time commitment, and spiritual maturity necessary for each position. Identify the supervisor, mentor, or accountability partner for each. (For an example of a "ministry job description" see additional Web resources at [www.wesleyan.org/explore](http://www.wesleyan.org/explore).)
3. Create an application for student leadership that includes their contact information, salvation story, why they want to serve this fellowship of believers, what they see as their gifts, talents, and abilities, how they would like to serve, and what other areas of service or commitment they already have (school activities, civic, family, etc.). Include a parent comment and signature section, along with a space for the *Explore* leader to write comments. A sample application is available at [www.wesleyan.org/explore](http://www.wesleyan.org/explore).
4. Have each preteen interested in student leadership complete an application. Review it with them, their parents, and the potential ministry supervisor. Explain to all involved the value of student leaders to the church and the value of the opportunity for spiritual growth to the preteen. Help them see the significance of this role and their contribution to the body of Christ.

5. Seek to match each approved applicant with an appropriate leadership role. Invite the input of other ministry leaders. Meet with the applicant and discuss the ministry job description and responsibilities. With the ministry supervisor, parent, and preteen, agree on a position with the accompanying expectations. Review the “ministry job description” and have the student sign a ministry agreement statement. A sample ministry job description and ministry agreement are available at [www.wesleyan.org/explore](http://www.wesleyan.org/explore).
6. Establish a timeframe for the leadership position—when it begins and when it concludes. Start by setting a one year time frame at most, giving students and leadership an opportunity to reconsider the position at that time.

### ***Before the Celebration Ceremony***

1. Explain to the preteens the significance of student leadership and their role in the ministry of the church. Help them understand the importance of this commitment both to them and to the church.
2. Prepare the preteens for the commissioning ceremony, helping them understand what it means to be commissioned and the specifics of what this ceremony will include. They will want to know what to wear, what they will be expected to say and do, who will be there, when they should arrive, and how long it will last. The more answers you can provide, the more comfortable they will be.
3. Before the service, prepare some large basins with warm water and give each preteen a hand towel. Coordinate how the ceremony will proceed and who will be responsible for each student. Consult the pastor for their input and leadership.

### ***The Celebration (A Sample Ceremony)***

Gather the preteens, parents, other *Explore* students, the pastor, and ministry leaders together for a special commissioning ceremony. During this ceremony, the ministry leaders and pastor will wash the feet of the preteens. Don’t make this a large ceremony. It’s intended to be personal. The following script may be used.

**Pastor:** We’ve gathered here because you have committed to becoming servant leaders in our church. There are many types of areas to serve in the body of Christ and there are many types of servant leaders. I commend you today for allowing God to work in your life as you serve.

*Have each preteen stand and say their name.*

**Pastor:** Do you (state the preteen’s name) commit to serving Christ in this church? Living a life that is honoring to God, serving with an attitude of humility, giving back to God, and sharing Christ’s love with others?



# Student Leadership Celebration

**Preteen:** Yes, I do.

*Instruct the preteens to sit in chairs and remove their shoes and socks.*

**Pastor:** John 13:4–5 says, “So [Jesus] got up from the table, took off his robe, wrapped a towel around his waist, and poured water into a basin. Then he began to wash the disciples’ feet, drying them with the towel he had around him.”

John 13:12–15 says, “After washing their feet, [Jesus] put on his robe again and sat down and asked, ‘Do you understand what I was doing? You call me “Teacher” and “Lord,” and you are right, because that’s what I am. And since I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other’s feet. I have given you an example to follow. Do as I have done to you.”

Jesus demonstrated true servant leadership to His disciples. Today, it is our desire to do the same.

*Lead the leaders in washing each of the feet of the preteens.*

Now our command is the same as Jesus’. We have given you an example, do as we have done and serve.

*End the ceremony with a time of prayer.*

## ***Following the Celebration***

1. Have a time of fellowship following the ceremony that allows the student leaders to become acquainted with their respective ministry leaders and celebrate this milestone in their faith development.
2. Establish guidelines for training and work with ministry leaders to coordinate this with the preteens.
3. Within the first few weeks of serving, observe the preteen and offer encouragement and help as needed.
4. Keep in contact with the ministry leader and preteen throughout the course of service to note their spiritual growth and ministry capabilities. Always serve as an encouragement to the preteen and a support to the ministry leader.
5. At the end of the student leadership year, host a thank you party in the students’ honor recognizing their contributions and growth. Give them a small token to demonstrate the church’s appreciation for their service.



# Leader Notes

book 4

# Encounter Your Mission for God

Leader's Guide

explore

*In this book students will learn—*

- How the fruits of the Spirit show God's work in your life.
- What spiritual gifts are and how God wants you to use them.
- Why spiritual disciplines are a key part of every believer's life.
- How your compassion shows Christ's love to a hurting world.
- What God calls every believer to do for Him.

You are on an amazing journey of faith—let's *Explore* it together!



# 1. Fruits of the Spirit

**The fruits of the Spirit are evidence of the Holy Spirit at work in your life.**

## Main Points

The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

The fruits of the Spirit are available to all Christians.

The fruits of the Spirit should be evident in you.

---

## Lesson Preparation

Background: Read Galatians 5:22–26; 1 Corinthians 2:10–12; and Romans 12:2.

Items Needed: *Live Bible* (one per student), student books, a balloon filled with air, a balloon filled with water, a lighter, and different types of fruit.

## Connect

When I say the word *mission* what's the first image that comes to your mind?

*Help suggest ideas: soldiers on a military mission, astronauts on a space mission, spies on a secret mission, or policemen on an undercover mission.*

Have you ever been on a mission—maybe a mission to find an answer to a clue, or a mission to buy something, or to discover the truth? What do you think our mission for God is?

*Invite students to respond.*

**Through these next six lessons, we're going to encounter our mission for God!**

## Warm Up

I'm going to describe some scenarios, and I want you to tell me your initial reaction to the situation.

plan

ask

# Fruits of the Spirit

*Encourage preteens to respond to each situation with one-word answers before going on to the next.*

Situation 1: You can't find the fifty dollars you got for your birthday.

Situation 2: Your friend constantly interrupts you as you tell an important story.

Situation 3: Someone intentionally trips you during a basketball game and you break your wrist.

Situation 4: Your best friend wants you to be the look-out while he or she steals money from his or her mom's purse.

Most people would probably react to these situations with panic, fear, frustration, anger, bitterness, and perhaps disobedience to God's will. **Today, we're going to talk about how different our reactions can be with the help of the Holy Spirit.**



## Engage

When we allow the Holy Spirit to work in our lives, we will react and deal with life's situations differently than we used to. The fruits of the Spirit are evidence of the Holy Spirit at work in our life. **The fruits of the Spirit don't grow on you. They grow in you.**

## I Can Know It Is True

1. The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. You may use one or two of these words to describe yourself from time to time, but all of them together seem overwhelming and impossible. The great news is that you don't have to be all of this on your own; the Holy Spirit gives you the power to succeed. With the help of the Holy Spirit, we have the power to love our enemies, not just our friends. We can have joy when life is full of pain or hurt. We can have peace when everything around us seems to be falling apart. With the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we can have patience during the most frustrating times. We can show kindness without expecting anything in return and be good when no one else is watching. With the support of the Holy Spirit, you can have faith when things don't make sense, react with gentleness when treated harshly, and have self-control when pressured to do something wrong. Read about the fruits of the Holy Spirit in Galatians 5:22–26.
2. The fruits of the Spirit are available to all Christians. When we become a Christian, the Holy Spirit enters our lives. He begins to help us become more like Jesus Christ by producing good "fruits" or Christ-like behaviors and attitudes. These fruits are not just available to a few believers; every Christian can experience them! Just because they're available doesn't mean they suddenly appear in our lives. We need to work on them every day and pray for the Holy



Spirit's help and power. Check out how the Holy Spirit guides and helps us in 1 Corinthians 2:10–12 and Galatians 5:16–18.

3. The fruits of the Spirit should be evident in you. Romans 12:2 says, “Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn and know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.”

As Christians we’re called to be different from the world or to be set apart. The fruits of the Spirit are a sign that we’re different. They should be evident in every Christian, and they should be evident in you. Discover the importance of living a life with the evidence of the Holy Spirit in 1 Peter 2:9–12.

**read**

### **Check It Out**

Galatians 5:22–23 says, “But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!” (p. 1160, *Live*).

➤ Put it to the test: Can you think of a law that goes against one of these behaviors?

First Corinthians 13:13 says, “Three things will last forever—faith, hope and love—and the greatest of these is love” (p. 1138, *Live*).

➤ Do you think love is the greatest fruit of the Spirit? Why or why not? Check out 1 Corinthians 13:4–7 for some insight (p. 1138, *Live*).

### **The fruits of the Spirit are evidence of the Holy Spirit at work in our lives!**

### **Relate**

The fruits of the Spirit are evidence that the Holy Spirit is at work in our lives.

*Hold up two balloons—one filled with air and the other with water.*

What do you think will happen to this air-filled balloon if I hold a flame underneath it?

*Light a lighter and hold the flame underneath. The balloon will burst!*

What do you think will happen to this water filled balloon if I hold a flame underneath it?

*Light the lighter and hold the flame underneath. It will not burst!*

When we add water to the inside of this balloon, not only does it change what’s inside, it changes the outside, too. **When God enters our lives, not only does He change what is inside us, He changes what others see on the outside.**

# Fruits of the Spirit



## Question

The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

➤ What are the opposite behaviors to the fruits of the Spirit?

Love: *Hate*

Joy: *Sadness*

Peace: *Fighting*

Patience: *Frustration, impatience*

Kindness: *Cruelty, meanness*

Goodness: *Badness*

Faithfulness: *Unfaithfulness*

Gentleness: *Harshness, hurtfulness*

Self-Control: *Uncontrolled, undisciplined*

➤ Take a look at your list. Would you rather have a life filled with the fruits of the Spirit or without? Why or why not?

*Allow students time to respond.*

**God has made the fruits of the Spirit available to you. But for this kind of spiritual growth and maturity to happen, we need to be open to the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit.**

The fruits of the Holy Spirit should be evident in our lives. Take a moment and examine your life and behaviors. In what ways do your friends see the fruits of the Spirit in your life? Does your family witness any of the fruits?

*Give students time to write.*



## Prayer

Dear Father,

We praise You for giving us the Holy Spirit to dwell in us. Help us have love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control in our lives. Please show each of us the fruits that we need to improve in our lives. Amen.

## Unwind

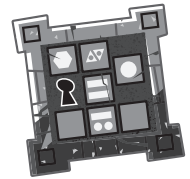
*Have the preteens get into a large circle.*

We're going to play a game called "Catch the Fruit." I'm going to hand one of you a piece of fruit. You're going to toss the fruit to someone across from you in the circle. Before you can toss the fruit, you must first call out the name of the fruit and then the name of the person you are tossing the fruit to.

*After that piece of fruit has been tossed a couple of times, add a different kind of fruit to be thrown simultaneously. Continue adding fruit until you have four or five pieces being tossed at once. The more odd-shaped the fruits, the more fun it will be.*

## Challenge

Pick one fruit of the Spirit that's not very evident in your life right now. Write down that fruit and pray this week that God will help you produce that fruit in your life. Be ready to share next week what fruit you chose and how the Holy Spirit is working in your life.



*Help students find the place in their books to write the fruit of the Spirit and how God is working in their lives.*

## Explore

Galatians 5:22–26 says,

But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!

Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there. Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives. Let us not become conceited, or provoke one another, or be jealous of one another (pp. 1160, 62, *Live*).

**For additional electronic resources, go to [www.wesleyan.org/explore](http://www.wesleyan.org/explore).**





## 2. Spiritual Gifts

**Spiritual gifts are given for service to God and His Church.**

### Main Points

Spiritual gifts are given by the Holy Spirit to every believer.

Spiritual gifts are to be used for the purpose of building the body of Christ (the Church).

Every spiritual gift is valuable to the body of Christ (the Church).

plan

### Lesson Preparation

Background: Read 1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4:11–13; and 1 Peter 4:10.

Items Needed: *Live Bible* (one per student), student books, ingredients and supplies for making lemonade, clear cups, buttons, clear soda, paper cups, plastic silverware, napkins, paper plates, markers, masking tape, and glue.

ask

### Connect

Which fruit of the Spirit did you pick to work on last week? Where did it show up in your life this week? Share a story.

*Encourage each preteen to share if their fruit showed up in their life during the week. If they can't think of an idea, ask questions to help them discover it.*

Even though all of the fruits of the Spirit are available and should be evident in all of us, we can definitely see some that are stronger or more obvious than others. We all have some of these characteristics that we need to continue to work on.

If I said, "I'm going to give you a gift," what would you wish for? What would you want that gift to be?

*Allow for each to respond and dream about what kind of gift they would like to get.*

**When we hear the word *gift*, we get excited and think of something special and wonderful.** In Matthew 7:11, it says that God knows how to give "good gifts" to His children. Now these gifts don't come wrapped with a bow and they aren't from a store at the mall, but they are pretty incredible, wonderful, and definitely special—unique for each one of us. They aren't ordinary gifts but spiritual gifts.

## Warm Up

*Before class, collect and prepare all the items needed to make and serve lemonade.*

As a team, I want you to work together to make and serve lemonade for everyone in class. What are some items you need to complete the task?

*Give them only the items they mention, and then give them a few minutes to complete the task. If they realize they forgot an item, give it to them once they mention the item.*

How hard would it have been if I had only given you a few of the things or tools needed to complete your task of making lemonade? Could you have made it without a container? Water? What about the lemons? Something as simple as lemonade, missing an ingredient, just won't work!

## Engage

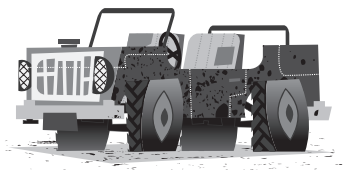
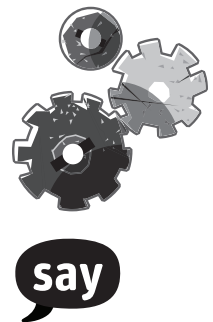
God has equipped each of His followers with tools that bring honor to His name. These tools are called *spiritual gifts*. **When every believer uses these spiritual gifts to serve God, His Church grows and becomes strong.**

### ***I Can Know It Is True***

1. Spiritual gifts are given by the Holy Spirit to every believer so we can serve God and His Church. Some of the spiritual gifts mentioned in the Bible are: teaching, preaching, serving, helping, healing, giving, encouraging, evangelism, mercy, hospitality, wisdom, knowledge, faith, missions, and leadership. Take a look at the spiritual gifts listed in Romans 12: 6–8; 1 Corinthians 12:7–11; 12:28; and Ephesians 4:11.

*As a group, see how many you can list.*

2. Spiritual gifts are to be used for the purpose of building and growing the body of Christ. Unlike our talents and personal abilities, our spiritual gifts are given to us for the sole purpose of building the Church. Your talents and abilities may bring you fame and fortune, but your spiritual gifts were not given to you for personal gain and attention. Instead, they're to be used for God's glory and for the benefit of the body of Christ. Discover how we are supposed to use our spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 12:7; Ephesians 4:11–13; and 1 Peter 4:10.
3. Every spiritual gift is valuable to the body of Christ. There's no scale of importance for spiritual gifts. Some may seem to get more attention or be more public, but all are equally valuable. Can you imagine what the church would look like if no one had the gift of teaching or the gift of wisdom? What about the gifts of mercy, encouragement, or helpfulness? Just like



# Spiritual Gifts

our bodies work best when all the parts are working—your feet, arms, legs, hands, ears, and nose—so it is with the body of Christ. **When each part is working well and doing their part, the church is at its best.** It's important for us to discover what our gifts are and then begin using them. When we use our spiritual gifts, the entire Church benefits, God is glorified, and we grow even stronger in our faith. Learn how valuable our spiritual gifts are in 1 Corinthians 12:12–28 and Ephesians 4:15–16.

read

## Check It Out

First Corinthians 12:11 says, "It is the one and only Spirit who distributes all these gifts. He alone decides which gift each person should have" (p. 1137, *Live*).

➤ Why do you think the Holy Spirit doesn't give us every spiritual gift?

*If we had every gift, we would not need to rely on each other or God for the things we are lacking.*

➤ God has called you to serve Him and His Church. The Holy Spirit has equipped you to do the job. Are you ready to start using your spiritual gifts to build the body of Christ?

## Relate

*Hand each preteen a clear cup and three buttons.*

We have all been given spiritual gifts from the Holy Spirit. Each spiritual gift is important and each one should be used to build, enhance, or lift up the body of Christ—the Church. This experiment will remind us of these truths.

*Fill each cup with a clear soda. Have the preteens drop their buttons into the soda and watch what happens. The bubbles in the soda will lift the buttons up.*

**Just like the bubbles were used to lift up the buttons, we should use our spiritual gifts to lift up the body of Christ, helping the Church to do its job as well as possible.**



## Question

➤ Spiritual gifts are given to every believer by the Holy Spirit. In looking at the list of spiritual gifts, which one do you believe you have been blessed with? How could you begin using that gift to build the ministry of the Church?

*Help each preteen to discover which spiritual gift they may have been given. A spiritual gifts inventory is available at [www.wesleyan.org/explore](http://www.wesleyan.org/explore), under Book 4, Lesson 2.*

➤ Spiritual gifts are to be used for the purpose of building the body of Christ or helping the Church to be its best. In 1 Corinthians 13, Paul reminds us that our motivation when we use our spiritual gifts should always be love—for God and for our fellow believers.

Check out Acts 8:9–24 (p. 1082–83, *Live*).

➤ What do you think Simon’s motivation was in wanting the gift of the Spirit?

*Money, attention.*

➤ Who was his top priority: God, the Church, or himself?

➤ How did Peter react to Simon?

*He was upset and rebuked him.*

➤ Name one person you know who is using his or her spiritual gift. What’s their gift and how are they using it?

*Allow students time to write.*



## Prayer

Dear Father,

Thank you for the spiritual gifts You have given us. Help us discover our gifts and use them to build up Your Church, the body of Christ. Help us realize that every one of our gifts is important and valuable to You. Amen.

## Unwind

*Hand each preteen a paper cup, some plastic silverware, a napkin, a paper plate, markers, masking tape, and glue. Depending on the size of your group, they can work in pairs or small groups.*

Today, instead of using these materials for a meal, we’re going to make a body out of them. Be creative as you make the body out of the materials you have.

*Give the preteens enough time to make their unique bodies. When everyone is done, have them display their creations. Talk about how unique their creations are and some of the things each had in common. As a group, see if you can relate any of the spiritual gifts to their body’s parts. Have fun with it but draw the parallel to how our bodies need each part to function well and so does the Church.*

# Spiritual Gifts



## Challenge

Read 1 Corinthians 12: 7–11 and 12:27–28. Make a list of the spiritual gifts. Circle the gift(s) you feel you have. Take time to pray this week that God will help you develop your spiritual gift and give you opportunities to lift up the body of Christ.

## Explore

James 1:17–18 says, “Whatever is good and perfect comes down to us from God our Father, who created all the lights in the heavens. He never changes or casts a shifting shadow. He chose to give birth to us by giving us his true word. And we, out of all creation, became his prized possession” (p. 1228, *Live*).

help

***For additional electronic resources, go to [www.wesleyan.org/explore](http://www.wesleyan.org/explore).***

# 3. Spiritual Disciplines

**Spiritual disciplines are holy habits that should be a part of every believer's life.**

## Main Points

There are a variety of spiritual disciplines mentioned in Scripture.

It takes an intentional commitment for spiritual disciplines to become part of your daily life.

Spiritual disciplines lead us into a deeper, more consistent relationship with God.

---

## Lesson Preparation

Background: Read Psalm 119:15–16; Romans 12:12; James 5:16; and 2 Peter 1:3–11.

Items Needed: *Live Bible* (one per student), magnets (two per student), a pie pan, a birthday candle, play-dough, a glass of water, a lighter, and a row of five chairs.

## Connect

What spiritual gift did you circle in your notebook last week?

*Remember to encourage the students as they share their gift.*

Does anyone see one of these spiritual gifts in someone else in this class that wasn't mentioned?

*Example: I think Jacob has the gift of teaching.*

I'm going to say a word, and I want you to make a face that shows how that word makes you feel. Ready, one, two, three . . . *discipline*.

*Note some students' facial expressions and ask for a few to share how that facial expression reflected their feelings.*

Most of us don't think well of the word *discipline*. It sounds like something that is done to us—usually, because of something we've done wrong! *Discipline* can also mean hard work—like any of you who play a sport or an instrument. To get good,

plan

ask

# Spiritual Disciplines

really good, you need to work hard and have discipline. Being physically fit, getting good grades, and being the best we can be, all require discipline. Discipline helps create positive habits in our life—like studying, reading every day, regular exercise, and a routine of practice.

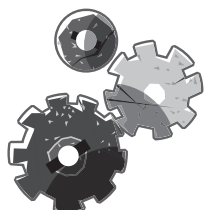
## Warm Up

*Give each preteen two magnets.*

For your magnets to really fulfill their purpose, they have to get close to or come in contact with one another.

*Have preteens start with their magnets arm-length apart, slowly bring together until they reach the point of “attraction” see if they can find that point again and note how close it really is.*

The closer they get to one another, the stronger the magnetic attraction becomes, and the harder they are to separate. **Magnets are a lot like our relationship with God. The closer we get to God, the stronger our faith becomes, and the harder it is for things like sin and worldly distractions to pull us away from God.**



**say**

## Engage

The more you do something, the better you get at it and the more you want to do it. Just like sports, music, and academics require discipline to get better and to achieve, your spiritual life requires discipline. Spiritual disciplines are holy habits that should be a part of every believer's life. These habits draw us closer to God and strengthen our faith in Him.

### ***I Can Know It Is True***

1. There are a variety of spiritual disciplines mentioned in Scripture. All throughout Scripture, you can read about a variety of disciplines that will help you grow in your relationship with God. The most commonly practiced disciplines are: prayer, Bible study, Scripture memorization, service, worship, giving, going to church, and fellowship. Another discipline that is mentioned in the Bible is fasting, which is giving up something important to you in order to focus on God. Most fasting is giving up food for a day or giving up a specific food item for a time. A few more disciplines include solitude, which is spending time alone with God; and stewardship, which is taking care of the resources God has given you and giving them back to Him. There are a couple of disciplines that we don't commonly think of when we discuss disciplines—confession and simplicity. Confession is sharing your sins with God and other believers, and simplicity is choosing to live a simple life without an abundance of worldly possessions. Read about a few of the spiritual disciplines mentioned in Scripture in Psalm 100:2; 119:15–16; Proverbs 30:8–9; Romans 12:12; and James 5:16.



2. It takes an intentional commitment for spiritual disciplines to become part of your daily life. Spiritual disciplines require time, effort, and energy. They can seem overwhelming and difficult at times. However, they are a vital part of Christian living, because they help us stay connected with God. For spiritual disciplines to become a part of your daily life you must purposely schedule time every day to put them into practice and commit to keeping them as a priority in your life. Read about the importance of working hard to stay connected to God in John 15:1–8 and Philippians 3:12–14.

*As a group see how many of these you can discover together.*

3. Spiritual disciplines lead us into a deeper, more consistent relationship with God. God wants to be our closest friend and not just someone we spend an hour or two with at church. Each spiritual discipline helps deepen our relationship with God in a unique way. Certain spiritual disciplines strengthen our faith, while others give us insight into God's character. Some disciplines help us discover God's will, and others teach us how to trust and rely on Him. Discover how we can grow closer to God through spiritual disciplines in Hebrews 12:1–3 and 2 Peter 1:3–11.

**read**

### **Check It Out**

Luke 6:47–48 says, "I will show you what it's like when someone comes to me, listens to my teaching, and then follows it. It is like a person building a house who digs deep and lays the foundation on solid rock" (p. 1017, *Live*).

- How do spiritual disciplines help you build a firm foundation?

*They help us grow in our relationship with God and strengthen our faith in Him.*

- Make a list of the spiritual disciplines mentioned earlier and the ones you discovered in the Scripture reading from the Engage section. Circle the ones that are a part of your life today. Underline the ones you need to work on.

*Allow time for students to write in their books.*

**Spiritual disciplines are holy habits that should be a part of every believer's life. They help us stay connected to God and strengthen our friendship with Him.**

### **Relate**

Spiritual disciplines draw us closer to God.

*Place the pie pan, birthday candle, play-dough, and glass of water so all the pre-teens can see.*

We're going to see if this candle can draw the water closer to itself.

# Spiritual Disciplines

*Place a small ball of play dough in the center of the pie pan. Then, place the candle in the play dough. Pour the glass of water into the pie pan and then light the candle. Next, put the glass upside down over the candle so it rests on the bottom of the pan. Watch as the water is drawn up into the glass to the candle.*

As the flame or light drew the water up into the glass, God draws us close to Him.



## Question

➤ Each spiritual discipline helps strengthen our friendship with God in a unique way. How do you think solitude strengthens your relationship with God?

*Gives you time alone to hear and talk to God, gives time to focus on your relationship with God.*

➤ Simplicity?

*Helps you learn to put your faith in God and not things, helps keep God your first priority.*

➤ Confession?

*Humbles you, encourages you to find forgiveness, keeps you accountable.*

➤ Fasting?

*Gives you more time to spend with God, shows God you are serious when you pray.*

➤ Spiritual disciplines are holy habits that should be a part of every believer's life. What spiritual disciplines are already in your life?

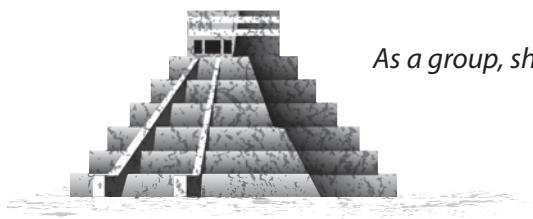
*Help them to talk about which ones they do and how they practice them.*

➤ What are three other disciplines that you should work to include?

*Allow students time to write in their books. Then discuss it as a group.*

**It takes an intentional commitment for spiritual disciplines to become part of your daily life. One way to be intentional is by coming up with a plan of action and committing to follow through with the plan.**

*As a group, share ideas about how to make some of these disciplines holy habits.*





## Prayer

Dear Father,

Thank you for the opportunity to draw closer to You through these spiritual disciplines. Help us be intentional in our quest to add these practices into our lives. Give us the desire to pursue You wholeheartedly. Amen.

## Unwind

Spiritual disciplines require persistence as we add them into our lives. This game will remind us to be persistent until we reach the final goal.

*Place five chairs in a row. Divide the preteens into two teams. Have one team line up near the end of the chairs. Have the other team line up at the opposite end of the chairs. At your mark, the first person on each team will attempt to cross the row of chairs by quickly sitting in each chair. Wherever the two preteens meet together, they must play "rock, paper, scissors" to determine who will keep their spot. The winner remains on the chair and the opponent will return to the end of the line. The winner will then face the next person on the opposing team, still trying to reach the last chair. To earn a point, a player must reach the last chair.*



## Challenge

This week, pick one of the spiritual disciplines that you would like to practice in your life and answer the following questions:

What practical steps can you take to make this spiritual discipline a part of your daily life?

Who can hold you accountable to follow through with your plan of action?

Write this discipline in your notebook and develop a plan on how you will make this discipline a habit. Seek someone to be accountable to and have them ask you how you're doing.

**They say it takes twenty-one days for a habit to form. Commit to do this spiritual discipline for twenty-one days and see if it really becomes a holy habit!**

*As a class, create a chart to map out each preteen's progress with their spiritual discipline challenge over the next twenty-one days. Track for three weeks, and see how they do at making those disciplines habits.*

# Spiritual Disciplines

## ***Explore***

John 15:5–8 says,

Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing. Anyone who does not remain in me is thrown away like a useless branch and withers. Such branches are gathered into a pile to be burned. But if you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, and it will be granted! When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples. This brings great glory to my Father (p. 1065, *Live*).

A black speech bubble icon with the word "help" in white lowercase letters.

***For additional electronic resources, go to [www.wesleyan.org/explore](http://www.wesleyan.org/explore).***

# 4. Compassion

**The ministry of compassion is the practical extension of Christ's love to a lost, hurting, and needy world.**

## Main Points

Jesus is our example because He lived a life of compassion.

The Church is called to provide for the needs of others.

There are a variety of practical ways that we can show compassion to others.

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## Lesson Preparation

Background: Read Matthew 20:29–34; Mark 8:1–10; Acts 2:42–47; and Luke 10:30–37.

Items Needed: *Live Bible* (one per student), student books, magnifying glasses, newspapers, masking tape, and a whiteboard or a picture you can hang on the wall.

## Connect

Which discipline did you work on last week? Does it feel as if you are on the way to making that discipline a holy habit?

*Encourage them to share their experience from the past week and talk about why it's hard to begin new habits. If you made a class chart, have each preteen fill in how they did for week one.*

**Trying to develop a new holy habit takes determination and perseverance—it's just hard work.** Paul says in Hebrews 12:1, "And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us." It may not be easy, but the end result of growing more like Christ and closer to God is so worth it!

Something else that can be really hard to do is loving people who seem unlovable. If I had you think of two people—one who was really easy to love and the other who was really hard to love, what would you say is the difference between the two? What is it about the one that makes them so easy to love compared to the one who just isn't?

plan

ask

# Compassion

*Do not let them mention names, but encourage them to talk about characteristics of people.*

We came up with several things that make it hard to love someone, but God loves those people anyway and He wants us to love them too.

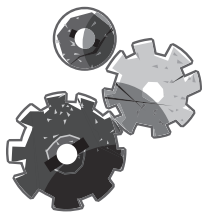
## Warm Up

Imagine that while you were hiking alone in the wilderness, you fell and injured your leg.

*If you have room, allow preteens to act this out.*

You're having a hard time walking because of the pain. It's getting dark outside, and you have no food, water, shelter, or medical kit to help clean your wounds. Now, imagine that a wilderness guide finds you, only to point the way to the nearest place of shelter. He warns that you had better hurry and get to the shelter before it gets dark. He then proceeds to drive away on his ATV. How would you feel? How could the wilderness guide have been more helpful?

All too often, Christians act like that wilderness guide. We tell others about how much God loves them and the importance of having a relationship with Him, and then point them to the answer, but we never take the time to express God's love to them by helping meet their immediate needs.



## Engage

We live in a world full of lost, hurting, and needy people. **God wants us to tell others about His love, but He also wants us to show them His love in practical and meaningful ways.** The ministry of compassion is the practical extension of Christ's love to a lost, hurting, and needy world.

**say**

### *I Can Know It Is True*

1. Jesus is our example because He lived a life of compassion. Jesus knew that to really make a difference in the world He couldn't just *tell* others about God's love; He had to *show* it to them in practical ways. Jesus took time to help meet the needs of those He came in contact with. Jesus fed crowds when they were hungry, healed the sick when they were hurting, spent time with those who were rejected, and showed mercy on the outcasts. We should look to Jesus' life of compassion as our ultimate example. Find out how Jesus showed compassion to the lost, hurting, and needy in Matthew 20:29–34; Mark 8:1–10; Luke 19:1–10; and John 8:1–11.
2. The Church is called to provide for the needs of others. The Church is called the body of Christ. As Christ's body, we must reach the world with His love as He did. Who needs to feel and hear that love more than hurting, needy

people? We're to use the blessings God has given us to provide for those in need. Even if we think what we can do is too small to make a difference or too large for us to handle, God calls us to step out and show compassion. Check out how the believers provided for the needs of others in Acts 2:42–47 and 4:32–37.

3. There are a variety of practical ways that we can show compassion to others. We can show compassion to others by meeting their physical needs of food, shelter, water, and medical care. We can provide practically through educational and financial assistance, helping them learn and earn a productive way of living. And we can provide for their emotional needs through showing them God's love, helping them see how valuable they are to God, and sharing what Jesus Christ did just for them. Discover how a Samaritan showed compassion in a practical way in Luke 10:30–37.



### **Check It Out**

Luke 6:35–36 says, “Love your enemies! Do good to them. Lend to them without expecting to be repaid. Then your reward from heaven will be very great, and you will truly be acting as children of the Most High, for he is kind to those who are unthankful and wicked. You must be compassionate, just as your Father is compassionate” (p. 1017, *Live*).

➤ God wants us to show compassion to everyone, even our enemies. How often do you show compassion to your enemies? Why is it easier to show compassion to our friends than to someone we don't get along with?

*We know our friends will appreciate our compassion. Our friends will show us compassion in return.*

Matthew 6:3–4 says, “But when you give to someone in need, don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing. Give your gifts in private, and your Father, who sees everything, will reward you” (p. 952, *Live*).

➤ Why do you think God wants us to be private about giving and showing compassion?

*So we're not tempted to take the credit, so God receives the glory and not us.*

**We live in a world full of lost, hurting, and needy people. Take a look around and see how you can be a practical extension of God's love by showing others compassion.**



# Compassion

## Relate

*Draw a picture on a white board or hang a picture on the wall. Have the preteens break up into pairs and give each pair a magnifying glass. Instruct the preteens to hold the magnifying glass up to their eye and focus on the picture. Slowly bring the magnifying glass away from the eye; the picture will flip upside down. Allow the preteens to experiment looking at other objects upside down.*

Following Jesus' example of compassion can be difficult at times. Showing compassion to certain people may seem backwards or upside down, but we need to remember to view others with the same love and compassion that God has for those people.



## Question

- List five examples of how Jesus showed compassion during His ministry.

*Reference the Scripture you read from the Engage section for help with this.*

- The Church is called to follow Jesus' example and provide for the needs of others. How well does our church do at showing compassion to the world around us?

*Talk about the specific ways your local church supports people, groups, and agencies—locally and globally.*

- How well do you show compassion for others?

*Allow time for them to reflect on this personally without verbal responses.*

- We can make a difference in the lives of others when we show them compassion. How has another believer shown you compassion? How did that impact you?

*Be prepared to give an example.*

- There are a variety of practical ways that we can show compassion to others. Think of practical ways you can show compassion to:

- An elderly neighbor?

*Mow his or her lawn, visit, bring cookies, water plants, shovel the driveway.*

- A friend whose parents are getting divorced?

*Ask how he or she is doing and listen to the answer, pray for him or her, invite him or her to hang out.*



➤ Your mom when she is not feeling well?

*Help pick up around the house, ask her if she needs anything and then take care of the need.*

➤ A missionary family in need of financial assistance?

*Give money from your allowance, ask your parents if you can earn money by doing extra chores and then donate the money you make.*



## Prayer

Dear Father,

Thank you for showing compassion to us and for being our example. Give us a heart that wants to reach out to a lost and needy world. Help us make a difference as we meet the needs of others. Amen.

## Unwind

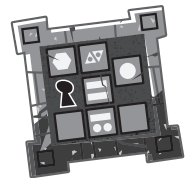
*Place a pile of old newspapers and masking tape in the middle of the room. Divide the preteens into groups of two or three.*

Each group is going to make a shelter out of newspapers and tape. Try your best to make a shelter that can fit at least one person.

*Show the preteens that a pole can be made by tightly rolling a piece of newspaper and then securing it with tape. See how well they each do. Remind them that there are people in our city, state, country, and world who do not even have a shelter that good to sleep in. God wants us to have compassion on them and be thankful for what we have been blessed to receive.*

## Challenge

Find a person who is in need. This can be as simple as a classmate who needs a pencil or lunch or a neighbor who needs help buying food or mowing the lawn. Once you've found someone in need, show compassion to them. Journal in your books about how you showed compassion and how it made you feel.



*Reference their books: Who I helped, What I did, How I felt.*

*As a group, look at the list of compassion ministries your local church supports. Discover if there is one your group could serve. Talk about the possibilities, select a group and a compassion opportunity, and formulate a plan of action. If your local church does not currently provide compassionate ministry that would apply, search on your city or county Websites or [www.worldhope.com](http://www.worldhope.com) for ideas.*

# Compassion

## **Explore**

Matthew 25:34–40 says,

Then the King will say to those on his right, “Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world. For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me.” Then these righteous ones will reply, “Lord, when did we ever see you hungry and feed you? Or thirsty and give you something to drink? Or a stranger and show you hospitality? Or naked and give you clothing? When did we ever see you sick or in prison and visit you?” And the King will say, *“I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!”* (p. 977, *Live*, emphasis added).



help

***For additional electronic resources, go to [www.wesleyan.org/explore](http://www.wesleyan.org/explore).***

# 5. The Call

**God calls every believer to a life of ministry.**

## Main Points

God calls some believers to vocational (professional or occupational) ministry.

God calls others to minister through a different kind of vocation (profession or occupation).

You can begin your ministry now!

---

## Lesson Preparation

Background: Read Matthew 4:18–22; Genesis 6:9–22; Esther 4:13–17; and Philippians 2:14–15.

Items Needed: *Live Bible* (one per student), student books, an object that represents your job, metal clothes hangers (one per student), and string (one three to four foot piece per student).

## Connect

What did it feel like to show compassion to someone? What was the most difficult part about finding someone to show compassion to? How can we continue to show compassion to others beyond just last week?

*If you did or are doing a group compassion experience, discuss or plan it.*

What are things you get called for?

*See how many things you can come up with as a group: supper, to answer a question, to be on a team, to do a chore, to ask a question, to do someone a favor, to share a secret or relay a message.*

Some of these things are good—like getting called for supper! But some of these things aren't always part of our plan—like being called to take out the trash during our favorite show.

We've been talking about our mission for God and together we've discovered that part of that mission includes growing fruit (fruits of the Spirit), receiving gifts

plan

ask

# The Call

(spiritual gifts), and getting disciplined (making holy habits). We've also experienced how good it feels to show God's love to others through compassion. **Another element of our mission for God is getting called by Him and answering that call.**

## Warm Up

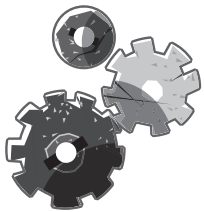
*Before class, find an object that represents your job.*

If you could choose any job to have when you get older, what would it be and why?

*After the preteens have had a chance to share their dream jobs, show them the object you brought in. Briefly talk to them about what you wanted to be when you were younger. Describe how you made that dream come true or how you came to decide on a different career.*

Do you think our pastor thinks his (or hers) is a dream job? Why?

*If possible, have your pastor share his (or her) story. The students have interview questions listed in their "Challenge" section. Encourage them to use those questions and have them take notes. If your pastor can't visit, have him (or her) write the class a note telling why being the preteens' pastor is a dream job.*



say

## Engage

Our pastor has been called by God to a life of ministry; he (or she) answered that call by being our pastor. God calls every believer to a life of ministry, not just pastors and missionaries. **God desires all of us to do ministry for Him.** How does God call us? What does it mean to be called, and how do you know when you are?

### *I Can Know It Is True*

1. God calls some believers to vocational ministries. God calls some people to dedicate their lives to leading, guiding, serving, and building the Church for a living. These people make ministry their career. Pastors, missionaries, and evangelists are a few examples of people who have felt God's call to make ministry their full-time job!

*Share specific names of people the preteens know who are serving vocationally.*

Check out how God called the disciples to a life of ministry in Matthew 4:18–22 and Mark 2:13–17.

2. God calls others to minister through a different kind of vocation. Not every believer is called to make ministry their full-time job. In fact, God calls most of His followers to a career outside the Church. God calls some believers to be doctors, plumbers, architects, store managers, school teachers, and

designers. No matter what career God calls you to, He wants you to find ways to minister to those people you work with, live beside, and come in contact with. Take a look at how Noah, Esther, and Mary responded when God called them in Genesis 6:9–22; Esther 4:13–17; and Luke 1:26–38.

3. You can begin your ministry now! God may call you into vocational ministry some day, or He may ask you to use your vocation as a way to minister to others. But, you don't have to wait until you have a career to minister to those around you. **God is calling you to begin your ministry now, by letting your life be a shining light.** It doesn't matter your age; you're called to be light to a world full of darkness and sin by living a life of love and service to others. When you choose purity over sin, forgiveness over resentment, or sacrificial giving over selfishness, your life will stand out like a light in a dark room. Letting your life be a shining light can be one of the most powerful ways to minister to others, so start letting your light shine! Read what Jesus said about letting your light shine in Matthew 5:14–16; Ephesians 5:8–9; and Philippians 2:14–15.

### Check It Out

First Samuel 3:10 says, "And the LORD came and called as before, 'Samuel! Samuel!' And Samuel replied, 'Speak, your servant is listening'" (p. 272, *Live*).

- When God called Samuel to ministry, Samuel listened and obeyed the Lord's calling. How did God call Samuel? Have you ever heard God's voice?

*Allow them to share, if they have a specific experience.*

Most of us never hear His voice with our ears like Samuel did, but we can hear His voice in our hearts. We can feel His direction through opportunities and circumstances He allows to come our way. Pray for the ability to "hear" Him speak.

- When God calls you to serve and minister to the people around you, how do you answer?

First Timothy 4:12 says, "Don't let anyone think less of you because you are young. Be an example to all believers in what you say, in the way you live, in your love, your faith, and your purity" (p. 1196, *Live*).

- Paul instructed Timothy to live an exemplary life so that no one would think less of him because of his age. What kind of an example are you in what you say? What about in the way you live? Are you a good example in your love, faith, and purity?

God calls every believer to a life of ministry. If you're a believer, you're called by God. **Take time every day to ask God how you can minister to the people around you and then obey His call.**

read



# The Call

## Relate

We need to listen carefully to God's special call for each of our lives. We're going to do an activity that reminds us to listen carefully to God's call.

*Hand each preteen a metal hanger and a piece of string. Have the preteens tie the middle of the string to the hook of the hanger. Next, wrap one end of the string around one index finger and the other end of the string around the other index finger. The hanger should now be hanging between their hands.*

Now, place your hands tightly over your ears. Bang the hanger against the table and listen to the sounds it makes.

*Allow the preteens to experiment banging the hanger on different items around the room.*



**We need to listen carefully when God calls us to do ministry for Him.**

## Question

➤ God calls some people to vocational ministry. What are specific areas of ministry in the Church that God calls people to do as their profession or job?

*Pastor, youth pastor, children's pastor, music ministry, Christian counseling, Christian education, missions, evangelism.*

➤ Have you ever felt God calling you to one of these areas of ministry?

*Make a point to follow-up with these students. Let their parents, pastor, and youth leader know their response.*

➤ Think about what you want to be when you get older. How can you use that career as a ministry?

You can begin your ministry now by letting your light shine!

➤ Think about your life. Which of these sources of light best represents your life and why: a candle, a nightlight, a flashlight, a spotlight, a bonfire, a lighthouse, or the sun?

➤ God calls every believer to a life of ministry, and He wants you to begin your ministry now. What are three specific ways you can minister to someone this week?

*Allow students time to write.*



➤ **God has placed a specific call on your life. How can you know what God is calling you to do?**

*You can discover His call by reading the Bible, praying, listening to God, discovering your God-given gifts and passions, and by listening to the Godly wisdom of other believers.*

## Prayer

Dear Father,

We praise You for calling each of us to do ministry for You. Help us hear Your special call for our lives. Help us obey when You call us to do Your work. We want to bring glory and honor to Your name. Amen.



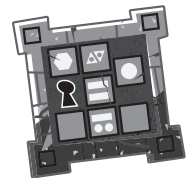
## Unwind

God calls us to do ministry for Him regardless of the occupation we have. We're going to play a game of charades. I'm going to whisper a job that someone might have, and you're going to act out that job in front of the class without making a noise. The first person to guess correctly will act out the next job.

*The jobs can include: fireman, janitor, teacher, pastor, electrician, farmer, taxi driver, pilot, army soldier, store clerk, factory worker, scientist, doctor, and policeman.*

## Challenge

*If your pastor is able to visit your class, let preteens ask these questions and record together their responses.*



Your challenge this week is to interview our pastor about being called to the ministry. Ask the following questions: When were you called to ministry? How did God call you to become a pastor? How long have you been a pastor? How did God help you become a pastor? Record our pastor's answers in your book. Then, take some time and pray about where God is calling you.

## Explore

First Timothy 4:12 says, "Don't let anyone think less of you because you are young. Be an example to all believers in what you say, in the way you live, in your love, your faith, and your purity" (p. 1196, *Live*).

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# 6. Missions

**Missions is the cross-cultural sharing of the Gospel.**

## Main Points

God calls each of us to make disciples.

God calls us to go into all the world.

There are a variety of practical expressions of missions.

**plan**

## Lesson Preparation

Background: Read Matthew 28:18–20; Isaiah 52:7; 2 Corinthians 8:1–7; and 1:11.

Items Needed: *Live Bible* (one per student), student books, a diaper, an empty glass, a glass of water, blindfolds, and information on local missions.

**ask**

## Connect

What was our pastor's story of being called to the ministry? How does it make you feel knowing God has a specific call for your life?

*Give students the opportunity to respond.*

Can someone tell me about a time when they met a missionary or heard a missionary speak? How would you feel if were called to be a missionary to a different country?

*Give students the opportunity to respond.*

**God has a mission for all of us and sometimes that mission includes missions!  
Let's investigate God's desire for all of us to be involved in missions.**

## Warm Up

Imagine that you've been given an urgent message that you need to share with every person in your state. How would you begin to share the message?

*Television, Internet, newspaper, radio, talk to people.*

How long do you think it would take for everyone in your state to get the message? Now imagine that you had to share that same message with everyone in the world. How long would it take? Do you think this is even possible?

*Give students the opportunity to respond.*

Before Jesus returned to heaven, He instructed His disciples to go and make disciples of all nations. This might have seemed like an impossible mission, but the disciples knew that all things are possible with God.

## Engage

Missions is the cross-cultural sharing of the gospel. We are called to take the good news to people from different cultures, backgrounds, lifestyles, languages, and countries. You may think “Missions—impossible,” but with God’s help you can do it.

### ***I Can Know It Is True***

1. God calls each of us to make disciples. Making disciples isn’t just for pastors, teachers, and church leaders; it’s for all of us. This might seem like an overwhelming task, but here are a few tips on how to make disciples.

Be a **D**isciple. You have to be a disciple before you can make disciples.

**I**nvest in a relationship with the person you are sharing with. When you have a friendship with someone, they are more likely to be open to what you are sharing.

**S**peak their language. Be familiar with the terminology that they use.

**C**ommunicate the gospel clearly. Be able to share the gospel in a way that is simple and easy to understand.

**I**nvestigate their culture. Take time to learn about their beliefs and way of life.

**P**ray. When sharing the gospel, always take the time to ask for God’s help and guidance.

**L**ove. To help someone understand God’s love, you need to show them God’s love.

Set an **E**xample. Show them what it looks like to be a disciple.

**S**erve. Always take the time to serve and meet the needs of the person you are telling about the gospel.

Read about our call to make disciples in Matthew 28:18–20 and Acts 1:8.



# Missions

2. God calls us to go into all the world. God does not want us to sit around and wait for people to ask us about Him. Instead, He tells us to “go.” It’s our responsibility to go out and share the good news, not just in our neighborhood, home town, state, and country but with people who live on the other side of the world. We can make a difference locally and internationally when we go into all the world and spread the good news. Read about our call to go into all the world in Mark 16:15.
3. There are a variety of practical expressions of missions. When we think of missionaries, we think of people who share the good news through preaching and teaching the Word, but did you know that there are many ways missionaries share the gospel in other cultures? Missionaries can be doctors, engineers, school teachers, contractors, and farmers. Many cultures and countries that need to hear about God’s love and salvation don’t allow preaching of the gospel or witnessing. God uses people with practical skills to share His message of love, forgiveness, and freedom. Read about some practical expressions of missions in 2 Corinthians 8:1–7 and 1:11.

**As Christians, we’re all called to “Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone” (Mark 16:15). Look for where God is providing an opportunity for you to “go!”**

**read**

## Check It Out

Acts 13–14 outlines Paul’s first missionary journey (p. 1087–91, *Live*). Did you know that Paul was one of the first missionaries? Write out all of the places he and Barnabas traveled to as they shared the Good News.

*Read through these chapters as a group, and write down the names of the places mentioned. Using map aides provided at [www.wesleyan.org/explore](http://www.wesleyan.org/explore), plot out those places on a map to discover where Paul went and what countries those are today.*

As believers, we have experienced the Good News of peace and salvation. Now it’s up to us to share this wonderful news with the world. **It’s our responsibility to go and make disciples.**

## Relate

One person can make a large impact for God when he or she is involved with missions.

*Before class, cut open a diaper and collect the absorbent material from the inside. Bring out two glasses, one filled with water and the other one empty.*

This water represents the people in this world. We can make a large impact on those people through missions.

*Bring out about a half of cup of absorbent material.*

This material represents us. Watch the big impact we can have on this world.

*Add the material to the water. Pour the water back and forth between the cups.  
The water will become a very thick gel.*

Just like this little bit of material changed the water, we can change the world when we are involved in missions.

## Question

Look around you. Where do you see opportunities for you to become involved in missions? **Even though you can't be a vocational missionary right now, God still wants to use you to serve Him through missions.** You can go on a short-term mission trip, send financial support or gifts to a missionary or mission field, and pray for the missionaries. You can support local missions by volunteering to serve or giving donations, and you can share the salvation message with someone who lives very differently than you do right in your own town.

➤ Matthew 28:18–20 tells us that it is our responsibility to go and make disciples. The word *go* implies action on our part. Why do you think it is important for us to go?

*Lost people won't come looking for us, we need to go find them.*

➤ Acts 1:8 gives a clue into how this “going” is possible. What is the source of the power needed to go?

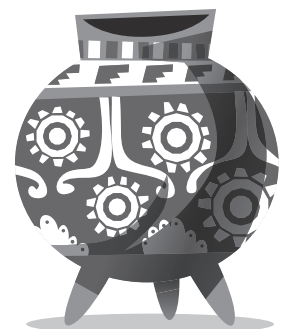
*The Holy Spirit.*

➤ Think about this question, without saying anything out loud: Do you look for ways to share the Gospel with other people or do you wait for them to come to you? Pray that the Holy Spirit will give you the power and courage to go and tell the world about Jesus and His amazing gift of salvation.

➤ Where can you go? And who can you tell?

➤ God calls us to make disciples. Think of someone you know that does not have a relationship with God. In your books, check off any of the steps that you have completed in the process of helping that person become a disciple. Choose one step that you will work on this week.

*Write out the following acrostic on a poster sheet. As a class go through each point and give practical examples of how they can do them.*



# Missions

Be a **D**isciple

**I**nvest in a relationship

**S**peak their language

**C**ommunicate the Gospel clearly

**I**nvestigate their culture

**P**ray

**L**ove

Be an **E**xample

**S**erve



## Prayer

Dear Father,

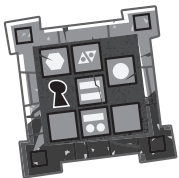
Help us to “go and make disciples of all the nations.” Help us be willing to share Your Word with those who need it. Help us not be afraid to get involved with missions across the street and around the world. Amen.

## Unwind

This game with our shoes will remind us we need to go and share the gospel in all nations.

*Have the preteens take off their shoes and place them in a pile in the center of the room. Divide the preteens into two teams and have the teams gather on opposite ends of the room. From each team, pick one preteen to blindfold. The blindfolded person will have to retrieve the shoes that belong to their team mates one at a time. The teams can give directions to the blindfolded teammate, but cannot get the shoes themselves. The first team to retrieve all their shoes wins.*

**We don’t always know where God is telling us to go, but we can know He’ll always be there with us.**



## Challenge

This week research and get information about a missionary or missions group. Discover a missionary that our church sponsors and ask where they serve, how they serve there, and what you can do to support their ministry. Get their e-mail address and send them a note to thank them for their ministry and let them know you are praying for them.

*If your church does not sponsor a missionary, use the Websites—[www.wesleyan.org/gp](http://www.wesleyan.org/gp) or [www.worldhope.org](http://www.worldhope.org)—to research missionary organizations and missionaries. Find one missionary that you can ask the same questions about and then contact them as well.*

Pray for the missionary that you have researched and consider ways you can get involved with missions today.

### **Explore**

Matthew 28:18–20 says,

Jesus came and told his disciples, “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (p. 982, *Live*).

***For additional electronic resources, go to [www.wesleyan.org/explore](http://www.wesleyan.org/explore).***





# Mission Experience and Celebration

The mission experience and celebration is a significant milestone in the spiritual life of your preteens. It is crucial to make it a meaningful celebration that included the preteen's family and church fellowship. The following materials are intended to assist you in planning the final celebration of the *Explore* series—a mission experience and celebration. Additional resources can be found at [www.wesleyan.org/explore](http://www.wesleyan.org/explore).

## ***Preparation for Mission Experience***

1. Before you begin planning an experience, meet with your pastor to gain initial approval.
2. Determine the general scope of the experience: potential dates, budget, number of potential preteens and leaders, distance willing to travel, and type of experience desired.
3. Research the three suggested preteen mission experiences to find the one that best fits your needs. Details on each and Web links are available at [www.wesleyan.org/explore](http://www.wesleyan.org/explore), under Book 4.
4. Meet with the preteens' parents to dialogue about trip options and determine the best trip for your group. Seek to gain parental commitment for their preteens participation and their willingness to chaperone.
5. Select the organization, trip, and dates. Develop a detailed "to do" list with corresponding dates leading up to trip. Things can include dates and amounts when funds are due, dates when applications are due and final commitment, dates of fund raisers, support letters, celebration ceremony, and trip training.
6. Create a report for your pastor's approval.
7. Meet with preteen parents to discuss trip details and finalize dates, destination, and cost. Provide detailed schedule with dates and items leading up to trip. Discuss opportunities for fund-raisers.
8. Meet with preteens to present trip information and begin to build excitement. Introduce fund-raiser ideas and schedule. Continue to meet with them and stay connected to keep excitement building and each on track with funds and preparation. Communication is very important when planning a mission experience.

9. Share the trip details with the church and keep them before the congregation for prayer and support in the weeks leading up to trip.
10. Create T-shirts that are the same color for your team. These should be worn on the first and last day of your experience. They provide a sense of community and help for easy identification.
11. Encourage each preteen to do a personal devotional in preparation for the trip, and have a training day to instruct them on expectations during the trip and details of the experience. Communicate clearly your goals and desired behavior for each. (A sample handbook is provided at [www.wesleyan.org/explore](http://www.wesleyan.org/explore), under Book 4.)
12. Communicate clearly and often with parents, pastor, and preteens.

### ***Preparation for Missions Celebration***

Meet with your pastor to discuss details of the celebration ceremony.

Determine the date, time, and expectations of the preteens and their families.

Meet with preteens and parents to share details of the service.

Prepare information about the trip, preteen group, and goals with congregation.

### ***The Celebration (A Sample Ceremony)***

Before you leave on your mission experience, gather everyone involved with the experience and the congregation for a celebration commissioning service. Below is a suggested order of worship:

**Pastor:** Today we are gathered here to send off a team of preteens as they fulfill the great commission.

Matthew 28:18–20 says, “Jesus came and told his disciples, ‘I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’”

Each one of these preteens has committed to be a servant leader amongst their peers and a servant to God. They realize the importance of missions and showing compassion to those in need.

Jesus calls each of us to go. This is exactly what this mission team is doing. They have decided not to wait for the mission field to come to them but to go out to the mission field.

# Mission Experience and Celebration

*Ask each preteen and leader to stand one at a time and say their name. Gather the team in front of the congregation.*

Acts 13:2–3 says, “One day as these men were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Dedicate Barnabas and Saul for the special work to which I have called them.’ So after more fasting and prayer, the men laid their hands on them and sent them on their way.”

The early church laid their hands on Paul and Barnabas before they left on their missionary journey. We too will lay our hands on our missionaries and bless them before they go.

*Have the mission team kneel at the altar. Gather the family members and congregation around the team and lay hands on them. Pray for the mission team.*

## ***Following the Missions Experience***

Plan a special service the week after the mission experience. Instruct each preteen to share a short, three-minute testimony of what God did on the mission experience. Create a video or slide show of pictures that were taken during the experience. Provide opportunity during the service or following for a question and answer time with the congregation. After the service, gather for a time of fellowship and rejoicing.

For additional Web resources, see [www.wesleyan.org/explore](http://www.wesleyan.org/explore).

- Three Preteen Mission Opportunities
- Mission Trip Preparation Handbook

# Leader Notes

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