



Green.House

Bible Studies for Youth

Edited by Pastor Damien Rice for
Youth Ministries Department of Seventh-day Adventist Church (North NSW) Ltd.

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Teachers Notes

A green house is an environment in which seedlings can be nurtured to maturity. It provides an optimal environment for health, growth and survival. Rather than casting the seed of the gospel and leaving the results to chance (see Matthew 13:1-23) the Green.House Bible Study series has been designed to help you intentionally create a hot house for the development of young disciples in both individual and group settings. Pastors, Chaplains and Youth Leaders will find it a useful resource to disciple young Christians who have made a commitment to follow Jesus at a camp or crusade. Green.House is not simply a series of doctrinal studies but rather a discipleship process that will give students a knowledge of the Bible and develop skills and habits to maintain a relationship with Jesus and live out their faith within the context of Christian community.

-Pastor Damien Rice

People in the Green.House

Ben Rea is a graduate of Avondale College with a BA (Theology). He is currently studying a course in Christian Counselling. Ben has been actively involved in the development and implementation of the *Wild Yak* teen ministry.

Elia Crevar began involvement with youth ministry as a troubadour in schools and on the street with the Mega-Life bus team. After graduating from Avondale as a High School teacher Elia taught Bible before entering full time chaplaincy at Central Coast Adventist School. His interest in creative ministry continues in partnership with *The Haven Church*.

Pr Bevan Craig graduated from Avondale College as a Nurse before studying theology. After beginning ministry at Kellyville in Sydney Bevan accepted a position in the Youth Department of the North NSW Conference. He has made a significant contribution to *Storm Co* service projects. Bevan is passionate about the Holden Racing Team.

Pr Daron Pratt has a passion for children's and creative ministry. He has ample opportunity to put both to use in his current position as Assistant Pastor at Avondale Memorial Church, Cooranbong. Daron has completed a Masters Degree in Theology. He leads a couple of *Storm Co* trips each year.

Pr Damien Rice is a recipient of the Graham Miller Award in recognition of aptitude for youth ministry. His ministry has included diverse pastoral roles as well as school Chaplaincy. He has an interest in training and resourcing people for ministry. He is the Pastor of Maitland Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The Youth Advisory Committee over recent years has been a hot house of support, innovation and ministry development like *Green.House*. Church Pastor *Sally Hall*, who is coordinating a soon to be released *Green.House* series for Juniors aged 10-12 years, gave invaluable input during the research phase of this project.

Dr Wayne French served the North NSW Youth Department for 14 years during which time his creativity, compassion, hard work and faith in people was an inspiration to thousands of young people and Pastors. Thanks for seeing the need for this resource and backing it to completion. You have been a great mentor. Wayne is currently Student Chaplain at Avondale College.

We also acknowledge the support of *Pr John Lang* (President) and *Pr John Skrzypaszek* (Ministerial Secretary) for this project. Their belief in young pastors and their commitment to discipling young people has created an environment in which youth ministry has been able to flourish.

Plant the Seed



If you could choose any famous person as a personal friend who would it be? Why? How do you think they would feel about being known as your friend?

This study explores what the Bible says about Jesus. We will discover that as well as being our friend, Jesus is also our Creator, Saviour and Lord.

Till the Soil



What Kind of Man is this?

Read Luke 4:38-5:32

- What amazing things did Jesus do?
- What do you think Jesus was implying when he offering to forgive people's sin?
- Why do you think Jesus told the demons not to give away his identity? Luke 4:41
- How did the people respond to Jesus?
- How do you feel about how Jesus interacted with the people?
- What does this passage tell us about Jesus as a man? As God?

What are you looking for?

It says in Luke 4:42 they were all looking for Jesus because they didn't want him to leave them. The people at the time of Jesus were just the same as people today. They were looking for something more to life. When Jesus appeared healing people and offering to forgive their sin, many rightly saw that they had found what they were looking for. Have you?

Why did Jesus call himself the "son of man"? Luke 5:24

Some people suggest that when he called himself the "son of man" he was emphasising his humanity and when he called himself "son of God" he was emphasising his divinity. However the opposite is probably true. Daniel 7:13 refers to one "like the son of man" who had all peoples worshipping him. Jesus was probably connecting himself to this prophecy of the messiah which the Jews were familiar with. When Jesus (less often) called himself the Son of God he is connecting himself more with humanity, in that Adam is described as the son of God (Luke 3:38). Jesus at these times was presenting himself as the second Adam, offering a second chance at eternal life.

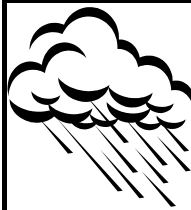
Digging Deeper



More than a Man

- Read John 1:1-14. What had Jesus been doing before he came to earth as a human being?

We have seen that Jesus is our creator as well as our God. He has authority over all of creation- animate, inanimate, spiritual and human.



The Latter Rain

Prayer involves talking to and listening to God. So how do we hear God speak? Often it can be the Holy Spirit giving us thoughts or impressions. But these can also come from ourselves or the world around us; from God or from Satan. So how do we tell whether or not it's the Holy Spirit? Anything God says to us will complement the Bible and guide us so that we can bring glory to God and live in happiness.

Peas in A Pod



- As a group, plan a meal together that you can have before or after your next Bible study.

OR

- Write someone an encouraging note this week or tell them something that you really appreciate about them.

The Finishing Touch



Responding to the God-Man

- Jesus authority extends over all people including you and me. How did Simon Peter feel and act when he realised that Jesus was the Lord? (Luke 5:4-11)
- How did Jesus treat Simon Peter even though he was a sinner?

Every person is faced with a decision when they encounter Jesus and his authority. You can reject him as a liar, you can dismiss him as a lunatic or you can choose to serve him as Saviour and Lord.

- How will you respond?



The Watering Can

Have a look at some of the prayers in Luke 1-6. When it says that Mary sang a song to God and Zechariah prophesied these are both prayers of a sort. A prayer can be really simple, like "Hello God, I need you today." Or it can be more in depth. What matters is that we are taking time to talk with God. Its good to set aside special times to pray (even if its just for a few minutes). And its good to pray to God often, as you go through your day.

Breaking New Ground



Find yourself a scrapbook or notebook to use as a spiritual journal, make notes and write down questions relating to the studies. You can also use it for writing down prayers and recording your journey with God.

During the next week read Luke chapters 1-6. Write down:

- questions you have about what you find
- any new things you discovered about Jesus
- anything that inspired or encouraged you
- goals you would like to set as a result of reading the passage. Plan and record your progress.



The Tool Shed

The Gospel of Luke was researched and written by a Greek doctor who was a travelling companion of Paul. Luke also wrote a second volume about the early Christian Church called Acts.

The themes of Luke include:

- recognition of gentiles as well as Jews in God's plan
- joy about the gospel
- the importance of women, family, and the poor.
- Jesus a friend of sinners
- prayer and the Holy Spirit

Plant the Seed



Tell us about someone you know who died. How did you feel about them? What was it like when they died? Have you ever come close to dying yourself?

This study examines the events of Jesus' death and what it means for you and me. We will see what God has done to save us.

Till the Soil



The Day God Died

Read Luke 23:44-24:8.

- What two supernatural events that happened during the crucifixion of Jesus Christ?
- How do you think the Priests, rulers, soldiers, and other people would have felt when the sun was supernaturally blackened? How would you have felt?
- Could Jesus have gotten off the cross if He wanted to? Why didn't he?
- What would have happened if Jesus didn't die on the cross?
- In your own words describe what Jesus death means for you.

Digging Deeper



Historical Background: The Jewish Temple

About 1500 years before Jesus' death God gave Moses instructions to build a place of worship that would symbolize how God planned to save people from sin. It had a courtyard and an inner and outer room separated by a curtain.

Everyday a priest would offer a sacrifice and then go into the outer room. But once a year on the Day of Atonement the High Priest would sacrifice a goat symbolising the sins of the nation and enter the inner room where God revealed His presence. He would sprinkle some blood from the goat onto a box called the Ark of the Covenant, which contained God's law. This showed that the price for breaking the law had been paid with death.

Jesus fulfilled that symbol as our sacrifice and our priest. When God caused the curtain to be torn he was showing that Jesus blood had payed the price for our sin and the temple was no longer necessary. The great divide between God and humans had been bridged.

Back Yard Blitz



- Paint a mural depicting what Jesus has done for us and hang it up in your school or church.

OR

- Make a food hamper with a nice note and take it to the door of someone who needs it.

Sin & Salvation

What is sin? Sin describes our state of separation from or broken relationship with God. It also refers to any behaviour, belief, or neglect to do something we should that causes this condition. This includes disobeying God's laws (eg. Don't murder) and even thinking those thoughts (eg. hate). The Bible makes it clear that we have all sinned and fallen short of God's perfection. (Romans 3:23) Sin divides humans from God and without God we die. The Bible says it like this "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). God does not want anyone to die but all to come to repentance (1 Peter 3:9).

What is salvation?

Salvation involves Jesus restoring that broken relationship by:

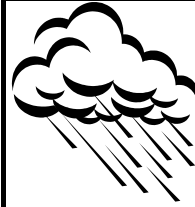
1. His incarnation (becoming human) to reveal God and His love
2. His life to perfect keep God's law
3. His death to take the consequences of sin
4. His resurrection to overcome death.

Digging Deeper



God's Not-So-Secret Mission

- Read Revelation 13:8. What can we learn about God from the fact that since creation He planned for Jesus to come and die to save us from sin?
- John 19:30 records that Jesus shouted "It is finished" and then he died. What did Jesus mean when he said this?
- What does it mean for you that Jesus gave his life to pay for your sin?



The Latter Rain

John 16:5-11 tells us that one job the Holy Spirit has is to convict people of their sin and their need to put their faith in Jesus. This is another way God works to save us. In what ways has the Holy Spirit been convicting you? What might happen if people ignore the Holy Spirit?

The Watering Can



Salvation and Prayer

Before Jesus came, people depended on priests to talk to God on their behalf. Because Jesus overcame sin there are no barriers to God's presence. This was signified by the tearing of the temple curtain at Jesus' death. Jesus is now in heaven and represents humanity and connects us to God. Read Hebrews 9:24-26 & 10:19-22. How does the message of salvation give new meaning to your prayers? How might it affect the way you pray?

The Finishing Touch



What it means for me...

- Jesus' perfect life means that he didn't deserve to the consequences of sin and qualified Him to die in our place. Read John 3:16-17 and Ephesians 2:1-10.
- What part do we play in receiving eternal life?
 - If you haven't already done it consider accepting Jesus free gift. Ask God to forgive you and make Jesus the Lord and Saviour of your life.
 - If you have accepted Jesus as your Saviour, tell someone about the decision you have made.



The Tool Shed

The Bible is divided into two parts.

The Old Testament was written in the centuries before Jesus birth while the New Testament was written during the 60 years after his death. The OT contains 39 individual books, while the NT contains 27 individual books. The genre includes: poetry, history, biography, autobiography, romance, apocalyptic, imaginative, wisdom and letters. It was written by many different people. Four "gospels" (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) record the "good news" about Jesus' life, teachings, death and resurrection.

Breaking New Ground



- Continue your personal study and journaling with Luke 7-12.
- OR
- Daniel 9 and Isaiah 52:13- 53:12 are two passages in the Old Testament that prophecy the coming of the Messiah. Make a time line of the 70 weeks described in the last half of Daniel 9 or Make a list of the characteristics and ministry of Isaiah's suffering servant.

Plant the Seed



- Tell us about a time when you were lost.
- What is the worst thing you could imagine losing? (Mobile phone, car keys, life, sanity, eye sight, sense of touch, a loved one?)

God lost something immeasurably valuable to him when he lost intimacy with you. But he didn't lose that because of carelessness or forgetfulness. He lost us because he gave us the freedom to abandon him. But he has also given us an alternative- the choice to come back to him. God is searching, calling and waiting for each one of us to return. In this study we consider what we need to do to accept God's provision for our salvation.

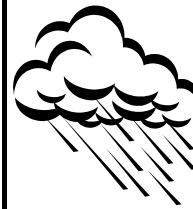
Till the Soil



Get Lost

Act out the story in Luke 15:1-32

- What can we learn about Jesus in verses one and two?
- What do the coin, the sheep and the sons have in common? How are they different?
- Which of the three stories connects with you the most? Explain your answer.
- How do you think people might have reacted to the different characters in the story?
- What did the son have to give the father to be accepted back into his family?
- What can we learn about repentance from verses 17-20?
- What can we learn about God's character from verses 20-24.
- Contrast the older son's relationship to the father with that of the younger son.



The Latter Rain

When we accept Jesus the Holy Spirit is God's presence with us. He helps us to

know God's will, convicts us of sin and gives encouragement. As well as the gift of salvation the Holy Spirit brings other gifts from God.

1. *The fruit of the Spirit.* Galatians 5:22-23. This means he is gradually making us more like Christ. These "fruit" are things like love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.
2. *Spiritual Gifts.* These are spiritual abilities that are build up the church. Every Christian has them. What are yours? How can you put them to use?

Harvest Time



Plan a party or social activity and invite some people who are "lost." Consider inviting people who used to come to your church or youth group but have stopped being involved. Try to make them feel important and extend God's fatherly love to them.

The Tool Shed

Matthew, Mark and Luke record many of Jesus' parables. Parables are everyday stories that have a spiritual meaning. Parables often use exaggeration or sharp contrasts to make an important point. Jesus used parables because they attracted people's attention and related to their personal experience.



People remember stories so they were a good way to teach people about the Kingdom of God. Everyone could take a different level of meaning from the parables. The more you think about them the more you can learn. What "parables" can be used today to teach people about God's kingdom?

Digging Deeper



Resurrection Power

Read Luke 24:1-12, 36-53. See also Romans 7:4.

The resurrection shows that:

- Jesus lives and has triumphed over the forces of evil.
- Jesus is Lord and everyone in heaven and earth will bow to him and honour him as King of Kings.
- The sacrifice was sufficient- he overcame death and went back to God.
- It is our evidence that we have victory through Jesus over our sin and death and will be resurrected as well.
- Jesus is the first fruit's of salvation.

When Jesus talks about his death and resurrection he says that repentance and forgiveness is to be preached everywhere. What does this tell us about who God wants to include in his kingdom?

The Finishing Touch



The Bible tells us that just as Jesus our Lord and Saviour has been raised, those who choose to follow him will not stay in the grave but will also rise, and spend eternity with him.

In this study we looked at we need to do to accept what God has provided as the way for us to be saved. What is your response to what God has already accomplished for you?

If you realise that you have been living apart from God and you need to give your life to Jesus and you have never done that before you can do it right now. Also if you have done it before but you would like to recommit to Him or you have noticed that there is a particular area of life that you know you need to give over to God, now is your moment. You can pray a prayer something like this→



The Watering Can

Father in heaven, I know

that I have lived my life away from you. I know that I have rebelled against you and sinned. I am sorry for that. I choose you as my saviour and accept your free gift of forgiveness. Thank you that you sent your son Jesus, to take my punishment and give me eternal life with you. I choose to recognise and follow you as Lord. I give every area of my life wholly to you. Amen.

Experience It

Write down something that you really have been feeling guilty about. Since you have asked God to forgive it the Bible tells us he has thrown your sins to the depths of the sea and will remember them no more. Burn your piece of paper. Or rip it to shreds and burn it then throw the ashes over a cliff. Write a symbol in wet paint on your hands or feet and which represents your sin and have each other wash it off.

Breaking New Ground



Read Luke 13-18. Write down in your journal any questions you have about what you find, and anything you find encouraging or inspiring. You could also record answered prayers and spiritual blessings you have received.

Plant the Seed



Tell us about a time when someone promised something but let you down. How can you know for sure that you are saved by God's grace and you will have eternal life?

This study shows that we are saved by God's grace and not our good works so that we can have total assurance we are saved.

Till the Soil



The God-Man gets Girl Germs

Read Luke 7:36-50

- The Bible says this woman cried so much that she mopped up her tears with her hair! What reason does the Bible give for her crying like that?
- What was Simon's attitude towards sinners?
- How is Jesus' attitude different?
- Try to describe how she would have felt knowing that God accepted her this way in spite of her many sins? See vs 48.
- Jesus explains how God forgives us by telling a story in verses 41 and 42. What do we learn about our ability to pay God back for giving us forgiveness and eternal life?
- How do you feel to know that no matter what you have done Jesus will forgive and accept you? How does it feel to know that you don't have to hide your real self from God?
- In what ways could you respond to God's forgiveness?

Early Table Manners?

When Jesus was on earth the common way of eating together was for everyone to lie down around a low table with their feet extending away from the table, leaning on one arm and using the other to eat with. So it would have been easy for the woman to put the perfume on Jesus feet.

Digging Deeper



- Read 1 John 1:9 and put this promise that we are saved in your own words.
- Do you have to "clean up your act" before God will accept you or you can become a Christian? Read Romans 3:23-24 and 5:6-11
- What do Ephesians 2:8-10 and Titus 3:3-7 tell us about how we are saved? Can we earn salvation? What is the role of good works? Do these save us? Who is responsible for changing us from the inside out? How does God do this?
- Read John 5:24 and 1 John 5:11-13 How can you be confident you have eternal life?

The Latter Rain



God also gives us the Holy Spirit as a seal showing us that we are his. When you notice the Holy Spirit working in you in different ways it is a reminder that you are saved. See Ephesians 1:13-14 and 2 Corinthians 1:22.

Peas in a pod



- Go through the drive through and pay for the person behind you. Make sure to watch the expression on their face when they realise their meal is free.

OR

- Tell someone you love them just for who they are and not for what they do.

AND

- Share these stories with the rest of your group at next week's study.

The Finishing Touch



God has forgiven each one of us. We need to understand that his gift is free and we simply need to accept it. If you have never accepted God's free gift of salvation or you have been like a bit like Simon the Pharisee in one way or another, trying to earn God's forgiveness or pay him back, you can accept his gift right now.

Prayer of Repentance

Heavenly Father, I know that I have sinned and I can't pay for it at all. Help me to remember that your salvation is a free gift. Right now I ask you to pay the price for all my sin with Jesus death on the cross. Thank you that you love me so much that you don't want to live without me. I choose you as my Saviour and my Lord. I surrender my life into your loving hands. Amen.

What is Baptism?

Acts 2:38-39 tell us that we should baptised when we repent. Read Romans 6:3 and Colossians 2:12, and Ephesians 4:5. Then tell in your own words why you think you should be baptised.

Breaking New Ground



- Read Luke 19-24. Write down in your journal any questions you have about what you find, and anything you find encouraging or inspiring.
- OR
- Write down some of the favourite things that you have realised about God's love for you. Write down any Bible verses about God's love that you might want to memorise. Make up a card to carry with you while you learn that verse. Share it with someone else.



The Watering Can

Read Luke 18:9-14 and discover the kind of attitude we should have in prayer.



The Tool Shed

Interpreting the Bible can be hard because we may not know much about the historical setting, culture, places and people. It is helpful to ask the following questions:

What happened?

Focus on the event. Find out what you can about the literary, cultural and historical context.

What is the principle?

Consider the key point, moral of the story, gospel message etc. The principle is bigger than a specific time and place.

How does it apply...

To people today? To me personally? How does it help me grow? How does the principle work in my life?

Action.

What am I going to do about it? What commitment do I need to make? What changes in my attitudes, values, relationships, behaviour do I need to make?

Plant the Seed



Draw your family tree. Discuss it with and compare parental and sibling stories. Find out who are the firstborn, second, middle, only children. Discuss experiences you might have in common.

This study explores what it's really like to be a son or daughter of God...

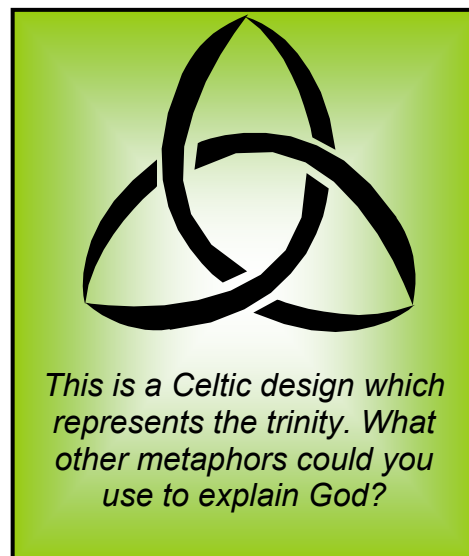
Till the Soil



Mind Bender

John 14:8-21.

- After reading this passage how would you describe the relationship between the Father, Son & Holy Spirit?
- As a human how did Jesus relate to his "Father" in heaven? Consider the examples in Mark 1:10-11 and Mark 14:32-36
- What does this teach us about how we should relate to God?
- The Bible teaches that all three are God, that they are distinct persons (not merely powers) but that there is only one God. This teaching is summed up by the doctrine of the trinity. Why is such a belief important?



This is a Celtic design which represents the trinity. What other metaphors could you use to explain God?



The Tool Shed

Since the time of Jesus the church tried to explain all the Biblical evidence about Jesus and God. Often this was in response to heresies (extreme and misguided beliefs). Some suggested that Jesus only pretended or appeared to be human. These "Docetists" couldn't accept that God would come down to our level and mix with sinful people, let alone suffer or die. Another guy called Arias wanted to preserve monotheism (one God) so he portrayed Christ as a created being who was inferior to the Father. This however denied Christ's full divinity and described the Holy Spirit as an impersonal force or power, not a divine person. Yet another group of people developed an idea called "modalism", which says that God can take on various forms or "modes" such as the Father, Son or Spirit. This view however denies the unique personhood of each part of God. All of these people were well meaning. In fact their views continue in one way or another. However the "trinity" concept has proved to be the most adequate way to affirm all of the Biblical evidence about God:

1. There is one God.
2. The Father is God, The Son is God, The Holy Spirit is God.
3. All are equal and interdependent.
4. The Father is not the Son; Son is not the Spirit; Spirit is not the Father etc
5. The Father, Son & Spirit are all personal beings not impersonal forces.
6. Jesus became both human and divine.
7. God can be known through all three beings.

Digging Deeper



Joining God's Family

- In John 17:21-23 Jesus indicates that we can become intimately connected with this triune God. How do you think this can be possible?
- John 3:5-7 talks about being born again. What does this mean to you?
- Read Galatians 3:26-29. How does it feel to know that you are a child of God? What do you think the benefits are of being a part of God's family? How do you think God is the same/different to your dad?



The Latter Rain

Have you experienced the Holy Spirit changing your life? If so this is one sign that you are God's child. Read Acts 10:44-48. Why is baptism a natural thing for someone who knows Jesus and has his Spirit?

As members of his family God gives us the following VIP privileges:

- Family name: 1 John 3:1
- Family likeness: Romans 8:14, 29-30, 2 Corinthians 3:17-18
- Rights & Privileges of children not slaves: Galatians: 4:5-7, Romans 8:15-17
- Backstage pass (access to God's presence): Romans 5:2, Ephesians 3:12
- Eternal Inheritance: 1 Corinthians 3:21-23, 1 Peter 1:3-6

Back Yard Blitz



If God is our father, how can we explain him to someone who doesn't have a good relationship with their father or may not have a father in their life?

- Consider sharing your family for the weekend with someone else who may not have the father or mother you do.
- What else could you do to help a family that does not have a father?
- Think of a way you can tell your dad (or another significant adult) how much you appreciate him.

In John 8:44 Jesus tells the Pharisees that their father is the Devil and their desires and actions come from him! How should having God as our father change our desires and actions?

The Finishing Touch



- Have you accepted God as your father? If so what does that mean to you? If not, what is stopping you from joining God's family?
- No matter what your family is like or what others think of you, remember your identity and worth comes from your heavenly Father. No one can take that away.



The Watering Can

Read *The Lord's Prayer* in Matthew 6:9-13 or Luke 11:2-4. What does it mean to pray to God like a Father? Consider each line of the prayer and compare or contrast it with how we might ask an earthly father for something. Read Luke 11:11-13. How is God's response to us similar or different to earthly fathers?

Breaking New Ground



For further study read 1 John 2:28 to 3:24. Write down the key points, mark any verses that impress you, and note questions you want to ask at your next Bible study. As a child of God how can you show the kind of love that is talked about here? List your ideas.

Plant the Seed



Discuss personal and home make shows on TV.

- How do they build someone's life from scratch or dramatically change it?
- What is great and what is bad about your life.
- What would you do differently if you had your time over?

This study explores what it means to live for Jesus and why we should want the new life he offers us.

Till the Soil



What's your life built on?

Read the story about two builders in Matthew 7:24-27.

- What did the two builders have in common?
- What made the difference in their experience?
- How can we hear and do what Jesus wants us to?
- What kind of floods and winds do we experience in our lives that might show the sort of life we really have?
- Consider what you have read about Jesus in the Gospels. What things in his life are an example that you need to follow?

Digging Deeper



Soul Make Over

Read Romans 12:1-2

- What is a sacrifice? What motivation do these verses give us for being living sacrifices? What other motivation is given in Romans 13:11-14? How do we put on the armour of light?
- In what ways do you conform to the world?
- What can you do to avoid being shaped by the world and its values?
- What does it mean to be transformed? How is our mind renewed?
- Is it more important to have your mind or actions renewed? Why?

Saviour AND Lord

Accepting Jesus as Saviour is accepting his forgiveness for our sins and giving us eternal life. Accepting him as Lord is about letting him be in charge of our whole lives; our money, our sexuality, our family, our work and study; our bodies, our relationships; every part of our lives. Sounds hard? Read Matthew 11:28-30 or 1 John 5:1-5.

Digging Deeper



Howz your old man?

Read 2 Corinthians 5:15-21

- Why did Christ die for us?
- Who were we living for before this?
- Describe the "old" and "new" person. How are they similar and different?
- How would an ambassador of Christ live?
- What does it mean that we are the righteousness of God in Jesus?

Read John 8:31-36

- Who frees us from sin?

Read Colossians 3:1-10

- How will setting your mind on things above change your priorities in life?
- In whose image are we being recreated?
- How does this renewal take place?

The Latter Rain

Read Galatians 5:16-25
What role does the Holy Spirit play in enabling us to live a new life with Christ?



The Tool Shed



The Ten Commandments give us a set of principles for living a life that honours God and treats others with integrity. Compare the two records of the commandments in Exodus 20:1-17 and Deuteronomy 5:6-21. What differences do you see? What do such differences tell us about the way the Bible was inspired by God and written by human beings? How can we focus on the key principles of scripture and avoid getting caught up in the cultural and historical issues of its day?

Digging Deeper



Get connected for your new life

Read John 15:1-8

- According to Jesus' teaching what is the source of power that will enable us to bear the fruit of a new life?
- What practical things can you do to abide/remain in Christ?

Struggling to give God control?

- What does 1 John 1:5-2:2 tell us about our sin? What happens if we do sin?
- How does Romans 7:14-25 reflect your experience? What sins do you struggle with? What hope does verse 25 give of escaping from sin?



The Watering Can

Being honest with God and yourself is the best thing you can do to deal with sin. Focus on 1 John 1:9. Is there anything that you need to confess to God? What does James 5:15-16 say will happen if someone prays for forgiveness?

The Finishing Touch



How has your life changed since accepting God? How is God challenging you to keep growing? What can you do to open up to the Holy Spirit and let Him work in your life?

Breaking New Ground



- Read Romans 6, 7 and 8:1-17. Write down the key points, mark any verses that impress you, and make a note of questions you want to ask at your next Bible study.

OR

- Write a journal entry about what you know God has promised as part of your new life.

Peas in a pod

Hebrews 10:24-25

talks about the importance of Christians meeting together to encourage

and support each other, especially as we get nearer to Jesus' return. Think about forming a contract with someone to help both of you grow. Alternatively you may ask a mature Christian to be a mentor who can hold you accountable and nurture you. Who do you know that you can be an example or encouragement to? Make a plan to help them in their walk with Jesus.



Plant the Seed



Can you remember when something spectacular happened? Perhaps a celebrity died, maybe you're favourite team won the grand final, or there was a natural disaster. Where were you and what were you doing at the time?

You've seen it portrayed in movies, but what will it really be like when the world ends? Just the thought scares a lot of people. This study shows that for Christians the end of the world is going to be their most exciting time on earth!

Till the Soil



Expected Time of Arrival Unknown

Many people have claimed know when Jesus will come. In fact people who started the Adventist church were among tens of thousands who thought they'd figured out the very day, but ended up disappointed when he didn't return. Read Matthew 24:36-25:30

- What message do Jesus' stories have for the people who think Jesus won't come for ages? What about the people who think he is coming at any minute?
- What do you think the main point of the stories is?
- How can we find the balance between wanting Jesus to come, not worrying about when he'll come because only God knows that, and continuing to be excited about his coming?

Digging Deeper



The Finale

When Jesus comes there will be four groups of people. Those who...

1. Believe in Jesus and are still alive.
2. Believed in Jesus but have died.
3. Don't believe in Jesus and are still alive.
4. Didn't believe in Jesus but have died.

Which group do you think you will be in?

- Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. Paul wanted people to understand what will happen when Jesus comes again. Who will meet Jesus first? Then who?
- Verse 18 says to encourage each other with the words of this passage. When would be helpful?
- According to 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10 what happens to those who don't believe in Jesus?
- Revelation 1:7 tells us about a group of people that didn't believe in Jesus and have long since died but who will see him when he returns.
- According to Revelation 1:7 is there any chance that Jesus might come without you knowing?

The Bible talks about some amazing stuff that will happen to people before he comes again. In Acts 2:17 it says: "In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Is this something you think you are prepared for? Why? If not, what do you need to be prepared?"

The Tool Shed



Bible Time Culture

If you lived in Israel around the time of Jesus you'd probably be sick of hearing about Messiahs. People all over the place were running around claiming to be the Messiah. Some of them had a following; most of them were locked up as madmen. I wonder how hard it would have been to hear about Jesus (yet another person who claimed to be the Messiah) and believe in him? Perhaps this is why he told his disciples not to reveal his true identity until the time was right. How do people respond to Jesus today?

Last to know?

Have you ever been the last to find out some news or gossip? Maybe friends were having a party and you didn't hear about it? What would you do if people were saying that Jesus had come? Would you be fooled if someone was doing amazing miracles and healing people? What would you think if it was on the radio and plastered all over the evening news?

Digging Deeper *Duped*



Read what Matthew 24:23-28.

- What can we learn from this passage? How can we be sure we won't be deceived?
- Verse 24 implies that the elect won't be deceived. How is this possible? Do you have a right relationship with Jesus?



The Latter Rain

"The Spirit clearly says that in later times some

will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons" 1 Timothy 4:1. Discuss what some of those "deceiving spirits and things taught by demons" might be. How does the Holy Spirit talk to your heart, convincing you what is right?

The Watering Can



Jude was Jesus' brother and wrote the book of Jude. At a time when many people live for themselves and follow their own desires (vs 18) he begs believers to "build your lives on the foundation of your holy faith" (vs 20) "as you wait for the eternal life that our Lord Jesus Christ in his mercy is going to give you (vs 21). Do you pray for Jesus to come again? Do you pray that He will keep you close to him and take you to heaven with him? Do you pray for opportunities to lead unbelievers into believing that Jesus can save them too?

Digging Deeper *Upgrade Your Chassis*



Read 1 Corinthians 15:52.

- What things are you looking forward to having changed?
- How does God's plan contrast with all the efforts humans make to change or improve their appearance? How should this change the way you look at yourself or people around you?
- How could you share this hope with someone who is sick, disabled or feeling bad about the way they look?
- How will we recognise each other with new and improved bodies?

The Finishing Touch



Believing in Jesus guarantees that one day we'll be in heaven with him. 1Thessalonians 5:10 says "he died for us so that we can live with him forever, whether we are dead or alive at the time of his return." What are you going to do about your belief in Jesus? Are you ready for his return? Are you telling others about it?

Breaking New Ground



- In your journal, write down a bunch of questions you'd like to ask Jesus when you finally get to see him. OR
- Write and thank him for allowing you to go to heaven and live for ever. OR
- Read the rest of Jude's letter to the Christian church.



Harvest Time

Jude had a passion for all people to see his brother

Jesus and live forever. Read Jude 22-23. How can you develop a passion for those who don't know Jesus as we do? Make a plan of how you and/or your group can share Jesus and the hope of his return with others. Consider working with your Pastor to run an out reach program.

Plant the Seed



Taking into consideration all that technology has to offer, make a list of as many ways we can communicate with each other that you can think of. This study is all about looking at what Jesus wants us to communicate with people who don't know him...

"Your mission, agent 24/7 is to infiltrate your society. Your privilege is in working with God and representing him. Your strategy should follow Jesus technique for winning hearts and minds. Your commission is a continuation of Jesus' mission on earth. Are you up to the challenge?"

Till the Soil



Makin' Bacon

Read Mark 5:1-20

- Satan had given this man special powers of strength (vs 2-4). What are some other ways Satan tries come into our lives?
- How had this affected his life? (see vs 5) What damage can occur with some of the things Satan uses to entice us with.
- Have you ever felt so bad about your life that you wanted or tried to harm yourself? How is Jesus attitude towards our lives different to Satan's?
- Verse 6 tells us that the man ran to Jesus and fell on his knees in front of him. How can we recognise Jesus entering our lives?
- How did the townsfolk react to what Jesus did in this man's life? It is estimated that the farmers lost the equivalent of half a million dollars!
- Discuss some of thing things God has done in your life to make you a better person. What do your friends think about what Jesus is doing in your life? What cost has it had for your friends and family? For you personally?
- In verses 18-19 the demon-possessed man begs to go with Jesus but Jesus sent this man back to his family and friends. What does that say about the importance of our witness to our family, friends, and neighbours?

The Latter Rain

The prime work of the Holy Spirit is to teach us and direct us to Jesus. What implications does that have for the demon possessed man recognising Jesus (from a distance; v6) and coming to him and falling at his feet despite being controlled by demons.

Harvest Time



Before Jesus and his disciples met the demon-possessed man they were caught in a storm (Mark 4:36-41). How can God use the "storms" in our life for good? What are we prepared to go through to share Jesus with someone?

Discuss the model of evangelism given in this story. Do we have to go overseas to be a missionary? Do we have to be a preacher? What qualified the formerly demon possessed man to be a missionary?

Read 1 John 1:1-4 and then take the time to write down your experience of Jesus. Ask God to give you someone to share your story with.

Digging Deeper



Imagine you knew something that could save a lot of people. Would you share it with them? How would you feel if you didn't and a lot of people lost their lives? Jesus has given us a mission - to be agents for him. Discuss how the following verses may influence your thinking about sharing Jesus with people that don't know him: Ezekiel 3:18, Acts 20:24, Matthew 6:33

Digging Deeper



The Great Commission

Read Matthew 28:18-20

- What is our task?
- What three things are required to make disciples? What is a disciple?
- How does Jesus give his power and authority to us to accomplish this task?

Party with Sinners

Read Luke 5:27-32 and Luke 19:1-10

- How can our association and friendship with lost people be an opportunity to witness?
- How can we ensure that we don't compromise our lifestyle or values?

Spice it Up!

Read Matthew 5:13-16

- In what ways can our influence reveal Jesus to others?
- What can you do to get out of the salt shaker and into the world?

The Finishing Touch



The closer we get to Jesus the more we will love the sinners he loves, and have a heart to save them. Take a risk by praying that God will bring opportunities for you to witness to someone you know. Write in your journal the names of these people and keep praying for them.

The Watering Can

The once demon-possessed man in Mark 5 begged to go with Jesus however Jesus didn't let him. Sometimes Jesus' plans differ from our agenda. What are the implications of this for our prayer life? Are you prepared to see God answer your prayer in ways other than you expect? Consider taking time during your prayers to let God speak.



The Tool Shed

Translating the Bible:

When the Bible was translated from ancient languages into English it was sometimes impossible to pass on the exact meaning of what the Bible writers were trying to say. For example: in the NIV Mark 5:15 ends with the word "afraid". A better translation of the original Greek word is "awe". Sometimes a better understanding of a word's meaning can shed a whole new light on a story.

Which translation is best?

That depends on whether you intend to analyse the text, understand the message or the make a life application. Translations either emphasise *literal word for word translation* (eg. KJV, NKJ, RSV, NRSV, ESV) or *dynamic equivalence* which puts the author's meaning in modern phraseology (eg. NLT, NCV, CEV, *Good News*). A combination of both techniques is used by most translators (eg. NIV). A paraphrase such as *The Message* will even translate the world view and images of the original text. This is most helpful in personal devotions.

Breaking New Ground



Study the following passages and write down what you discovered about your mission with Jesus.

- John 4- tells of a woman at the well who was changed by encountering Jesus and how she impacted her world.
- Acts 8- tells about Phillip. He goes, baptises and teaches. If you haven't been baptised consider the implications of this story for you.
- Revelation 14:1-12- tells about a message of warning to the world in the last days. Explore how we can play a role in getting people to worship the creator instead of the beast.

Plant the Seed



Discuss some recent futuristic movies.

- Why do you think that many movies are so focused on the future and beyond? Do you think this movie's portrayal of the future is realistic?
- Describe your ideal utopia.

John Lennon, front man of the Beatles, died a violent death in 1979 at the hand of an assassin's bullet. Ironically, one of John Lennon's hit songs was 'Imagine' in which he described an ideal world with no violence, war, race or religion. It is hard to imagine such a world, yet the Bible describes such a place. This study reveals a time when heaven will descend with God and Jesus to this earth!

Till the Soil



Holy Smoke or Holy City

Revelation 20 describes a period of 1000 years before heaven is remade on earth.

- Where are the Christians during this time? Where are the wicked during this time? Where is Satan during this time? What do you think he will be thinking about during the 1000 years? Why do you think he doesn't change his attitude towards God and his people? What is Satan's ultimate fate?
- Why do you think God involves a jury in the judgement process?
- In what ways are the first and second deaths similar and different?
- What does it mean to be a priest of God?
- Why should the lake of fire bring hope to Christians? For reassurance read John 6:39-40, John 5:24 and John 11:25-26

The Tool Shed

Understanding Revelation

It is sometimes difficult for us to understand prophecy because we are not familiar with that style of writing. The book of Revelation draws heavily on images or concepts from the Old Testament Prophets- in particular Ezekiel, Daniel and Isaiah. We should look for the spiritual meaning of a symbol not interpret it literally. The description of the holy city as a cube for example is symbolic of the most holy place in the OT sanctuary which was also a cube. Both are places where God dwells and people are at one with him.

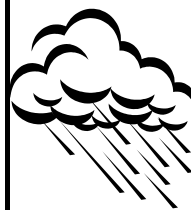
Digging Deeper



City of Angels

Read Revelation 21-22

- How is this world different to the world we live in today?
- How do you think the first Christians to whom John was writing felt when they read this?
- How does this passage make you feel?
- Do you think this picture of heavens is really true or too good to be true? Why?



The Latter Rain

Jesus' power to recreate is not limited to the future- he can renew your heart now too. What do you need the Holy Spirit to renew in your life? Read Philippians 1:27. How does the Holy Spirit help us to live as citizens of heaven?

What will heaven be like?

As Marco Polo, the famous Venetian traveller of the 13th century, lay dying, he was urged by his detractors to withdraw the stories he had told about China and the lands of the Far East. But he refused, saying, "I have not told half of what I saw." In 1 Corinthians 2:9 The Bible tells us that heaven is beyond our wildest dreams. Read Isaiah chapter 35, 65:17-25 to learn more about what it will be like.

In March 1997 Marshall Applewhite leader of the Heaven's Gate cult and 38 followers who believed he was Jesus reincarnate suicided or were murdered in order that their souls might escape to heaven in a UFO hidden in the tail of the Hale-Bopp comet. They gave up their names, possessions, identity, freedom and finally their lives to get to heaven. Was it really heaven's gate?

Digging Deeper



How do we get to heaven?

For Christians it is no mystery. We need not worry about making it to heaven if we believe in Jesus. Jesus told his disciples he was going to prepare a place for us and would come again and take us to be with him. John 14:4 says "you know where I am going and how to get there." Here are the first three steps...

1. Confess you are a sinner (Romans 3:23).
2. Believe Jesus died for your sins and rose again. (1 Corinthians 15:3,4)
3. Accept Jesus as your lord and saviour. (Romans 10:9)

If you haven't taken these three steps what is stopping you? If you are already growing in your relationship with Jesus what is stopping you from being baptised as a public expression of your faith in him?

The Finishing Touch



What do you desire?

"If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world." C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, p. 119.

- How does knowing heaven awaits you make it easier to live today?
- How do you think Jesus has decorated your room in heaven?

Heaven is worth the wait! It is going to be an awesome place that will be beyond our imagination. When life is going wrong for you, you can be assured that you have a future that is out of this world. All our questions will be answered there. You are invited to be there, book your ticket now to avoid disappointment.

- What can you do now to book your ticket to heaven?

The Watering Can



Colossians 3:1-4.

During your prayer time this week, spend time in meditating on heaven and the future that is in store for you. Imagine a place where there is no more sin, sickness, disease, crying, war and crime. As you meditate on this place you might like to write some of the thoughts that come to your mind in your journal.

When you pray thank God that he has not only made this future but has provided a sure way to get there.

What shall we do in heaven? Not lounge around but worship, work, think, and communicate, enjoying activity, beauty, people, and God. First and foremost, however, we shall see and love Jesus, our Saviour, Master, and Friend.

James Packer, Your Father Loves You, Harold Shaw Publishers, 1986.

Breaking New Ground



Re-read Revelation 20 -21 and list the characteristics of heaven. Draw, paint, or write a creative masterpiece that portrays heaven or your feelings about it.

Peas In A Pod



Read Revelation 21:3-4. Make a plan to create a little piece of heaven this week for someone who is hurting, disabled, lonely, sick, or grieving.

Plant the Seed



Find a magazine article about someone famous. After reading the story, rate out of ten how much of the story you think is true as opposed to how much you think is just media hype. Discuss as a group why you think so much of what comes out of the media doesn't contain all the truth.

Each human being was created with a purpose in mind. Do you know what yours is? Who would you trust to help you discover what your purpose in life is? This study looks at what God's first purpose is for the human beings he created.

Till the Soil



Ain't no hole in this bucket

Read John 4:4-42

- What does Jesus reveal about himself by travelling through Samaria and talking to the woman at Jacob's well?
- It was considered inappropriate for a man to talk to women in public because they were seen as inferior and could make you unclean or tempt you to sin. What barriers prevent you from connecting with Jesus?
- The giving of hospitality was a way of accepting someone into your family. By asking this woman for a drink he was really saying "you are family" because he didn't mind sharing her cup. How do you think it would have made her feel? Can you think of times in your life when Jesus has let you know how much he values you?
- What do you think Jesus meant when he offered her "living water"?
- We usually assume this woman was immoral because of her string of failed relationships. What other explanations could there be for her situation? How do we sometimes misjudge people? What things in your life do people judge you for, but deep down inside you know that Jesus wouldn't?
- Ellen White in *The Desire of Ages* comments that although this woman was in the personal presence of the Messiah, she saw no more than a thirsty, dusty traveller. She therefore gained nothing special from her relationship with Jesus by actually seeing him in person. How does this encourage us who have not seen Jesus and may struggle to believe?
- Understanding God's purpose for us as Christians begins by worshipping Jesus as the lord of our life in spirit and in truth. What could you do to show your adoration and make your life an act of worship?

The Tool Shed: Who are the Samaritans?

Samaria was the region named after its prominent city which lay between Judea and Galilee. When the Assyrians defeated the ten tribes of northern Israel in 722 BC and relocated them to Babylon, they resettled other tribes (2 Kings 17) who intermarried with the remaining Jews and adopted some of the Jewish religion. The Jews who returned from Babylon in 538 BC had also experienced religious changes. Ethnic and religious differences resulted in open hostility that has continued to modern times. In Jesus' day, Jews travelling between Galilee and Judea would cross to the eastern side of the Jordan river to avoid the region. Samaritans only accept the Pentateuch (first 5 books of the Bible) which contains variations such as the merging of two commandments and addition of another tenth. The Jewish account of renewing the covenant on the Mounts of Blessing and Cursing (Joshua 8:30-35) has Joshua building an altar on Mt Ebal, whereas the Samaritan text indicates the altar was set up on Mt Gerizim, their holy mountain. The village of Sychar was situated between the two mountains about 65km north of Jerusalem on the site of ancient Shechem. Here Jacob built his first altar (Genesis 33:18) and Joseph's bones were buried (Joshua 24:32). It is the site of the modern township of Nablous. Today less than 700 Samaritans live in Israel & Palestine. They still celebrate the Passover in a colourful festival.

Digging Deeper



Discerning God's Will

- Read Hebrews 13:20-21. Who equips us to do God's will? Who should we live to please?
- What does Proverbs 3:5-6 indicate should be our priority? What precedes God showing us the way to go? What practical things can you do to seek his will?
- What principles does Micah 6:8 outline as the basis for following God's purpose in our lives? What other principles characterise God's will for us?

The Latter Rain

In relation to this woman being offered "living water" one Bible commentary says that through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, Jesus provides the secret of enduring energy and satisfaction in this life. How is this possible? Discuss Ezekiel 36:25-27.

We can distinguish between God's general will for all Christians which is made clear in the scriptures and his specific will for our personal circumstances which may be revealed through life circumstances, the Holy Spirit and people with wisdom, spiritual insight or discernment. If we are in harmony with God's general will specific decisions will become clearer. Remember God doesn't always tell us what to do- he has already gives us common sense and free will to choose what is best. For example we may not know what career path we should follow, and God may never reveal a specific direction, but all Christians should be honest, hardworking and fair employees. Make a list of God's general will in other areas of your life (eg. relationships). Are you following what he has already shown as his purpose for a life that pleases God and you? Are you being challenged or called by God to do something specific?

Harvest Time



"Come and see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Christ?" is a natural response to meeting Jesus. What do you tell people you come in contact with about your encounter with Jesus? Discuss 1 Peter 3:15-16.



The Watering Can

Jesus' confession that he is the Messiah (v26) is unique in all the gospels. Apparently the Samaritan community is a place where Jesus feels comfortable revealing Himself openly. Is your prayer life a place where Jesus feels comfortable to reveal his purposes for your life?

The Finishing Touch



You know you're surrendering to God when you rely on God to work things out instead of trying to manipulate others, force your agenda and control the situation. Let go and let God work. - Rick Warren

- In what ways can we get in the way of God's purposes? Sometimes it takes years, but eventually you discover that the greatest hindrance to God's blessing in your life is not others, it is yourself - your self-will, stubborn pride, and personal ambition. - Rick Warren

- What is stopping you from experiencing God's will?

Take a risk! Give Jesus control of your life. Worship him as Lord and see his purposes for you fulfilled.

Breaking New Ground



Surrender is an unpopular word. It implies losing and no one wants to be a loser. We would rather talk about winning, succeeding, overcoming, or conquering rather than submitting, yielding or surrendering. However surrender is the natural response to God's amazing love and mercy. Write in your journal this week a list of things you need to surrender to God as you continue a lifestyle of adoring and worshiping him.

Plant the Seed



Think of a famous personality that you've seen in a TV commercial.

- Why would a famous person be used to do the commercial?
- Would you buy the product because he or she is in it?
- Do you believe the promises he or she makes about the product?

Promises, promises, promises! Every body's making promises! Buy this and you'll have "six pack" abs, eat this and you'll play like a pro-footballer, drive this car and you'll be the envy of your street, wear these clothes and everyone will love you. This study looks at the promises God makes to us, and the expectations we should have about God, especially when things don't seem to be going as well as we might have hoped...

Till the Soil



Captive Audience

Read Daniel 1:1-20

- Imagine that like Daniel you have been taken away from your family, your friends, your neighbourhood, your school and your church. You have been castrated and put in chains and told to walk for six months to a new country with strange people, ideas and customs. Why would you continue to put your faith in God?
- Daniel was being trained to be a ruler of his own people. Why do you think he made the decision not to "defile himself" and risk losing the privileges and opportunities that the King of Babylon had given him.
- Verse 9 indicates that God moved the official to act in Daniel's favour. When can we rely on God to step in and help us if we find ourselves in trouble?

God rewarded Daniel with knowledge and understanding. Does God always reward us for staying faithful to him? Why or why not?




The Tool Shed

Much of what we know about the Babylonian captivity is found in other books of the Bible. For instance did you know Daniel was castrated before he went to serve the king of Babylon? Isaiah. 39:7 says "... some of your own descendants will be taken into exile. They will become eunuchs who will serve in the palace of Babylon's king." Many prophets such as Ezekiel and Jeremiah warned God's people to repent or be taken captive by Babylon. Daniel and Esther tell the experience of Jewish people in captivity. Ezra and Nehemiah deal with their return to Israel and rebuilding of Jerusalem.

Digging Deeper



- In Lamentations 5:10-12 we read about some of the things that happened as the Babylonians besieged Jerusalem. As Daniel endures the atrocities that came to his people what questions might he have had about his faith in God?
- In what ways has your faith in God been challenged?
- Read the following predictions about the Babylonian siege and captivity in 2 Kings 20:17, Ezekiel 23:25-26, Jeremiah 24:3-7. How would these predictions, when taken together, have given Daniel hope in God?
- Where do you get hope from in tough times?



The Latter Rain
 John 14:16-18, 27 talks about the work of the Holy Spirit. How can you experience the kind of peace and reassurance that Jesus describes in these verses? How is this comfort and peace different to what the world offers? What does Romans 8:23-27 teach us about the Holy Spirit and tough times? How does prayer help us face difficult circumstances?

Digging Deeper



Mistakes

- Read Psalm 103:10, Isaiah 55:7, Philippians 1:6 & 3:13-14. How do these verses help us to have faith even when we stuff up and make mistakes?

Doubts

- How do Mark 9:24 and Romans 15:4 suggest we should combat doubt?
- What does 1 John 3:19-20 say we should do when we don't *feel* saved?

Emotional Darkness

- Jeremiah got so depressed he was known as the weeping prophet! Read about his ups and downs in Jeremiah 1:4-8, 12:1-4, 15:15-18, 20:7-18, 51:5. Have you ever opened up to God like this? Have you ever felt life was unfair? How has God comforted you?

Suffering & Injustice

- What does Daniel 3:17-18 teach us about handling tough times?

Harvest Time




Despite the fact that God promises us so many good things, he never promises that those who put their faith in him will never experience anything bad while still on this earth (Consider John 16:33 and 17:14-15). How would you go about sharing your faith even when something bad has happened to you, your friends or to those who don't even believe in God?

The Finishing Touch



As humans & Christians living in a sinful world ruled by Satan we can expect to experience tough times. However even during tough times we can have faith- in fact God can even use suffering to bring us closer to him. Regardless of our doubts and fears God's love for us never changes. His power and promises give us reasons for hope. Finish this study by reading Romans 8:35,38-39.



The Watering Can
 Daniel was known as a man who prayed three times a day. In fact in Daniel chapter 6 we find that Daniel's habit of praying got him thrown into a den of lions. Read Daniel 6:10-11 and find out what kind of things Daniel used to pray for. As a group talk about your prayer life. Do you pray the most when life is good, or when you find yourself with a problem on your hands?

Breaking New Ground



- Study 2 Corinthians 1:3-11. Think back to an annoying or painful event in your recent experience. Open your heart to God in prayer as you write a list of ways you can see God may have used that event to bless you and bring you closer to him.

OR

- Read Hebrews 11. How did faith help these people overcome tough times? Do some further study on a character who inspired you. What does their life teach you about faith in tough times?

Plant the Seed



Browse through a recent newspaper and find a story about the dark side of humanity. What happened? Why do you think this might have happened? What are people doing to help the situation? What could a Christian do to show the love of Jesus in that situation? This study is about how God wants me to interact with my world- including all the bad stuff.

Till the Soil



Poverty, Oppression and Justice

Read Isaiah 58:3-14

- What is the connection between authentic spirituality and serving others?
- How does God see the poor and oppressed?
- As a Christian, what things can you do to “rebuild walls and cities”?
- Why isn't it enough to just worship God one day a week? How can we ensure that our relationship is more than a one hour event on the weekend?
- Read Luke 4:18-19 in which Jesus quotes Isaiah 61:1-2. How is Jesus' concern for social issues an example for you?

Digging Deeper



Me & God's Creation

Read Genesis 1:26-31

- Describe one of the most beautiful places of natural beauty you have seen. As a Christian, what does beauty mean to you?
- How does looking after our environment fulfil God's original purpose for us?

Read Romans 8:18-23

- In what ways is the created world subject to the curse of sin?
- God wants us to overcome sin in our lives. How does this apply to our environment?

Read Jonah 4:11.

- What does this suggest about God's concern for all His creatures?

Backyard Blitz

Plan a service project that you or a group can do to make the environment a better place. You might enhance the beauty of God's creation, or take responsibility as God's stewards to fix a problem.

Digging Deeper



Me & My Country Romans 13:1-7 or 1 Peter 2:13-17

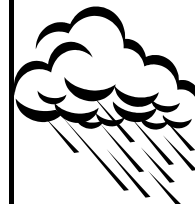
- According to these verses how should Christians relate to civil authorities?
- What should a Christian do if their government is unjust or oppressive?
- How do you think Christian's should treat people who have broken the law?
- One of the principles of modern society is the separation of church and state. Do you think it is okay to use power to get people to do the right thing? If you were the prime minister what would you do with your Christian morals?



The Tool Shed

When we read the Bible we

discover things that we wouldn't consider civilised, moral or Christian. To interpret it we need to understand the culture, values and beliefs of ancient times. A commentary, study Bible or encyclopaedia can help us do this. Don't get distracted by the details, avoid imposing your world view and remember to look for the principles that apply in any place, time or culture.



The Latter Rain

Read Romans 8:28-30. What activities

described in these verses are

the work of the Holy Spirit? In what ways does the Holy Spirit call us? Have you sensed that God is calling you to come closer? How can you respond to Him? What is stopping you? What is attracting you to God?

Which is worse: to do evil or to be evil?

Dietrich Bonhoeffer was a promising young theologian and dedicated pastor. The rise of Adolf Hitler in 1932 changed his world. His church was divided over Nazi ideology. Bonhoeffer believed Hitler was wrong. He made a radio announcement attacking the leadership of Nazi Germany but was stopped part way through. In 1935 he began an illegal seminary to train ministers for the confessing church. However the Gestapo found out and closed it. Because Dietrich was a pacifist he left Germany to avoid the growing crisis but soon returned to engage the problems facing his church and nation saying "I shall have no right to participate in the reconstruction of Christian life in Germany after the war, if I do not share the trials of this time with my people." He got a job in the German Military Intelligence Service, but was also working for the underground. The political situation escalated, peace could not be made and the underground saw no alternative than to assassinate Hitler. In 1943 Dietrich became involved in their daring plot but before the plan could be carried out the Gestapo arrested him on suspicion of involvement with the underground. Things got worse when documents were uncovered linking him to the plot to kill Hitler. He was placed in a Gestapo prison and tortured, and later moved to an extermination camp. During the night of April 8, 1945 a court martial met and sentenced him to death. Early the next morning he was hung, just days before the Allies liberated the camp.

Consider these quotes from Bonhoeffer's writings:

- "Jesus Christ lived in the midst of his enemies. At the end, all his disciples deserted him. On the cross he was utterly alone, surrounded by evil doers and mockers. For this cause he had to come: to bring peace to the enemies of God. So the Christian, too, belongs not in the seclusion of a cloister life but in the thick of foes." *Life Together*.
- "Things are much simpler here than we would prefer. It is not that we do not know God's commandments, but that we do not keep them." *Meditating on the Word*
- "Let no one say, 'God has blessed me with money and possessions' and then live as if he and his God were alone in the world." *No Rusty Swords*

Do you think what Dietrich did was right? Why? What caused Dietrich to follow this course in life? What gave him the courage to face the problems of life instead of running away from them? What enabled him to stand tall in affliction and die with dignity and peace? Are there any social issues which Christians shouldn't get involved in?

-Rent the movie "Dietrich Bonhoeffer: Agent of Grace" from your local video store.-

The Finishing Touch



Do you sense the Holy Spirit calling you to action? Have you been challenged to change an attitude towards something or someone? Do you need to stop being apathetic or cynical? Pray and ask God to guide you and give you the power to take action for Him in your world.

Breaking New Ground



- Make a list of other social issues. How might God want you to respond to them? Consider researching some of these topics in your Bible.

OR

- Colossians is a positive and practical letter about living in the world. As you read it, note key verses and record how God is speaking to you through his word.

The Watering Can



Do you ever struggle to find the right words to say when you pray?

Take a look at Romans 8:26-27. How does the Holy Spirit help your prayer life? How do you feel knowing that God knows your heart? How can we accept God's will for us? Use the themes of this passage as the basis for your prayer time today.

Plant the Seed



Do a role-play built around conflict. Then do the same role-play, but this time act out a resolution.

This study explores what it means to participate in a church at all levels, including how to resolve conflict between believers and live with differences.

Till the Soil



Is there such a thing as the perfect church?

Read Acts 2:41-47

- What were the characteristics of the church following Peter's sermon at Pentecost?
- What activities were they involved in?
- How is this description similar to and different from your church?
- What would it take for your church to have the experience of Acts 2?

Digging Deeper



Faith Affirming Rituals

Read John 13:1-17.

- Why did Jesus wash his disciple's feet?
- How can we put Jesus' example into practice?

Read 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

- What is the significance of communion?
- How does it help us see, smell and taste as well as hear that we are saved? Why does God often use our senses to communicate with us? (eg. the sanctuary and parables)

Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-13 & Matthew 28:18-20

- What is the relationship between baptism, belief and belonging?
- Does baptism mean that we will have a sinless life?

The Tool Shed

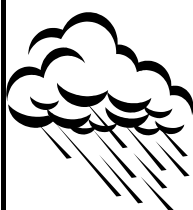


Who wrote the Bible?

Christians answer this in three different ways.

1. Verbal Inspiration says humans wrote the *words* God dictated to them.
2. Thought Inspiration says humans wrote the *ideas* God gave them and recorded God's actions.
3. Inspirational not inspired typifies liberal theology which says humans merely wrote *their ideas and stories* about God.

The Bible itself claims to include a divine and human element in the process (Hebrews 1:1-2, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, 2 Peter 1:20-21) which appears to have worked differently for the various Bible writers.



The Latter Rain

In Acts 1:4-5 Jesus tells his disciples to wait until they receive the Holy Spirit. What implications does this have for us embarking on new ventures? Read how the Holy Spirit came in Acts 2:1-2 and Acts 4:31-33. What were the results of the Holy Spirit coming? What would your church be like if it was filled with the Holy Spirit?

Digging Deeper



You need the church. The church needs you.

Read Hebrews 10:24-25

- Is it possible to be a true Christian without belonging to a church?
- Share one way the church has helped you in your walk with Jesus.
- In what practical ways could you encourage people in your church or group?

Digging Deeper



Living in Diversity

- If, as Galatians 3:26-29 says, we are all equal, how should we treat each other? How does seeing other people as God's children change the way you treat them? Is racism compatible with Christianity?
- What reasons does Paul give for our unity in Ephesians 4:1-7? In what ways are we also different to each other?
- In what practical ways can you apply Philippians 2:2-4 to your life? How does the example of Jesus in verse 5-11 inspire you to treat others?
- According to Matthew 18:15-20 how should you confront other Christians when there is a problem? Is there someone who you need to talk to according to this principle?

Peas in a Pod



Consider starting or joining a small group devoted to growing in Jesus. Or, find a mature Christian to be your mentor or an accountability partner to help you in your Christian walk. Who could you invite to join your Bible study or small group? Who can you support in their Christian journey? Ask God to lead you to these people.

The Finishing Touch



Christianity is a communal not an individual religion. We all need support, encouragement, accountability and knowledge from other people. This study has highlighted the importance of healthy relationships in the church with words like unity, equality and respect.

- What other words describe a healthy church?
- What steps do you need to take to get connected to the body of Christ?
- Do your relationships with other Christians reflect the values of the New Testament church?
- What will you do to encourage your church and help it grow?

Breaking New Ground



- Read Jesus' prayer in John 17. What does it teach us about his relationship to his father? What does it reveal about our relationship with him? Spend time each day praying that you will be one with God.

OR

- Read Paul's letter to the Ephesians. What does this letter reveal about church life in Ephesus? What does it teach us about unity and diversity in the church? What does it have to say about Christian living and the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives? Remember to underline key verses, and write down things you discovered or questions you might have. What is God saying to you through his word? What do you need to do about it?



The Watering Can

Before his crucifixion Jesus prayed for unity in the church (John 17:20-23). Unity begins by being united with Jesus. Unity is also crucial to fulfilling our mission. What barriers to unity exist in your church? Do you think unity is more important than doing and believing what is right? To what extent can we be unified with other Christians? Like Jesus we can pray that the church will be one. Pray for wisdom and grace to overcome the barriers to our unity with Jesus and unity with people in our group or church.

Plant the Seed



Using lucky dip let each group member choose a gift from a selection of good, average and downright disappointing gifts. Compare gifts. Alternatively you could allow group members in turn to examine the gifts (have them guess what is in them) and select one, with the option of forgoing the examination to take a gift from another group member. Trick gifts add to the fun.

This study explores the gifts that God gives us through the Holy Spirit and helps us discover our SHAPE for ministry. You will discover that every gift is important to God's church.

Till the Soil



God's Good Gifts

Read 1 Corinthians 12

- Using the analogy of the human body which part do you think you are?
- According to verse 7 what is the purpose of God's gifts?
- Verse 18 suggests that we are just the way God wants us. How does this encourage those who have doubts about their ability to contribute anything good to the church?
- What are some of the ways we can care for each other equally? (vs 25)
- In what ways are we separate or individual? In what ways are we necessary? (vs27)
- Begin making a list of all the gifts mentioned in this passage. Add to it as you discover new gifts in the following passages.

Body Building

- According to 1 Peter 4:10-11 why should we manage our gifts well? What will be the result of us using our gifts appropriately?
- Who does Ephesians 4:7-8 and 11-16 say gave us our gifts? What implication does this have for how we use them? What is the purpose of these leadership gifts?
- Romans 12:3-11. In what ways do you sometimes underestimate your giftedness? Are you sometimes envious of the gifts God has given others? How can you deal with those feelings? If you could look at your self through God's eyes what would you see?
- According to the above passages is any gift more important than others?
- Exodus 31:1-5 indicates that craftsmanship or artistry can be a gift from God. What other gifts do you think God might give people?

Digging Deeper



The Tool Shed

Who decided what went into the Bible?

"Canon" is a word that refers to a collection of writings that have authority. The canonisation of the Bible took place over a few centuries. By Jesus' day the content of the OT was largely agreed upon by Jewish leaders who only wanted to include genuine prophets. Some books, like Esther, which doesn't even mention God were still in doubt. The early Christians included in the NT only the writings of people who knew Jesus personally (Luke interviewed them, while Jesus appeared to Paul in vision). However the process was not without conflict. Even during the 2nd century Marcion rejected the book of Hebrews because he felt it was too "Jewish." While the Gnostics tried to add other documents to the canon, passing them off as original letters. The Catholic church accepts some writings from the time between the OT & NT known as the Apocrypha.

What's the difference between a spiritual gift and a talent?

Talents come as result of natural processes of genetics, conditioning or training. Spiritual Gifts are a supernatural empowering of a Christian by the Holy Spirit for ministry in the church.

The Latter Rain

Read John 10:27 and Isaiah 30:21. Do you recognise when God is “speaking” to you? Are you in tune with his guidance through the Holy Spirit? John 14:17 indicates that the Holy Spirit will lead us into all truth. God wants what is best for us and he has given the Holy Spirit to help us. How do you know whether or not it is the Holy Spirit guiding you?

Discovering your SHAPE

- S – Spiritual Gifts: Every Christian is given at least one gift. Finding out yours is the first step to effective service.
- H – Heart: What are you passionate about? Perhaps you have seen a need, or maybe God has put a burden on your heart. If you are passionate your ministry will be fun and fulfilling.
- A – Abilities: What are you good at that others aren't? You might have a technical skill, a talent, or an understanding of a subject. You should use your natural abilities to glorify the God who made you that way.
- P – Personality: Some people are naturally outgoing while others are introverted. Your ministry role should reflect your personality.
- E – Experiences: Your life experiences (eg. education, hurts, vocation, and spiritual journey) equip you to minister in a way no one else can.
- What steps do you need to take to discover your SHAPE?
 - What ministry experiences will help you find and develop your gift/s?

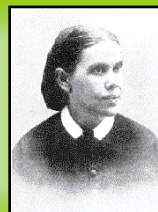
Harvest Time



Consider asking your church pastor to take you through a spiritual gifts inventory to help you identify possible gifts. Then “field test” the results to see if that ministry fits your SHAPE. Remember the more experiences you have the better you will know where you can serve best.

Case Study

Ellen White was a young girl in poor health. Despite this God used her gifts to nurture a church from disappointment to confidence in Jesus and his second coming. What could he do with you?



The Finishing Touch



In 2 Timothy 1:6 Paul encourages Timothy to “fan the flame of the spiritual gifts God gave you when I laid my hands on you.” How does it make you feel to know that God has given you a unique SHAPE and chosen to channel his power through you? What a responsibility! What a privilege!

Breaking New Ground



- Study 1 Corinthians 13 and 14. Chapter 13 shows that all gifts should be used with love. Chapter 14 deals with how to apply some of the gifts.
- OR
- Learn about some other spiritual gifts such as celibacy (1 Corinthians 7:7-8), hospitality (1 Peter 4:9-10), martyrdom (1 Corinthians 13:1-3), missionary (Ephesians 3:6-8) and voluntary poverty (1 Corinthians 13:1-3). How could some of these gifts be a blessing to an individual and the church?



The Watering Can

Acts 6:1-7 tells us about the first ever deacons. When the deacons were chosen the apostles prayed for them and laid hands on them. This is called ordination. It is a way of recognising a person's gifts and seeking God's blessing on their ministry (See also 1 Timothy 4:14). In Acts 8 God gave Phillip more spiritual gifts as he needed them for ministry. Are you open to God using you for ministry and service? Why not pray and ask God to give you the gifts you need to do his work?

Plant the Seed



Gather some Cleo, Cosmo or similar magazines. Talk about the morals and attitudes these magazines promote. Alternatively talk about some recent release movies and the attitudes or morals portrayed in them.

Western philosophy since the time of ancient Greece has separated the physical and spiritual realms giving us a fragmented view of ourselves. The desire for a sense of wholeness has led many people to turn to new age philosophies which seek to enhance the body-soul connection and experiment with chants, mantras, spells and potions. In this study you will discover that God offers something fulfilling and permanent for our fragmented selves.

Does my body matter to God?

The emphasis on the spiritual realm and reduction of the body to a superfluous outer shell resulted in two extremes of behaviour:

1. The physical world, including the body was seen as evil and must be brought into submission. Hence Christians refrained from marriage, sex and food, flagellating and denying themselves any earthly comfort. This was known as asceticism and flourished in monastic communities.
2. Because only the soul was considered important they believed it didn't matter what one did in the body and so immorality flourished in the church.

The Tool Shed

In 1947 a boy looking for a lost goat found some scrolls preserved in clay jars that had been hidden in caves overlooking the dead sea. They included copies of OT books dating from the time of Jesus and provided proof that the scriptures have been passed down to us essentially unchanged.

Early manuscripts of Old and New Testament books are more numerous, reliable and closer in date to the actual people who wrote them than most significant ancient documents known to us. Comparing the various copies shows that only minor changes took place with no significant additions or omissions in the transmission process. The Bible you read is reliable!

Till the Soil



Read 1 Corinthians 6:12-20

- Does Paul think our body is important? Why do you think Paul needed to write this letter
- In what ways does our physical life impact our spiritual life, and vice versa?
- In what ways can you honour God with your body? (See also Romans 12:1-2 & 1 Corinthians 10:31)
- What principles do 1 Thessalonians 4:1-5 and Philipians 4:8 talk about that you can use in your life today.
- Does your life reflect God's sexual values?

Digging Deeper



The way God made us.

Read Genesis 2:7

- In order to create a living person what did God use?
- Why do you need a physical body to be a person?
- If God made us this way (and *he* said it was "good"), do you think he intended for us to enjoy nature, food, sex and relationships?
- If all our experiences, memories, thoughts and feelings are dependent upon biological processes what will happen to our identity when we die and our body returns to dust?
- According to verses like 1 Kings 8:39 and Psalm 94:11 God knows our thoughts. Therefore he is able to preserve our identity even when we die!

Digging Deeper



What about after death?

Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 and 1 Corinthians 15:51-55

- Some people think our soul goes straight to heaven or hell when we die. In other words it is immortal. If this is the case why does the New Testament place so much hope in the resurrection?
- What does Jesus' resurrection suggest about life after death? See also John 20:17.
- According to 1 Corinthians 15:42, 52-53 when does the soul become immortal? Is immortality something we possess innately or is it a gift? See Romans 6:23.
- If only those who have accepted Jesus get eternal life is it possible for bad people to suffer in hell for ever? What will happen to them? Revelation 20:11-15. The whole point of the lake of fire is to destroy sin and death. Human bodies don't survive fire. Without our body we cease to have a conscious soul. Perhaps at this "second death" God chooses not to preserve the memory of their identity any longer.



The Latter Rain

Matthew 4:1 tells us that when Jesus went into the wilderness to be tempted he was led by the Holy Spirit. He was tempted physically, mentally and spiritually. The Holy Spirit can help us resist temptation too.



The Watering Can

James 5:13-18

describes the way in which prayer connects the spiritual realities of heaven with physical issues on earth. Why doesn't God always heal the sick? To what extent do our spiritual and physical wellbeing affect each other? Are spiritual problems always the cause of physical problems and vice versa? Are there areas of your life where you have been applying spiritual or physical solutions when the other is really needed? Ask God to help you balance your life. Hold nothing back from him.

Backyard Blitz



Individually or as a group design a project to help an elderly or disabled person whose body is not able to do things for themselves. Incorporate something that will help restore their sense of wholeness and minister to their soul.

OR

Develop a plan to improve you're your physical, social or emotional wellbeing.

The Finishing Touch



God made you, saved you, and loves you *body and soul*. Do you want to commit your body and soul to him? Ask God to help you as you continue to make choices and changes that will bring you more in line with his plan for your life. He wants you to enjoy emotional, spiritual, physical, mental and social wellbeing.

Breaking New Ground



- Do an in depth study of 1 Corinthians 15. What does Paul teach about the resurrection, Jesus, and life after death?

OR

- Read Song of Solomon and discover a Biblical perspective on human relationships, love, intimacy and sexuality.

Plant the Seed



What do you like about the Sabbath? What don't you like? If you could design the perfect Sabbath day where would you be? What would you be doing?

The Sabbath is sometimes portrayed as a day of dos and don'ts. However, according to Jesus, the Sabbath is much more than that. In fact he blisters the Pharisees for their attempts to limit the Sabbath to a set of rules. In this study we will discover the true meaning of the Sabbath.

Till the Soil



Sabbath Conflict

Read Matthew 12:1-14

- What did Jesus mean in verse 8 when he claimed to be the "Lord" or "Master" of the Sabbath?
- How did the rulers of the synagogue react?
- How did Jesus respond?
- In your opinion what is the purpose of the Sabbath?
- How did Jesus model Sabbath keeping?
- How does this impact on the current way you keep the Sabbath?

Digging Deeper



The Sabbath is a Symbol of...

- *Creation*- We are God's creatures and the earth is his (Genesis 2:1-3). He has the power to recreate us too!
- *Identity*- It tells us who we are and why we are here (Ezekiel 20:12).
- *Liberation*- It is a unique opportunity to be aware of oppression and injustice and to creatively act to bring liberation and equality (Deuteronomy 5:12-15, Luke 13:10-17)
- *Completion*- symbolizes God's completion of creation and the future rest we will experience when Jesus comes again. His rest in the grave over Sabbath reminds us that he completed payment for our sins. (Hebrews 4:1-11).

The Tool Shed Bible Study Methods



Topical Study: Examine a relevant topic such as death, abortion, marriage, etc.

Book Study: First do some research to find out about the author and his historical context. Then explore the overall themes and concerns of the book before you study it verse by verse.

Word Study: Using a concordance to look up each instance of a word in the Bible such as faith, love, promise etc.

Biographical Study: Much can be learnt from the lives of people like David or Mary. A similar study can be done of places like the Temple.

Historical Study: The Jews in Captivity, The Exodus, The early Church etc.

Discuss it

- What is the main reason you keep the Sabbath?
- How does it help your relationship with God? With other Christians?
- What changes will you make in your life and attitudes now that you understand the real meaning of the Sabbath?



The Latter Rain

The Sabbath is about worship, renewal and rejoicing. Jesus often rejoiced in the Spirit. Read about one such occasion in Luke 10:21-24. What more appropriate day to rejoice in the Spirit than on the Sabbath. What does rejoicing in the Spirit mean to you?

Why do most Christians worship on Sunday?

During the 1st and 2nd century AD Christians were thrown out of synagogues and persecuted by Jews. The Romans also persecuted the Jews. As a result Christians tried to break any association with their Jewish roots - the Sabbath being one such obvious feature. Sunday was already a popular day for pagan worship and so was adopted by many Christians in commemoration of Jesus' resurrection. In 321AD the Emperor Constantine passed a law making Sunday a day of Christian rest and worship. It has remained a feature of Christianity ever since, despite the fact that there is no Biblical authority for the change. What is more important to you, God's word or human tradition?

Digging Deeper



How do I keep the Sabbath?

How do you make choices about what you do on Sabbath? The following principles can help you decide how to make Sabbath holy.

- *Worship* (Exodus 20:8-11, Luke 4:16). In what creative ways can you worship God on His Sabbath?
- *Fellowship* (Hebrews 10:25). In what ways can you experience fellowship and community on the Sabbath?
- *Rest* (Isaiah 58:13-14). What does it mean to rest on the Sabbath? How does the Sabbath help you cope better with the stress and problems of life?
- *Service* (Luke 13:10-17) How can we bring the service component of the Sabbath into balance with the other three aspects of the Sabbath?

Harvest Time



Plan some special service activities that you and your group can be do on a Sabbath that will relieve others' burdens and help them to enjoy the Sabbath too.

The Finishing Touch



The Sabbath is a day for worship, fellowship, rest and service. It is a sign between God and the people he loves. Are you ready to make the Sabbath a highlight of your week and spend the day with your best friend?

Breaking New Ground



- Select a Bible study method and discover what God has to teach you about a subject of interest or concern to you. You may wish to do a comprehensive word study of the Sabbath.



The Watering Can

During your prayer time this week reflect on how the Sabbath enhances your relationship with God and the special people in your life. Spend time meditating using the symbols of the Sabbath as your focus:

- *Creation*: What creative/recreative power is needed in your life?
- *Identity*: Contemplate your special relationship with God. Who are you now that you are his?
- *Liberation*: What needs liberating in your life? How has he liberated you?
- *Completion*: What work is God doing in your life right now to enhance your walk with him? Thank him for it.

Studying and Applying The Bible

Plant the Seed In addition to a brief introductory statement *Plant the Seed* includes an opener/icebreaker type thing. This serves to generate interest in the topic, get people talking, and develop relationships as people share.



Till the Soil *Till the Soil* is a focussed study on an extended passage or story. It should be the core of the Bible study time. It is an opportunity to model interpretation and application of scripture.



Digging Deeper *Dig Deeper* develops the topic by looking at additional passages in scripture. It may address specific applications of issues raised in *Till the Soil*.



The Finishing Touch *The Finishing Touch* concludes and summarises the study. It also challenges the student to apply their new understanding to their lives by listening to God and taking action to change or grow.



Breaking New Ground *Breaking New Ground* provides direction for further study and journaling during the next week. It is important to follow this up the next time you meet with your student/s to address their questions or and allow them to share any discoveries.



Developing A Relationship with God

The Watering Can *The Watering Can* is a side bar on prayer. Over the course of studies it becomes a study in itself and serves to develop and reinforce skills and habits in prayer.



The Tool Shed *The Tool Shed* is a side bar on the Bible and Bible Study. Over the course of studies it becomes a study in itself and serves to develop and reinforce skills and knowledge about the Bible and study methods.



The Latter Rain *The Latter Rain* is a side bar on the Holy Spirit. Over the course of studies it becomes a study in itself and serves to develop and reinforce skills and openness to the work of the Holy Spirit.



Living the Christian Life

Harvest Time *Harvest Time* provides the student/s with an opportunity to plan and implement a strategy for sharing the gospel through mission and evangelism.



Peas in a Pod *Peas in a Pod* provides the student/s with an opportunity to plan and implement a project to share fellowship and build relationships in their group, church or home.



Backyard Blitz *Back Yard Blitz* provides the student/s with an opportunity to plan and implement a service project.



Overall Outcomes

By the end of the *Green.House* Bible studies the student will:

1. Know how to study the Bible and apply it to their own lives
2. nbb
njjjcdd hnjsdh
Have a personal relationship with Jesus and accepted him as Lord and Savior
3. Have learnt and be practicing the skills needed to maintain that relationship
4. Have a desire to be baptized
5. Be committed to living for Jesus.
6. Have an awareness of and respect for the Adventist Message
7. Have a desire to join the Seventh-day Adventist Church as their spiritual home

Content covered in every study includes aspects of Fundamental Beliefs: 1, 5.

Individual Study Outcomes & Adventist Fundamental Beliefs

#1 Jesus the God-Man

By the end of this study the student will:

1. Have an appreciation for the mystery of the incarnation.
2. Have begun to understand Jesus' mission.
3. Have impressions of Jesus' ministry.
4. Accept Jesus as the revelation of God.
5. Accept Jesus as the creator.
6. Have been presented with an opportunity to make a decision for Christ.

Content covered includes aspects of Fundamental Beliefs: 2, 4, 6, 9.

#2 Why did Jesus die?

By the end of this study the student will:

1. Understand the seriousness of sin.
2. Accept that they are sinners in need of a saviour.
3. Understand how and why Jesus died.
4. Have an appreciation for the grace of God.
5. Have accepted or be thinking about accepting Jesus as their saviour.
6. Understand that salvation is by grace through faith.

Content covered includes aspects of Fundamental Beliefs: 4, 7, 9, 10, 14, 11, 17, 18, 21, 23.

#3 How does Jesus save me?

By the end of this study the student will:

1. Have an appreciation for God's grace.
2. Have further considered their response to God's gift of salvation through Jesus.
3. Understand the significance of Jesus' resurrection.
4. Have the opportunity to accept Jesus as their saviour.

Content covered includes aspects of Fundamental Beliefs: 9, 10, 11, 12.

#4 Signed, Sealed & Delivered

By the end of this study the student will:

1. Have assurance that they are saved.
2. Know they are saved by grace through faith.
3. Know the Holy Spirit as one sign of their salvation.
4. Understand the appropriate place of good works.
5. Have opportunity to consider being baptised.

Content covered includes aspects of Fundamental Beliefs: 9, 10, 12, 14.

#5 Who's Ya Daddy?

By the end of this study the student will:

1. Be introduced to the concept of the trinity
2. Realise that they are children of God and understand the implications.
3. Know the Holy Spirit as one sign of their salvation.
4. Feel a sense of acceptance and worth.
5. Have opportunity to think and talk about their own family.

Content covered includes aspects of Fundamental Beliefs: 2, 3, 7, 10, 13, 22.

#6 Get a (new) life!

By the end of this study the student will:

1. See Jesus as the foundation of the Christian's life.
2. Know that God wants them to be like Jesus
3. Have a desire to be like Jesus and accept him as Lord of their life.
4. Understand that it is the Holy Spirit's work in them that makes them more like Jesus.

Content covered includes aspects of Fundamental Beliefs: 7, 8, 10, 11, 18, 19, 21.

#7 Coming Ready or Not

By the end of this study the student will:

1. Know that Jesus is coming to back to this earth one day.
2. Know that the people who have died will be raised back to life by Jesus.
3. Know that death isn't the end for human beings who have dedicated their lives to Jesus.
4. Have a desire to be ready for Jesus return.
5. Want to share the hope of Jesus return with others.

Content covered includes aspects of Fundamental Beliefs: 12, 16, 17, 24, 25, 26.

#8 My Mission with Jesus

By the end of this study the student will:

1. Be aware that sharing their faith is a natural response to what God has done for them.
2. Be aware that having Jesus come into our lives is the only way we can change.
3. Understand that evangelism is a privilege and responsibility of all believers.
4. Sense the importance of sharing their faith with others.
5. See that the best witness they can be is to their own family, friends and community.
6. Be able to share their story of Jesus.

Content covered includes aspects of Fundamental Beliefs: 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 20, 21.

#9 Imagine my future with Jesus

By the end of this study the student will:

1. Believe that there is a place called heaven.
2. Understand what the bible teaches about the millennium and final judgement.
3. Have assurance that they will be in heaven.
4. Be looking forward to being in heaven.

Content covered includes aspects of Fundamental Beliefs: 8, 10, 14, 21, 23, 26, 27.

10 God's Purpose for my life

By the end of this study the student will:

1. Be aware that Jesus will cross all boundaries to show his love for them.
2. Know that Jesus wants them to accept him as Saviour and commit to him as Lord.
3. See that what Jesus wants for you is better than anything else on offer.
4. Desire to do God's will, know how to discover his will, receive power to do his will.
5. See that the natural response to discovering Jesus as your "messiah" is to share him with others. And that this is also His will.

Content covered includes aspects of Fundamental Beliefs: 7, 10 11, 13, 21.

#11 Faith in Tough Times

By the end of this study the student will:

1. Have more understanding of and compassion for the suffering of others.
2. Realise that faith in tough times allows God to continue working in their lives.
3. Realise that Christianity is not an escape from tough times, but that it helps us move through mistakes, doubts, darkness and suffering.
4. Realise that God uses both good things and bad things to draw us closer to him.

Content covered includes aspects of Fundamental Beliefs: 3, 8, 11, 12, 17, 21.

#12 Me In My World

By the end of this study the student will:

1. Have begun to develop awareness and Christian concern for social and civic issues.
2. Know why and how Christians should interact with society.
3. Have a greater respect and appreciation for creation and God as the creator.
4. Feel motivated to make a difference for Jesus.
5. Be willing to serve others in practical ways.

Content covered includes aspects of Fundamental Beliefs: 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 18, 19, 20, 21.

#13 Me in my Church

By the end of this study the student will:

1. See the importance of belonging to a church community.
2. Know that diversity is part of God's plan and that they should accept it.
3. Accept the place of baptism, communion and foot washing.
4. Have a feeling of belonging and acceptance.

Content covered includes aspects of Fundamental Beliefs: 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 20.

#14 Get me into Shape

By the end of this study the student will:

1. Understand themselves better.
2. Know what spiritual gifts are and their place in the church.
3. Have discovered or have a desire to find their SHAPE.
4. Be committed to ministry and service in their local church.
5. Recognise the gift of prophecy in the ministry of Ellen White.

Content covered includes aspects of Fundamental Beliefs: 11, 12, 13, 16, 17, 20.

#15 My Body & Soul

By the end of this study the student will:

1. Understand that the body and soul are interdependent.
2. Believe in the unconsciousness of the soul at death and the annihilation of the wicked in hell.
3. Have a desire to look after their physical health and moral wellbeing.
4. Have hope in the resurrection.

Content covered includes aspects of Fundamental Beliefs: 6, 7, 9, 21, 22, 25, 26.

#16 My time out with Jesus

By the end of this study the student will:

1. Understand the significance of the Sabbath
2. Have an appreciation for Jesus' Sabbath keeping
3. Have principles on which to base their own Sabbath keeping.

Content covered includes aspects of Fundamental Beliefs: 6, 9, 10, 11, 19, 20.

Green.House Bible Studies for Youth are a resource to help teachers, chaplains, pastors and youth workers to disciple young people who have taken a first step towards Jesus. In addition to teaching the doctrines of Christianity from an Adventist perspective, this series will develop skills such as prayer, bible study and an openness to the Holy Spirit which form the basis of an authentic spirituality and relationship with God. The studies encourage students to find ways of putting their faith into practice. Suitable for individual or small group use, the Green.House Bible Studies for Youth will provide young people with a hot house of nurture for approximately two school terms.