

Junior Soldiers

UNIT 16 : LESSON 8



Being still in a busy world

PURPOSE: For the children to explore and understand that even when we are busy God is with us and we can be aware of Him.

Our God says 'Calm down and learn that I am God'
Psalm 46:10 (CEV)

Consider & Prepare

Read:

1 Kings 19:1-18: This is the story of Elijah after he ran away from Jezebel who threatened His life. Elijah is feeling alone and sad. God cares for him by providing food and then appears to him – not in the wind, earthquake or fire but in a gentle whisper.

Consider:

- How can I be aware of God in my different situations?
- How do I expect God to present himself to me?

In a similar way, to Elijah, sometimes we need to pause amongst the business of our lives. We need to be still and ready to hear the gentle whisper of God.

Mindfulness is more about being than doing. Being still allows us to focus on specific things, to choose what we will focus on. Being still can help us to let go of things that make us feel anxious.

<http://simpleadventure.ca/still-world-rest>

The Christian tradition has a long history of meditation and silence. The aim of Christian meditation and silence is to calm the endless chattering speech in our

hectic lives and to focus instead on God. The practice helps us to identify our need to listen more and speak less.

Scripture records many examples of instances in which Jesus made time to step away from the business of life, particularly to pray:

- Mark 1:29-35 – after a busy time of ministry Jesus went away early in the morning to pray.
- Mark 6:30-31 – after sending the disciples out on a mission trip Jesus took them away to a quiet place and heard what they had done.
- Mark 14:35-36 – when Jesus was facing his most difficult challenge – he went away to pray.

What you will need:

For ‘Connecting In’

Choose one or more of these activities depending on the time you have available.

- Bubbles
 - » Bubble wands and bubble liquid
- Listening to noises
 - » Blindfolds (optional), alternatively children can just close their eyes
 - » Various objects that will produce sounds (e.g. a twig that can be broken, a dry leaf that can be crushed, a bell, the recording of a racing car, some music, a drum, some cellophane to crush)
- Sensory feeling bag
 - » Paper bags for placing objects in
 - » Various objects with different shapes, textures, firmness (e.g. a koosh ball, play dough, marbles, sand, potato chips, pepper)

For ‘The Main Thing’

- Print several copies of the story for your helpers
- Pole and green material for tree
- A light or torch to create shade
- Hair dryer
- A bottle of water
- A loaf/piece of bread

For ‘Tying In’

Option 2: Snow Globes

- Pre-prepared snow globe – <https://www.wikihow.com/Make-a-Snow-Globe-With-a-Jar>
- Enough Jars for one per child with a figurine already glued to the lid of the jar
- Strong Glue or a glue gun
- Water
- Glycerine/Baby Oil
- Glitter

For ‘Memory Verse Activity’

- Bibles
- Paddle pop sticks – one for each child
- Cut coloured paper circles (approx. 3cm in diameter) – red, orange (or yellow) and green – one of each colour for each child OR purchase sticky dots in red, orange (or yellow) and green

- Cut white cardboard into strips (approx. 13cm x 2cm) – you will need three for each child
- Craft glue
- Pens or markers
- Whiteboard or large sheet of paper

For 'Home & Beyond'

- Print off the Home & Beyond cards for each child

Connecting In

Choose one or more of these activities depending on the time you have available. If you choose to do all three of the activities you might like to break into smaller groups.

Bubbles

I am going to make some bubbles using these bubble wands. I want you to sit quietly and watch the bubbles and tell me what you notice about the bubbles.

Allow the children to offer answers. Some might find it really hard to sit still and not chase after the bubbles. Encourage them to use their eyes to chase the bubbles and ask them to explain to you what they can see.

If your group is struggling, you might like to suggest they look at

- *how the bubbles float*
- *how they burst*
- *how they rest on something without bursting*
- *what colours they see in the bubbles*
- *how high they float*
- *the size of the bubbles*

Link

When we slow down we notice more things. When we aren't rushing around we can learn more about things that we may have never noticed before. We noticed the shapes and the colours of the bubbles, the way they moved and popped. In a similar way when we slow down we might notice how God is working in our lives.

Listening to noises

Ask the children to sit in a circle.

Ask a few leaders/older children to each stand around the outside of the circle with one or two of the noise making objects.

Everyone close your eyes or put on your blindfold and listen to the noises that you will hear. When you hear a noise keep your eyes closed and point in the direction that the noise came from.

As a leader be sensitive to the fact that some children might be nervous about closing their eyes, or wearing a blindfold. Every few seconds point to a different helper for them to make a noise with their object (e.g. breaking the twig, crunching a leaf, playing the pre-recorded sound).

If the children do not hear a quieter sound, ask them to be really quiet and make the sound again.

Link

You can open your eyes now. When we are still we can be aware of things that we don't notice when we are busy. Being quiet means that we can hear more sounds and even determine the direction that they came from. It is similar with God. Sometimes when we slow down and quieten we can hear God speak to us.

Sensory feeling bag

Ask the children to sit in a circle.

Let the children know that you will be passing out some bags containing objects. Ask the children NOT to look inside the bags.

Pass out the paper bags to the children in your group.

Without looking, put your hand inside the bag and feel the object inside.

Ask the children to take turns describing the object inside their bag without looking at it. You might like to use the following questions to prompt them.

- What do you notice about it?
- What shape is it?
- Is it hard or soft?
- Can you describe any sounds that it makes?
- How heavy is it?
- Is it smooth, rough, slimy or hairy?

Go around the circle a second time and ask each child to guess what is in their bag then check to see if they are correct.

Link

In the busyness of life, we can often miss details. We can become more aware of what an object is like by taking more time to explore it. Similarly, if we take time out to spend with God we can learn more about Him.

The Main Thing

Below is the story of 1 Kings 19:1-13, including some options for acting out the story. You could involve the children by assigning volunteers to be:

- *Elijah*
- *The angel*
- *God speaking*

The words for your volunteers to read out are in bold.

1 Kings 19: 1-13 (MSG)

Ahab reported to Jezebel everything that Elijah had done, including the massacre of the prophets. Jezebel immediately sent a messenger to Elijah with her threat: **“The gods will get you for this and I’ll get even with you! By this time tomorrow you’ll be as dead as any one of those prophets.”**

When Elijah saw how things were, he ran for dear life to Beersheba, far in the south of Judah. He left his young servant there and then went on into the desert another day’s journey. He came to a lone broom bush and collapsed in its shade, *(Use a pole and green material with a light to create shade.)* wanting in the worst way to be done with it all—to just die: **“Enough of this, God! Take my life—I’m ready to join**

my ancestors in the grave!” Exhausted, he fell asleep under the lone broom bush.

Suddenly an angel shook him awake and said, **“Get up and eat!”**

(The angel places a bottle of water and a loaf of bread near Elijah.)

He looked around and, to his surprise, right by his head were a loaf of bread baked on some coals and a jug of water. He ate the meal and went back to sleep. *(Elijah eats and drinks.)*

The angel of God came back, shook him awake again, and said, **“Get up and eat some more—you’ve got a long journey ahead of you.”** *(Elijah eats and drinks again.)*

He got up, ate and drank his fill, and set out. *(Elijah wanders around.)* Nourished by that meal, he walked forty days and nights, all the way to the mountain of God, to Horeb. When he got there, he crawled into a cave and went to sleep. *(Elijah crawls and curls up.)*

Then the word of God came to him: **“So Elijah, what are you doing here?”**

“I’ve been working my heart out for the God-of-the-Angel-Armies,” said Elijah. **“The people of Israel have abandoned your covenant, destroyed the places of worship, and murdered your prophets. I’m the only one left, and now they’re trying to kill me.”**

Then he was told, **“Go, stand on the mountain at attention before God. God will pass by.”**

A hurricane wind ripped through the mountains and shattered the rocks before God, *(Make wind with a hair dryer or large fan.)* but God wasn’t to be found in the wind.

After the wind an earthquake, *(Ask all the children to jump and stomp on the ground.)* but God wasn’t in the earthquake.

And after the earthquake fire, *(Use the hair dryer to blow heat.)* but God wasn’t in the fire.

And after the fire a gentle and quiet whisper.

When Elijah heard the quiet voice, he muffled his face with his great cloak, went to the mouth of the cave, and stood there. A quiet voice asked, **“So Elijah, now tell me, what are you doing here?”** *(Whisper this quietly.)*

Discuss:

- How do you think Elijah might have been expecting God to pass by him?
- How do you think we can be aware of God in our day to day lives?

Tying In

There are two options below for ‘tying in’. Pick the one that will work best for your group.

Option 1: Awareness Walk

If you have permission to take the children away from your normal meeting place and enough leaders, go for a walk. This activity could even work at your usual meeting place.

Go for a walk and every few minutes ask the children to stop and freeze. Speak quietly and ask them to focus on what they can see, hear, feel. Suggest to them things like:

- I can see a car driving past/a plane flying in the sky.
- I can hear the sound of a bird/car/leaves rustling in the trees.
- I can feel the heat of sun or the coolness of breeze.

Link

We can pause in the middle of what we are doing and take notice of what is going around us. It is the same with God. We don’t need to go to a special place to be aware of Him. We can simply pause during our day and be aware that He is with us at all times!

Option 2: Snow Globes

When we slow down we can see more clearly. We can be more aware of what is around us. But busyness can cloud what we can see, hear and feel.

Hold up your ready made snow globe.

This is similar to a snow globe. When it is shaken, I can't see the figurine clearly. When I stop shaking the globe and allow it to settle the figurine becomes clearer.

We are going to make some snow globes to remind us about slowing down and being aware of God around us.

Memory Verse

We have learnt today that we can be more aware of God in our busy lives when we stop and slow down.

Ask the children to look up Psalm 46:10 in their Bibles and read it together.

Provide each child with:

- a paddle pop stick
- red, orange and green circle
- 3 x strips of white card
- craft glue
- pen or marker

Ask the children to

- Glue the red circle, orange circle then green circle onto the stick.
- Attach each of the white paper strips to the underside of the stick, in line with the circles.
- Write out the memory verse onto the strips of cardboard. (*Write out the words onto a whiteboard or large piece of paper in three lines so that the children can copy what you have done.*)

Prayer Time

If you made snow globes:

Ask the children to sit quietly and shake their snow globes.

As the glitter settles:

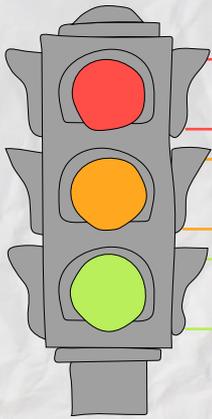
- Thank God for the things that you noticed on the awareness walk.
- Thank him for things that you can see, feel, taste, and hear.
- Ask God to help you to be more aware of him.

Alternatively:

Ask the children to hold their memory verse craft:

- Touch the red circle and ask God to help you to be calm and peaceful.
- Touch the orange circle and tell God about one thing you know about him.

- Touch the green circle and praise God for being amazing.
- Lay your hand across the three circles and ask God to help you to be more aware of him.



Psalm 46:10 Our God says: Calm down

And learn that I am God

All nations on earth will honour me.

Home & Beyond

Try to hit the 'pause button' at least three times this week:

- Stop for two minutes.
- Notice what is going on around you.
- Write a list of things you heard, saw, felt or smelt.
- Be aware that God is with you and thank him for his presence.

Share the memory verse for this week and one of your lists with your Big Bud or a family member.

Home & Beyond

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