



CHILDHOOD BIBLE STORIES

OLD TESTAMENT

LIFE



in this series

**DAVID AND GOLIATH:
WHAT DO YOU TRUST IN?**

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**PHARAOH:
AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH**

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**JERICHO AND RAHAB:
RIGHTEOUS FEAR**

• •

**JONAH AND THE WHALE:
SELFISH SALVATION**

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**NOAH AND THE FLOOD:
THE HOLY EXCEPTION**



CHILDHOOD BIBLE STORIES
[OLD TESTAMENT]



More LIFE resources available at
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DAVID AND GOLIATH: WHAT DO YOU TRUST IN?



What is something you often put your trust in?

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

1 Samuel 17:32-50
Proverbs 3:5-6

What is one practical thing you are going to do
this week that will help you to trust in God rather
than something else?

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PHARAOH: AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH



What is something that reminds you of God's
power and Kingship?

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

Exodus 7-12
Matthew 5:3
Luke 6:46

How will you acknowledge God is King this week?


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NOTES

Who will you share Jesus with this week?

Jonah 3:3-4:4
Romans 3:23-24

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

Is there someone who you think doesn't deserve to be saved?


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JONAH AND THE WHALE:
SELFISH SALVATION

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What is one thing you want to stop or start doing this week to live as the 'holy exception'?

Genesis 6:5-22

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

How do you feel about how the world is going?


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NOAH AND THE FLOOD:
THE HOLY EXCEPTION

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What is one thing you will do this week to fear God rather than men?

Joshua 2:1-20
Joshua 6:1-25
Psalm 33:8

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

What are fearful of?


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JERICHO AND RAHAB:
RIGHTEOUS FEAR

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DAVID AND GOLIATH: WHAT DO YOU TRUST IN?

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summary

David and Goliath, the story of the little guy triumphing over the big guy - at least this is what popular culture tells us.

But is that all there is to the story?

This guide looks at who David and Goliath place their trust in and where we should place our trust, hope and strength.



you will need

If you do activity 3 in "Involve":

- 1/2 an A4 piece of paper for each person in your group
- A pen for each person in your group

keep in mind

Be aware of referring to sins or issues in our life as the "giant" or "Goliath" in our life. We can't draw seamless parallels between David's story and our lives.



CONNECT



To help your group connect on a relaxed level, spend some time discussing the following:

- » Would you rather have a giraffe's neck or an elephant's trunk?
- » What was your favourite toy as a child?
- » What song or album can you not get enough of at the moment?

DISCUSS



- » What do you think it means to "put your trust in" something?
- » What are some things that people today put their trust in?
- » Have you ever put your trust in something/someone and been let down? What happened? How did it make you feel?

read the bible

In 1 Samuel we read a story about a boy named David. His people (God's people) were being bullied by a giant named Goliath. Everyone was terrified of him. No-one was prepared to fight him. Until David came along...



Ask a volunteer in your group to read:

1 Samuel 17:32-50

(Questions for this passage are on the next page)



Your group members might find The Message paraphrase helpful.



- » Which line stands out to you most? Why?
- » David is small and hasn't got a proper weapon or armour on. If you were Goliath what do you think you would you have been thinking as David came out to fight you?
- » What if you were David? How would you have felt stepping out in front of Goliath? What kind of weapons would you like to have had to protect yourself?
- » Read verse 45 out loud again. Who do you think David was trusting in? Why do you think he was so confident in God?



Ask a volunteer to read:

Proverbs 3:5-6

- » What do you think this verse is saying?
- » What does it mean when it says to not 'lean on your own understanding'?
- » Does taking precautions (like wearing a seatbelt or studying for exams) mean we are not trusting in God?
- » Do you think God tells people to do scary or seemingly crazy things like this today? Why/why not?
- » What is one thing that you really want to become or achieve in your life? Would you say that you are trusting in God with it?



INVOLVE



Choose ONE of the following activities for your group:

- » Activity 1 - Trust Scenarios Brainstorm
- » Activity 2 - Sharing and Praying for each other.
- » Activity 3 - 'What do I trust in?' Exercise

activity 1

For each of the following scenarios, brainstorm ways that you could:

Trust in God

OR

Trust in Yourself



Encourage your group to wrestle with the answers to these questions. The answers will not be black and white. The exercise is designed to equip your young people to trust God whilst still using the wisdom and resources He has given them.

- » You're embarrassed or worried that you've never had a boyfriend/girlfriend.
- » You think God wants you to become a Salvation Army Officer but would feel safer getting a high-paid job.
- » You have important exams coming up. You've studied super hard but are so stressed about failing that you can't sleep.
- » You feel confident that God has called you to go on a Christian mission trip but you're really scared.
- » You become sick and the doctors don't know what is wrong with you.
- » Your parents are getting separated and you really want your family to stay together.



activity 2

Tell the group that you are going to have a time of sharing and praying for each other.

Go around the group and give each member an opportunity to share with the group a situation in their life where they are struggling to trust God.

Encourage the person sharing to name the thing/person etc that they are trusting in more than God so that the prayers for one another can be specific.



It can be good to lead by example and share first as a leader to help people feel comfortable and open up to one another.



Make sure you remind the group that this is a safe space for sharing and we need to love and care for one another.



Make a mental note (and later a physical note) of these so you can follow up your group well during the week after your group has met.



You could play some music that talks about God being mighty whilst your group is brainstorming. Some suggested songs are:

Mighty to Save (Hillsong)

Mighty is our God (Studio Musicians)

Indescribable (Chris Tomlin)

Jesus is the Mighty, Mighty King (Colin Buchanan)

activity 3

Have each member of your group share one thing that they are trusting in more than God. Get them to each write it down on a piece of paper.

To symbolise not trusting in this anymore you can do one of the following

- » Tear up the paper into little shreds
- » Burn the paper (beware of fire hazards and smoke alarms and always have a bucket of water/hose nearby)
- » Scrunch up the paper and throw it into a bin

As each person destroys the paper on which they have written their item have another group member pray for them. You may want to lay hands on them as you pray for them.



Ensure that your group members are comfortable with the laying on of hands before you do this.



APPLY



After today's LIFE group, what is one thing that you would like to change in your life?

OR

What is one practical thing you are going to do this week that will help you to trust in God rather than in something else?



LEADERS NOTES

- David was a special individual in God's plan for salvation history. He was God's anointed King over Israel (1 Samuel 16:6-13) and at this point in time that hasn't come to be yet. So as David goes out to battle he knows that God's promise of kingship will come true and therefore God will protect and help David in this situation. This is why he so fearlessly trusts God at this point.
- We can't claim that God needs to physically protect us in every situation. But we can have assurance that if we are one of God's family, He will protect us in the spiritual sense and bring us to his eternal kingdom.

FOLLOW UP

About 3 days after your group has met, follow up all your group members and encourage them about what they learnt in your LIFE group. You could ask them:

How have you gone this week at trusting in God over and above anything else in this life?
(You could specifically ask about the thing they mentioned was what they trusted in over God)



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PHARAOH: AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH

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summary

You've probably heard of the 10 plagues of Egypt. This week we are going to look at the character of Pharaoh.

Pharaoh had a huge amount of power. He was the King of the entire known world!

But God had an inconvenient truth for him:
Pharaoh wasn't the biggest king out there. God was!
We also need to know this, and live accordingly



you will need

- Print & cut out *appendix 1*

If you do activity 1 in "Involve"

- A YouTube Clip of a song about God's greatness and Kingship (see Leaders Notes for suggestions)
OR ask group members to bring their acoustic musical instruments (if they play!)

If you do activity 2 in "Involve"

- A box of random objects (if you do not have access to nature or standard household items)

keep in mind

The story of the 10 plagues spans 6 chapters of Exodus (chapters 7-12). We will dip in and out of these passages to get an overall idea of the story. As a leader it can be helpful to have read the entire story beforehand.



CONNECT



To help your group connect on a relaxed level, spend some time discussing the following:

- » What animal creeps you out the most?
- » What is your favourite/least favourite season of the year? Why?
- » Share with the group the best thing that happened to you this week?

INVOLVE



Choose ONE of the following activities for your group:

- » Activity 1 - Sing a Worship Song
- » Activity 2 - Objects about God's Power

activity 1

Sing a worship song together that acknowledges God's greatness and Kingship.
(See leader's notes for song suggestions).



You could sing along to the YouTube clip, sing a Capella or encourage any musicians in your group to bring along an acoustic instrument.



activity 2

Give your group 10 minutes to find and bring back an object that says something to them about God's power and Kingship. Encourage them that there are no wrong answers.



If possible, it would be great to give them time to explore outdoors.

If you are in a space where there are no random objects, bring along an assortment of random items for the group to select from.

Some group members will need a couple of examples to get them thinking. (See below for some examples).

When everyone gets back, give each person a chance share which object they chose and why (see examples of objects on the next page).

Here are some examples for objects that remind us of God's power and Kingship:

Leaves = If God did not send rain they would die.

Medicine = When medicine fails God can still heal.

Photo-frame = God's power has saved us and made us part of His family.

Outside = God's vastness and how big He is.

Mobile Phone = God is powerful enough to hear us when we pray to him at any time.

Paintings/Books = God is powerful to have created us different and unique.

Light Globe = God is the Light which dispels the darkness.

Glasses = God is so powerful that He is all-seeing and knows everything that is happening.

Dirt = God is so powerful that He formed man out of the dirt of the earth.

Fruit = God powerfully works to bring about spiritual fruit in us.



DISCUSS



- » Who do you think the most powerful people on earth are?
- » Do you think their power makes it harder or easier for them to worship God? Why?
- » In the Western World we are pretty powerful. When we get sick, we can go to the doctors and get medicine to make us better; when we are hungry we can go to the fridge or the shop to get food. In what ways are you powerful? (What decisions do you have power to make? What problems do you have power to fix?)
- » Do you think it was easier for people to worship and rely on God in the 'olden days' when technology and medicine were less advanced? Why/Why not?
- » Do you think it's easier for people who live in poverty to worship and rely on God than it is for those of us who live in wealthier societies? Why/why not?
- » **Matthew 5:3 (MSG)** says: "You're blessed when you're at the end of your rope. With less of you there's more of God and his rule." What do you think this means? Does it match your experience? How?

In the Old Testament we read about an incredibly powerful man named Pharaoh. God wanted to reveal to him an inconvenient truth - he was not the greatest King - God was. God shows this to Pharaoh in a series of plagues.

Have each group member grab one or two of the cut out verses from the pile in the middle of the group. (Verses can be found in *appendix 1*)

Read out the plagues in order 1-10.

- » How do you think you would have felt if you were Pharaoh and these plagues were happening? What do you think you would have done? (See leaders notes for explanation of "Hardening Your Heart").
- » Pharaoh only turned to God when he was desperate. Can you relate to this? Does God get more attention from you when things are good or bad? Why do you think this is? How do you think God feels when we relate to him like this?



If you have some visual learners in your group you might like to show them the image of the cycle from *appendix 1* and ask them if they ever get caught in a similar cycle.



read the bible



Ask a volunteer in your group to read:

Exodus 7:5

Exodus 9:14-16

According to these verses, God sent the plagues to show everyone in Egypt that the whole world and all people come under his authority, even King Pharaoh. Have you ever experienced something that reminded you that no one is as powerful as God? What happened?



Ask a volunteer to read aloud:

Luke 6:46

What do you think Jesus means when He asks this question?
What is one area in which you are not currently treating God as your Lord and King?

APPLY



What is one thing that you will change in your life this week to acknowledge that God is King?



Pray for each other about the thing you shared.



LEADERS NOTES

- Some worship songs that acknowledge God as King include:
 - "We Fall Down" (Chris Tomlin)
 - "How Great is Our God" (Chris Tomlin)
 - "Shout to The Lord" (Darlene Zschech)
 - Salvation Army Song Book #156 "Crown Him with Many Crowns"
- 'Hardening our heart' can mean that we reject God's authority over our life. It can be shown by us purposefully rejecting Him, or by us simply ignoring Him or pushing Him to the side.
- Why do bad things happen? Why do I suffer? Sometimes God can be using a bad situation to get our attention, but sometimes bad things can simply happen to us because we live in a sinful and broken world.
- A helpful passage on this topic is the disaster of the "Tower of Siloam" (**Luke 13:4**) when Jesus explains that this disaster was not as a result of their sin.
- These are a few helpful questions to ask when you are suffering:
 - How can this situation help me understand more about Christ, or become more like Him? With the help of the Holy Spirit we can learn to respond as Jesus did (**Hebrews 4:15-16**). We can also be refined and shaped to be more like our Saviour through these situations (**Romans 8:29**) and to develop characteristics that God wants to see in us – patience, obedience, trust in God, gratefulness for what I do have, compassion for others etc.
 - How can this situation produce humility in me, or draw my attention to a way that I am ignoring or disobeying God? If you are convicted of sin by the Holy Spirit then remember God loves it when His children repent and come to Him for forgiveness and He will cleanse us (1 John 1:9).



FOLLOW UP

About 3 days after your group has met, follow up all your group members and encourage them about what they learnt in your LIFE group. You could ask them:

What is one thing in your life that you have changed this week to acknowledge that God is King?



APPENDIX 1



1st plague – Exodus 7:20-21

Moses and Aaron did as the LORD commanded. In the sight of Pharaoh and in the sight of his servants he lifted up the staff and struck the water in the Nile, and all the water in the Nile turned into blood. And the fish in the Nile died, and the Nile stank, so that the Egyptians could not drink water from the Nile. There was blood throughout all the land of Egypt.

2nd plague – Exodus 8:5-6

And the LORD said to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Stretch out your hand with your staff over the rivers, over the canals and over the pools, and make frogs come up on the land of Egypt!'" So Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt, and the frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt.

3rd plague – Exodus 8:16-17

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Stretch out your staff and strike the dust of the earth, so that it may become gnats in all the land of Egypt.'" And they did so. Aaron stretched out his hand with his staff and struck the dust of the earth, and there were gnats on man and beast. All the dust of the earth became gnats in all the land of Egypt.

4th plague – Exodus 8:24

And the LORD did so. There came great swarms of flies into the house of Pharaoh and into his servants' houses. Throughout all the land of Egypt the land was ruined by the swarms of flies.

5th plague – Exodus 9:5-6

And the LORD set a time, saying, "Tomorrow the LORD will do this thing in the land." And the next day the LORD did this thing. All the livestock of the Egyptians died, but not one of the livestock of the people of Israel died.

6th plague – Exodus 9:8-10

And the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "Take handfuls of soot from the kiln, and let Moses throw them in the air in the sight of Pharaoh. It shall become fine dust over all the land of Egypt, and become boils breaking out in sores on man and beast throughout all the land of Egypt." So they took soot from the kiln and stood before Pharaoh. And Moses threw it in the air, and it became boils breaking out in sores on man and beast.



APPENDIX 1



7th plague – Exodus 9:22-25

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward heaven, so that there may be hail in all the land of Egypt, on man and beast and every plant of the field, in the land of Egypt." Then Moses stretched out his staff toward heaven, and the LORD sent thunder and hail, and fire ran down to the earth. And the LORD rained hail upon the land of Egypt. There was hail and fire flashing continually in the midst of the hail, very heavy hail, such as had never been in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation. The hail struck down everything that was in the field in all the land of Egypt, both man and beast. And the hail struck down every plant of the field and broke every tree of the field.

8th plague – Exodus 10:13-15

So Moses stretched out his staff over the land of Egypt, and the LORD brought an east wind upon the land all that day and all that night. When it was morning, the east wind had brought the locusts. The locusts came up over all the land of Egypt and settled on the whole country of Egypt, such a dense swarm of locusts as had never been before, nor ever will be again. They covered the face of the whole land, so that the land was darkened, and they ate all the plants in the land and all the fruit of the trees that the hail had left. Not a green thing remained, neither tree nor plant of the field, through all the land of Egypt.

9th plague – Exodus 10:21-23

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, a darkness to be felt." So Moses stretched out his hand toward heaven, and there was pitch darkness in all the land of Egypt three days. They did not see one another, nor did anyone rise from his place for three days, but all the people of Israel had light where they lived.

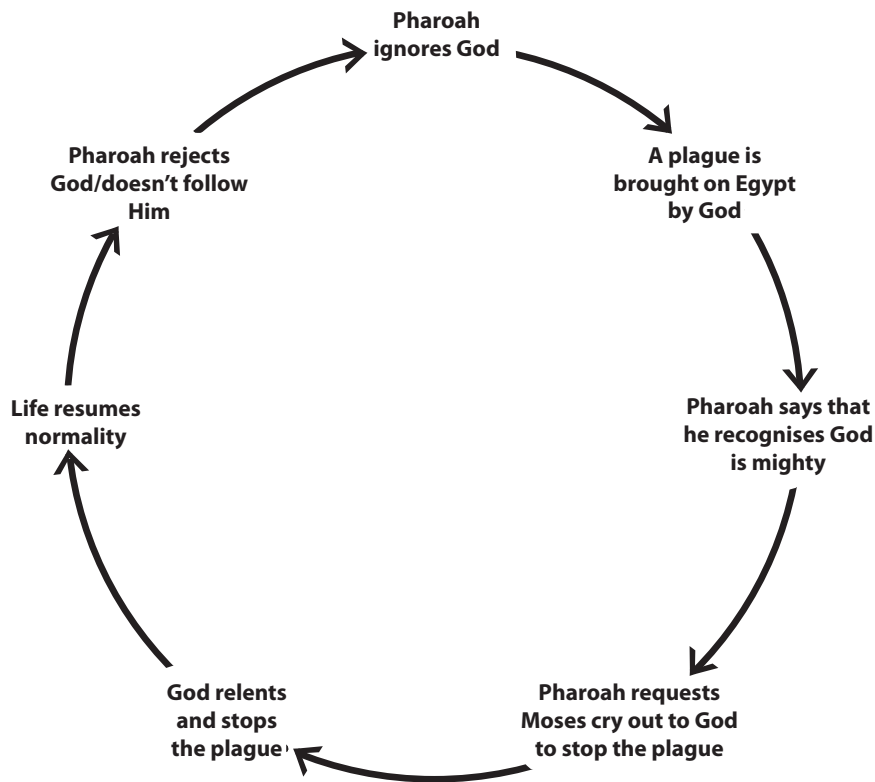
10th plague – Exodus 12:29-30

At midnight the LORD struck down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of the livestock. And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he and all his servants and all the Egyptians. And there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was not a house where someone was not dead.



APPENDIX 2

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JERICO AND RAHAB: RIGHTEOUS FEAR

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summary

If you grew up going to Sunday School you might remember singing: "Joshua won the battle of Jericho, and the walls came tumbling down."

This week, we are going to revisit this story but we are going to focus on a woman called Rahab. Rahab shows us what it looks like to have a righteous fear of God.

We are going to examine how she lived this out and how we can do the same in our own lives.



you will need

- 7 printed copies of *appendix 1* if you are going to read the story as a script
- Internet to watch a youtube clip
"BBC Chronicles of Narnia: LWW - Chapter 3/6 Part 2/3"

If you do activity 1 in "Involve":

- Print out one copy of *appendix 2* and cut out the characteristics of God.

keep in mind

It is helpful to know that 'fear' is not always meant in the negative way we use it these days. There is a clear explanation of this in this week's Leader's Notes.



CONNECT



To help your group connect on a relaxed level, spend some time discussing the following:

- » Which city in the world would you most like to visit? Why this place?
- » Share with you group a funny word you like saying, or a favourite saying you like to use.
- » Which animal do you find the scariest?

DISCUSS



- » How would you explain the word 'fear' to someone who doesn't know what the word means?
- » What do you think the top 5 fears in Australia are? (Answers – 1. Heights 2. Flying 3. Enclosed spaces 4. Snakes 5. Needles)
- » Why do you think people fear these things?
- » Have you ever heard the phrase 'fear of God'? Where did you hear it? What did you think of when you first heard it?

In the Bible 'fearing God' is referred to as a good thing and is mentioned more than 100 times.



Ask a volunteer to read aloud:

Psalm 33:8 (NIV)

"Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the people of the world revere him".



- » Do you think 'fearing God' means that we should see God as mean and intimidating? If no, what else could this verse mean?
- » Do you think fear is always a bad thing? Is there such a thing as "good fear" or "righteous fear"?
- » What could a healthy fear of God look like?

This week we are going to look at a woman who feared God – in a good way!

read the bible

Option 1:

If you would like to involve more members of your group in the Bible reading you can use the passage in *appendix 1* that has been divided up into characters.

You'll need 7 volunteers for this: Narrator, Joshua, Person from Jericho, Soldier, Rahab, 2 x spies from Israel.

Option 2:



Ask a group member to read:

Joshua 2:1-20



The Message paraphrase provides a helpful retelling of this story.

- » By hiding the spies at her house Rahab risked being killed by the authorities. Surely she would have been afraid that her lying would result in her family being harmed! Why do you think she didn't just hand the spies over to the King of Jericho?
- » Rahab says: "I know that the LORD has given Israel this land. Everyone shakes with fear because of you." (Joshua 2:9) How did Rahab's fear of God affect her behaviour?
- » Rahab made the decisions she did because she feared God more than people. Can you think of one example of when your behaviour was affected by a fear of people? Can you think of one example of when your behaviour was affected by a fear of God?



In C.S. Lewis' Narnia series the character Aslan the lion represents Jesus. Watch this Youtube clip together. In this scene Mr and Mrs Beaver describe Aslan to the children.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yqSeKiO_lpl&index=8&list=PL300D251591052D34

Starting at: 3.53min and stopping at 4.59

- » Does this clip from "The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe" help you understand having a good fear of God? How does it help? (Leaders: we want to get at the idea that it is good to fear God because of who He is.)

Let's fast forward a few chapters to **Joshua 6**. Israel (God's people) have crossed over into the land that God has promised to them and they are camping on the banks of the Jordan River, looking towards the city of Jericho.



Ask volunteers to read aloud:
Joshua 6:1-25



Each person in the group could read 5 verses each.

- » The Israelite's were going in to battle with a dangerous opponent but God told them to simply march around the wall of the city and blow their trumpets and shout. How would you have felt going in to battle with this kind of strategy?
- » Do you think it would have been hard as an Israelite to trust in God and trust in His seemingly bizarre instructions? Why/why not? What do you think you would have done in their shoes?
- » Joshua and the spies keep their promise to Rahab. When the city is destroyed, she and her family are kept safe. Fearing God more than people paid off! Often fearing people seems easier in the short term. At the end of our lives do you think we will wish we feared God more or feared people more? Why?



INVOLVE



Choose ONE of the following activities for your group:

- » Activity 1 - Choose a Characteristic
- » Activity 2 - Sharing and Praying

activity 1

Print and cut out the characteristics (*appendix 1*) and scatter them on the table/floor.

Ask each group member to pick up a characteristic and share with the group how knowing this about God helps them to have a righteous fear of Him.

activity 2

Ask each group member to share one place/time in their lives where/when they struggle to fear God rather than people.

Have every person in the group pray for the person on their left about the thing they shared.

APPLY



Each morning pray that God will help you to fear Him rather than men.



LEADERS NOTES

"Scripture is full of examples of how fearing God is a positive rather than a negative thing. For example in **Genesis 42:18**, Joseph wins his brothers' trust when he declares he is a God-fearing man.

It was because the midwives feared God that they obeyed him instead of the authorities by sparing the Hebrew babies (**Exodus 1:17**). Pharaoh brought disaster on his nation because he did not fear God (**Exodus 9:29-31**). Moses chose leaders to help him on the basis that they feared God and wouldn't take bribes (**Exodus 18:21**) and told the Hebrews that God met with them in a terrifying display of his power so that they wouldn't sin (**Exodus 20:20**).

The Mosaic Law cites fear of God as a reason to treat the disabled and elderly well (**Leviticus 19:14, 32**). And lest you think this is only an Old Testament idea, note that Jesus states this stronger than anyone when he says, "Don't be afraid of those who want to kill your body; they cannot touch your soul. Fear only God, who can destroy both soul and body in hell" (**Matthew 10:28**). And Paul says to work toward complete holiness because we fear God (**2 Corinthians 7:1**)."

Excerpt taken from <http://www.christianitytoday.com/biblestudies/bible-answers/spirituallife/what-does-it-mean-to-fear-god.html>

FOLLOW UP

About 3 days after your group has met, follow up all your group members and encourage them about what they learnt in your LIFE group. You could also ask them:

How have you been challenged
by Rahab's story this week?



APPENDIX 1



Joshua 2: 1-20 (CEV)

- NARRATOR: Joshua chose two men as spies and sent them from their camp at Acacia with these instructions:
- JOSHUA: Go across the river and find out as much as you can about the whole region, especially about the town of Jericho.
- NARRATOR: The two spies left the Israelite camp at Acacia and went to Jericho, where they decided to spend the night at the house of a prostitute named Rahab. But someone found out about them and told the king of Jericho,
- MEN FROM JERICO: Some Israelite men came here tonight, and they are spies.
- NARRATOR: So the king sent soldiers to Rahab's house to arrest the spies. Meanwhile, Rahab had taken the men up to the flat roof of her house and had hidden them under some piles of flax plants that she had put there to dry. The soldiers came to her door and demanded,
- SOLDIER: Let us have the men who are staying at your house. They are spies.
- NARRATOR: She answered,
- RAHAB: Some men did come to my house, but I didn't know where they had come from. They left about sunset, just before it was time to close the town gate. I don't know where they were going, but if you hurry, maybe you can catch them."
- NARRATOR: The guards at the town gate let the soldiers leave Jericho, but they closed the gate again as soon as the soldiers went through. Then the soldiers headed toward the Jordan River to look for the spies at the place where people cross the river. Rahab went back up to her roof. The spies were still awake, so she told them:
- RAHAB: I know that the LORD has given Israel this land. Everyone shakes with fear because of you. We heard how the LORD dried up the Red Sea so you could leave Egypt. And we heard how you destroyed Sihon and Og, those two Amorite kings east of the Jordan River. We know that the LORD your God rules heaven and earth, and we've lost our courage and our



APPENDIX 1

will to fight. Please promise me in the LORD's name that you will be as kind to my family as I have been to you. Do something to show that you won't let your people kill my father and mother and my brothers and sisters and their families.

SPIES: Rahab, if you keep quiet about what we're doing, we promise to be kind to you when the LORD gives us this land. We pray that the LORD will kill us if we don't keep our promise!

NARRATOR: Rahab's house was built into the town wall, and one of the windows in her house faced outside the wall. She gave the spies a rope, showed them the window, and said, "Use this rope to let yourselves down to the ground outside the wall. Then hide in the hills. The men who are looking for you won't be able to find you there. They'll give up and come back after a few days, and you can be on your way."

NARRATOR: The spies said:

SPIES: You made us promise to let you and your family live. We will keep our promise, but you can't tell anyone why we were here. You must tie this red rope on your window when we attack, and your father and mother, your brothers, and everyone else in your family must be here with you. We'll take the blame if anyone who stays in this house gets hurt. But anyone who leaves your house will be killed, and it won't be our fault.



APPENDIX 2

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STRONG

SAVIOUR

POWERFUL

JUST

FAITHFUL

THE WAY

HOLY

ETERNAL

MIGHTY

WISE



APPENDIX 2

PAGE 2 OF 2



MERCIFUL

THE ONLY GOD

RIGHTEOUS

CREATOR

ALL SEEING

UNCHANGING

JUDGE



4/5

JONAH AND THE WHALE: SELFISH SALVATION

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summary

Lots of saving takes place in the story of Jonah and the Whale. Jonah gets saved from a whale. More than 120 000 people are saved from death and a whole heap of animals are saved too!

Despite being saved by God himself, Jonah does not want to see God save the people of Nineveh.

He doesn't think they deserve it.

Do you think that the good news of God's salvation is for everyone? Or are there people who you've decided don't deserve it?



you will need

- And A4 piece of paper for each member of your group
- Pens and textas for each member to write with

keep in mind

It can be quite confronting to realise that you have been judgmental of others. Be ready to pastorally care for people in your group, who may be struggling with this.



CONNECT



To help your group connect on a relaxed level, spend some time discussing the following:

- » If you could rename yourself, what would your first name and middle name be?
- » What is your favourite TV show at the moment?
- » What is something the group can be praying for you?

DISCUSS



Give each group member a copy of the comic strip (*appendix 1*).

Read through the comic together.



Encourage your group to use expressive funny voices & sound effects

God specifically tells Jonah to go to Nineveh and tell the people to turn to God for salvation but he defies God's instruction, running in the opposite direction.

- » Have you ever ignored a prompting from God to tell someone about Jesus? What happened?



read the bible



Ask a volunteer to read:

Jonah 3:3-4:4

- » Jonah does eventually obey God and warn the people of Nineveh to repent, but when God saves them Jonah gets angry. What do you think of Jonah's reaction? Do you think he has a right to be angry?
- » Have you ever felt angry when someone has been forgiven? What made you feel angry? Do you think it was reasonable to feel that way?
- » Are there any people who you think God shouldn't save? Or do you think some people are more deserving of salvation than others? Why/Why not?



Ask volunteers to read:

Ecclesiastes 7:20 from the Old Testament

Romans 3:23-24 from the New Testament

- » Based on these verses, who deserves Jesus' salvation?



Ask volunteers to read:

Jonah 4:4-10

- » What do you think God was trying to show Jonah by giving him the vine and then taking it away the next day?



God uses the vine to teach Jonah that God is the one in control, He made everything, he makes everything function (like the vine growing) and he commands everything (like the worm to eat and the wind and sun to scorch the vine). God is showing Jonah, that he has no right to decide who is deserving of salvation and who isn't).

Jonah is angry when the plant dies and yet is not distressed about 120, 000 people in Nineveh who are potentially about to be wiped out.

- » Do you feel like you have any of your priorities mixed up at when it comes to your family or friends being saved? Can you give an example of this?



INVOLVE



Choose ONE or BOTH of the following activities depending on your group's timings.

- » Activity 1 - Sharing Salvation with others
- » Activity 2 - Response Prayer

activity 1

Give your group an opportunity to confess times they have:

- » Thought that people were undeserving of salvation or
- » Run from God's prompting to share the gospel with people.

They could do this activity in pairs or around the circle with the whole group.

When they finish, assure your group that God loves to forgive and restore those who come to him and ask for His forgiveness and help.




Encourage them to:

- Confess the situation
- Repent of their thoughts and actions in this situation
- Pray that God would renew them and help them to think more like God





activity 2

 Read Romans 3:23-24 out loud again.

None of us deserve to be saved, but the good news is that our salvation has nothing to do with us or how "good" we've lived our lives... rather it has EVERYTHING to do with Jesus and we are saved only because He is completely perfect and righteous!

Have you group write down a prayer to God in response to this verse and the story of Jonah.
If your group members don't enjoy writing you could allow them to draw, decorate or create their prayer in a different way.

-  Their prayers may have elements of reflection, confession, thankfulness and asking for help.
-  Be available to help your group members write a prayer if they request your help.



APPLY



Who is one person that you will commit to sharing Jesus with this week?

AND/OR

What is one thing you will do differently as a result of what we've talked about this week?

FOLLOW UP

About 3 days after your group has met, follow up all your group members and encourage them about what they learnt in your LIFE group.
You could also ask them:

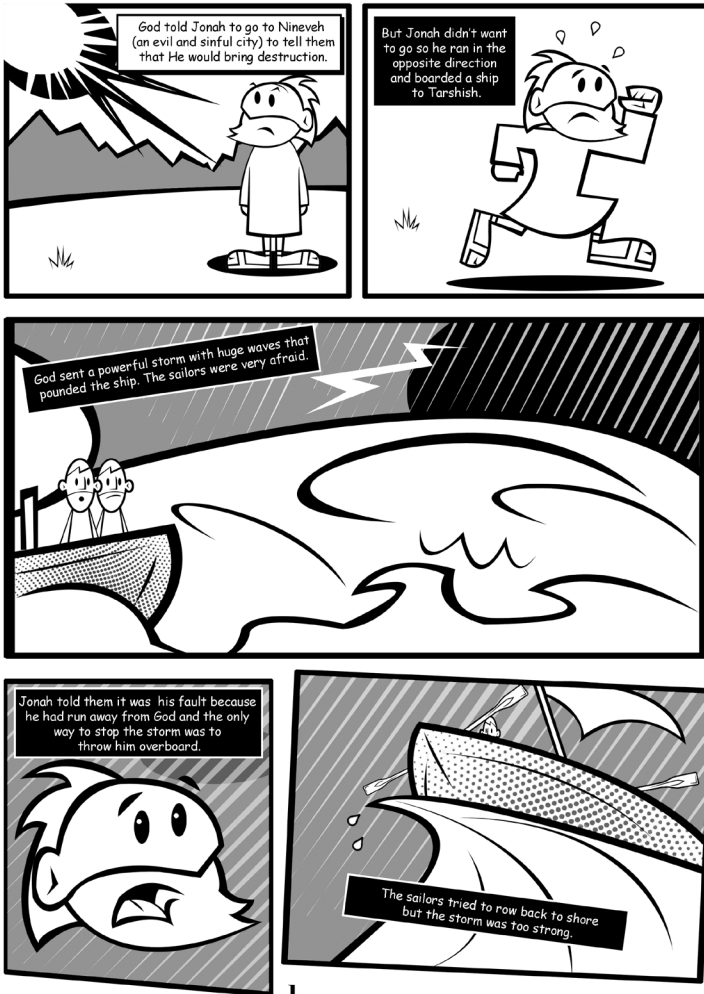
Who have you shared your
salvation with this week?



APPENDIX 1

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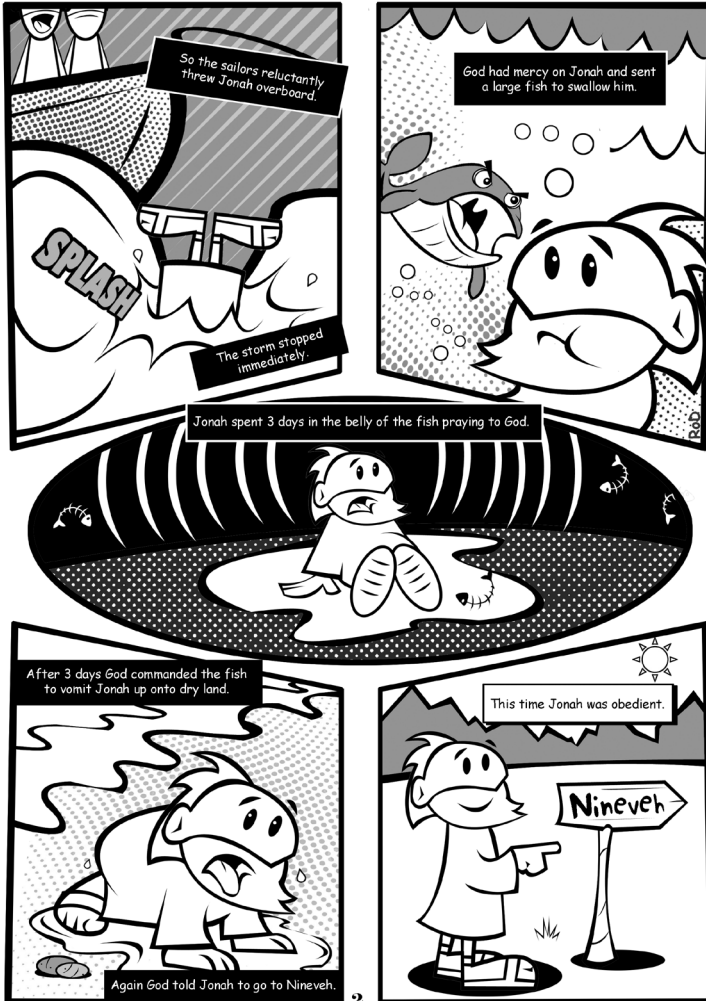
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APPENDIX 1

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5/5

NOAH AND THE FLOOD: THE HOLY EXCEPTION

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summary

Have you ever heard the story of Noah and the Ark? Maybe you remember colouring in rainbows or singing songs about animals going in 'two by two'.

In a world full of sin, Noah stood firm and lived his life God's way. He lived his life as the Holy Exception.

This week we are going to explore how we can do the same.



you will need

If you do activity 1 in "Involve":

- A print out of the table from *appendix 1* for each member OR 1 large piece of butcher's paper with your own table drawn onto it
- Enough pens or textas for your group to have a writing implement each

If you do activity 2 in "Involve":

- 2 large pieces of butchers paper
- At least 1 pen or texta for each member of your group to brainstorm with

If you do activity 3 in "Involve":

- A comfy chair or bean bag

keep in mind

There are lots of questions in this guide. As with all our LIFE guides they are just that - a guide. You might want to pick and choose questions that you think will be helpful for your group.



CONNECT



To help your group connect on a relaxed level, spend some time discussing the following:

- » What is your favourite colour? Is there a specific feeling or mood this colour can put you in? Or a specific thing this colour reminds you of?
- » What is the funniest thing someone has said to you recently?
- » What is one thing you have been thankful to God for recently?



You could spend some time as a group thanking God in prayer for these things.

DISCUSS



read the bible



Ask some volunteers from your group to read aloud:

Genesis 6:5-22



You could have them read a few verses each and pass onto the next person.

Which verse stands out to you the most? Why?

- » How would you describe God's feelings about the way the world has been going?
- » Why do you think God cared so much about how people acted or thought?
- » Do you think He cares about your thoughts and actions? Why/why not?



- » In verse 8 we read that while the whole world rebelled against and ignored God, Noah pleased God. He was the "holy exception". (Depending on which translation you read Noah is described as 'righteous', 'faithful', 'devoted' and 'blameless' in verse 8-9). How do you think Noah managed to stay focused on pleasing God when everyone around him was sinning?
- » Who is someone you look up to as living a holy life for God? What does their life look like? How do you think they keep living for God?
- » Have you ever been in a situation where the easiest and most popular thing to do was the wrong thing? Can you give an example? How did you feel in that situation?
- » In today's world do you think it is easy to live a life devoted to God? Why/why not? What makes it hard?
- » Do you find it easier to live a holy life when around your friends or around strangers? Why?
- » Have you ever felt like living God's way makes you look like you are crazy? Can you give an example?
- » In verse 22 we read that: "Noah did everything just as God commanded him". Do you ever find yourself wanting to partially obey God or obey but not fully?
- » What is one practical thing that has helped you to live your life God's way despite what others are thinking or doing?

further questions for established Christians



We want to challenge those in our group with deeper thinking and discussion about deep topics. If your group is mature these questions might be helpful, or you could individually challenge members of your group.

- » God clearly feels very passionately about His people living holy lives! Do you think it was reasonable for God to "blot out" all the people who were being evil? Why/why not?



Some members may struggle to cope with God wiping out the world. Hear their concerns and comfort them. Remind them that God is good. Also remind them that God is the one who created the whole world and as its Creator He has every right to choose what happens to His creation.

- » Do you think God still punishes people who ignore him or rebel against Him today? If yes – In what way?



INVOLVE



Choose ONE or ALL of the following activities depending on your group's timings.

- » Activity 1 - Then & Now
- » Activity 2 - "How to live for God" Brainstorm Exercise
- » Activity 3 - Hot Seat

activity 1

Then & Now

Fill out the table below as a group.
Discuss with your group different things that come up as you fill out the boxes.



You could print the A4 version out from *appendix 1* and give one to each group member or draw up your own large table on butcher's paper and do the activity as a group.

activity 2

As a group, brainstorm times when it is hard to live God's way.

Some examples to help your group get thinking if they are stuck:

- » My sporting team often gets into verbal and physical fights.
- » My friends all drink alcohol excessively.
- » Everyone I know has had sex with their girlfriend/boyfriend.
- » There is so much gossip in my workplace!
- » Everyone in my family is involved in petty crime.

(Activity continued on the next page)



Now as a group, brainstorm practical things you can do to stand firm and live for God regardless of the situation.

For example:

- » Spend more time around people who will influence you positively.
- » Memorise Scripture verses that will strengthen you.
- » Openly and boldly tell you friends what you have decided to do/not to do and ask them to respect your decision.
- » Have an exit strategy in place so that you can remove yourself from situations where you will feel tempted to sin.
- » Pray every single morning that the Holy Spirit would fill you and lead you to live for Jesus.

activity 3

Place a 'hot seat' (beanbag or comfy chair) in the centre of the room and give each group member a turn sitting in it. Ask the person in the hot seat to share one thing they'd like prayer for and have the rest of the group gather around and pray for them.



If group members feel comfortable, it could be helpful for the group to lay hands on the person in the hot seat.



Try to normalise praying for one another out loud. While we would never recommend forcing people to pray out loud, encourage your group members to stretch beyond their comfort zone.

APPLY



What is one thing you want to stop or start doing this week to live as the 'holy exception'?



Write these down so that you can keep each other accountable next week.



FOLLOW UP

About 3 days after your group has met, follow up all your group members and encourage them about what they learnt in your LIFE group.
You could also ask them:

How have you gone with the
thing you said you wanted to stop
or start doing this week?
How can I pray for you?

*Try and include the actual thing
they mentioned in the group.*



APPENDIX 1



	Then (in Noah's time)	Now (for us)
The state of the world		
The way that God saved		
What living like the "Holy Exception" looked like		
How God shows mercy to people		





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