

AMAZING JOURNEY



WITH JESUS

Youth Guide for VeBS® 2002

Amazing Journey with Jesus

***"The LORD is good, a refuge in times of trouble.
He cares for those who trust in him."
—Nahum 1:7***

**A Youth Guide for use with
Cruisin' the Amazing Amazon™ VeBS®**

Written by Frieda Nossaman
Games by Rick Anthony

Cruisin' the Amazing Amazon™ A Jungle Journey to Discover Jesus™

Very exciting Bible School® Curriculum

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Amazing Journey with Jesus Youth Guide

For use with *Cruisin' the Amazing Amazon™* VeBS®

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INTRODUCTION

What Steps Are Your Students Taking?

The world is a crazy place for teens: school shootings, random violence, drug use, alcohol abuse, and attitudes toward casual sex. What's a teen to do?

All young people are on a journey and need survival skills to get through each day. Not all young people, however, have Jesus to guide them along the way. Their journeys are bound to be difficult because they're headed in the altogether wrong direction. *Amazing Journey with Jesus* helps your students look at ways they can live each day with Jesus as their guide. At the same time, your students will discover Jesus and see ways that He can influence their thoughts, decisions, and steps as they journey through each day with Him.

Each day you will lead your students in games, discussions, studies, and, finally, in an applicable challenge. All of these elements have been designed around the message for each session—the challenge to trust Jesus, instead of ourselves in times of trouble. *Amazing Journey with Jesus* uses the Active InReachOut system to assist you in an enjoyable and profitable teaching and learning experience.

What Is Active InReachOut?

Active InReachOut is a fun, interactive system based on high-energy games and small-group discussion. It challenges students to **Reach In** and deepen their own commitment to Jesus through personal Bible study and reflection. It is also a way to **Reach Out** and get them involved in leading their friends to Christ. With the Active InReachOut system, your students will belong and take ownership of their youth ministry as well as take the lead in inviting their friends into a relationship with Christ.

Why It Works

• It's Student-Led Evangelism

The best thing about the Active InReachOut system is that it mobilizes your greatest resource—your students. And student-led evangelism—one kid at a time—is the key to a successful program. *Amazing Journey with Jesus* lets your students take the lead in reaching out to their friends. The way the lessons are set up, your students may be the ones who end up telling their friends about Jesus, based on what you shared. This sense of shared responsibility can carry over to other ministries in your church where your students can make a difference.

• It's Small Group Relationships

Church can often mean boredom for your students. But with the Active InReachOut system, your students will play, compete, and discuss in ways other programs never touch. By dividing your students into Extreme Teams (*X-Teams—see next page for more information*) for both the games and session times, your X-Teams will build relationships that are open, accepting, and committed.

• It's Faith-Building

Face it, not every student in your ministry was born and raised in church. But you also have several students who seem to know a lot about being a Christian. So what can you do? You can use the Active InReachOut system to engage students of all faith levels. For example, an X-Team of mostly visitors might focus its discussion time on what it means to accept Jesus Christ as Savior and how to have a personal relationship with Him. But an X-Team of core church attendees might focus its discussion time on the Extra Study Options and what each team member needs to do to take “the next step” in his or her walk with

Christ. A note about the Extra Study Options: photocopy these resources and give them to your students who are ready to examine some of the deeper issues brought up in the sessions. You can discuss them as a group or the students can use them for personal Bible study at home. Day Five of *Amazing Journey with Jesus* is specifically geared around a discussion of Jesus as our Rescuer. Take special advantage of this awesome opportunity to invite your students to accept Jesus Christ to be their Lord, Savior, and ultimately, Rescuer.

How the Sessions Work

There are four steps in each Session:

- 1) Opener.** This is the first activity after the Crazy Comp tournament. It's designed to introduce the message topic and ease the transition from the high energy games. This first activity will get your students thinking about how they can discover Jesus, their true guide through life. A different topic will be covered in each session, but all sessions will tie into our key verse, Nahum 1:7.
- 2) Table Talk.** Using reproducible Table Talk resources, your students will start discussing in their X-Teams about how they can take the journey of life with Jesus as their guide.
- 3) Message.** A creative, engaging way to convey the truth of God's Word in ways students will understand. From drama to discussion to interactive storytelling, your students will get the Bible. Really get it.
- 4) Challenge.** The final step of the session asks students to let the truth they have learned change their hearts and help them live with Jesus as their guide. More than just a list of do's and don'ts, the Challenge step gives students the opportunity to change from the inside out. It helps them put their faith into courageous action.

What Is an X-Team?

Ideally, each Extreme Team (*X-Team*) is made of four to six core students and the visitors these students invite. If possible, team members should already be friends or at least know each other. Two things make X-Teams work:

- **The Leader:** The ideal X-Team leader is an adult who has the respect of the students in his or her group, a teachable and committed heart before God, and an ability to help students work through important spiritual decisions. In some cases, spiritually mature students may also make good leaders.
- **Team Identity:** Teams need names, colors, and a place to sit together during the lesson—café-style circle tables work best. Encourage X-Team leaders to find creative ways to build team identity. For example, have them wear team colors, make a banner, create a team cheer, decorate team tables uniquely each day, and so on. Award bonus points for every display of team spirit. Visitors will feel “at home” much more quickly when they connect with a team and an identity.

How to Run the “Crazy Comp” Tournament

You know that games are one of the most effective ways to introduce teens to your group and set the stage for deeper X-Team relationships. All of the games are written so a number of X-Teams can compete at once. We recommend that you keep track of cumulative team scores and at the end of each round of the Crazy Comp tournament, total the team points and announce team standings. At the end of the week, award an impressive prize package (for example, movie coupons or gift certificates) to the team with the most points. Be prepared with consolation prizes for the other teams. But remember, handing out points doesn't cost you a thing, so be generous! If you award more points, you will have a more exciting contest.

Publicity Flyers

Effective publicity is an important part of any successful outreach program. Consider using the flyers below as bulletin inserts, or for your

students to hand out to their friends. Fill in the bottom section with your church name, date, and phone number. Be creative and have fun!

Let's Face It...

life is a roller coaster ride! The question is, are you having the ride of your life? Or are you scared, sick, and clutching the sides of your cart wanting to get off?



Amazing Journey with Jesus is a program dedicated to getting answers for your many questions! Even tough questions like, "How can I quit being scared at school?" and "What does my future hold?" At *Amazing Journey with Jesus* you'll join other young people in Bible studies and discussions that will relate to real issues you face each day. Instead of agonizing over these things alone, you'll find people, support, and resources to help you get through the tough issues.

It's not just "deep stuff." There'll be lots of fun games and teambuilding. Best of all, you'll make some awesome new friends along the way.

Come take this journey. Who knows, it just might change your life!

Where: _____

When: _____

For More Information, Call: _____

Are you sick of people who constantly ditch the real issues?

Why not join a group of young people who are serious about finding answers to tough questions?

Fun and games are a big part of this program, but we aren't here to simply kill time. We're ready to meet you where you're at and really dig into some stuff with you. Bring your questions, uncertainties, and any doubts you may have—there's no such thing as a dumb question!

We'll do our best to make sure you leave your doubts behind and go home with a guide you can really trust your life to.



For More Information, Call: _____

Where: _____

When: _____

DAY ONE

All games have a theme of sightlessness, or being guided.

Blanket Drop

Supplies:

- One blanket for every pair of X-Teams

Have two X-Teams face each other. Then raise a blanket between them. Each team will crouch behind a raised blanket so as not to be seen by the team on the other side. Have each team quietly pick one team member to go up to the blanket. The blanket, which is being held by workers, will then be dropped at the count of three. Of the two team members facing the blanket, the one who says the other person's name first is the winner. (*Others remain silent.*) Repeat the game with different people approaching the blanket.

Blind Relay

Supplies:

- Two blindfolds for every X-Team

This relay operates like a typical relay except that those running are blindfolded! Each team will yell at their blindfolded player to help him or her know where to go. (*Have a number of spotters to avoid injuries.*) The person waiting in line should also be blindfolded and should be ready to go as soon as the person in front returns and touches his or her hand.

Group Blind Walk

Supplies:

- One blindfold per student

All students are blindfolded and holding hands on this walk. A worker will lead them only by using a sound (*such as*

dangling keys). To make the walk even more challenging, don't let team members grab hands until after they are blindfolded. Also don't tell team members ahead of time what the sound will be, have them figure it out on their own. (*Have spotters on hand to assist with any obstacles.*)

Destination Walk

Supplies:

- One blindfold per student

All students are blindfolded and must get to a certain point. Show students the destination point, then blindfold them and turn them around to disorient them. (*Use spotters for protection.*) For more of a challenge, have team members find their destination together as one large bunch!

Blind Grab Bag

Supplies:

- Two grab bags/boxes
- Items that can be pulled out of the "grab bag" opening, such as keys, wrapped candies, etc.
- Item names written on pieces of paper and placed in the "label bag"

Place a large box or bag in the middle of the room with an opening at the top just big enough for a hand to reach in and pull out an item. Divide into teams. One at a time, have each team send a person to the "label bag" to draw out a slip of paper. Then have them go to the "grab bag" and pull that item without seeing into the bag. Give teams negative points for wrong items and positive points for right items. Students continue to pull out items until they get the right items.

FOLLOW THE LEADER

SESSION ONE

OPENER Who's Leading You?

Time: 15 minutes

Supplies:

- Magazine or newspaper photos of leaders (*presidents politicians, local government officials, leaders from your church, etc.*)
- Paper and pens for each group
- Whiteboard or butcher paper, markers
- A large sheet of paper or construction paper
- Glue sticks (*one per X-team*)

After completing some of the Crazy Comp games, have students come together and sit with their X-Teams. Say something like:

Thanks for coming to Amazing Journey with Jesus. During this time we are going to deal with some serious life issues. We'll tackle these ideas in the games we play, the topics we discuss, and the activities we participate in. We'll look at some ways that God guided people in Bible times and ways that He's guiding people today, too.

In this session we're going to concentrate on leadership. The people we look up to and follow impact us in ways that we aren't even always aware of. Knowing who it is that we are following is the first step toward knowing if we're headed in the right direction.

Have one person from each X-Team come forward and pick a leader from your collection of pictures and photos that

their group wants to concentrate on for this first activity. Once members have chosen a leader, allow them to take their picture back to their group. Hand out large sheets of paper or construction paper to each team along with a glue stick per team. Have each team create a poster by gluing their leader's picture down on the paper creating a "Someone Worth Following?" poster.

Challenge each X-Team to brainstorm five to ten things they've observed about their person and have them write these things on their posters. They can be good or bad impressions, depending on what the group thinks of the leader they've chosen. Make sure each group covers everything from their person's leadership style to his or her looks and any general impressions the group might have about this leader.

When time is up, have each team choose a spokesperson to explain what their team thinks about their person as a leader. After each team has shared, say: ***There is a saying that goes, "Leaders are made, not born." What do you think this means?*** Invite teams to tell their opinions.

Next, spend a few minutes having people blurt out characteristics they think a good

Optional Opener

Give each student a piece of paper and a pencil. Have them write a short paragraph describing their favorite teacher, coach, or other adult who has influenced them. After teens have had 5–8 minutes to complete this, go around the group and invite people to read their paragraphs aloud.

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Pick-me-up Let Jesus be your guide.

SESSION ONE

leader should have. As people call out their ideas, write them on a whiteboard or on a large sheet of butcher paper for everyone to see.

Conclude this opener by reading what teens have said about leadership and by giving your own impression of what you look for from those in leadership over you.

TABLE TALK Hurry Up—Already!

Time: 10 minutes

Supplies:

- Copies of Table Talk, “Hurry Up—Already!” (page 14)
- Pencils

Hand out the “Hurry Up—Already” worksheet (page 14) and pencils. Allow the students to work in their X-Teams as they go through the questions and discuss them. (For a description of X-Teams and their purpose, see page 6.) Remember to let the teens talk and react without the leaders judging their comments. A visiting teenager needs to know his or her opinion will be heard and not instantly rejected.

MESSAGE Leader in Progress

Time: 15 minutes

Supplies:

- “Leader in Progress” discussion-starter

worksheet (page 15)

- Pencils
- Butcher paper and markers (for sketching)
- Bible for each X-Team

Hand out copies of the “Leader in Progress” discussion-starter worksheet. This worksheet will allow your students to follow Moses’ moves from the time he was an infant, up until he went to Egypt to deliver the Israelites from slavery and lead them out of Egypt. Make sure each X-Team has a Bible to share. Assign each X-Team one or two of the passages below depending on your group size. Give plenty of time for X-Team members to read their passage or passages and as a group, come up with a number of ways that each incident was preparing Moses to be a great leader someday.

Before moving on, make sure each X-Team has a chance to share its findings with the rest of the X-Teams.

Invite those who finish their worksheets early to sketch cartoon-like pictures of Moses in various stages of life (for example, as a baby floating in the basket, as a young man killing the Egyptian, as a married man facing a burning bush, etc.). When all have finished their worksheets, have the students explain their sketches to the other groups. (Have fun with this and invite creativity.)

Next have students open their Bibles to Exodus 12:31-42 and 13:17-22. Give your group time to read these first passages on

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their own. Conclude the Bible segment by having a volunteer read aloud Exodus 14:5-14 and 19-22. Share, ***Moses had a tough job. He finally overcame the obstacles, plagues, and agony of escaping Egypt, but he really wasn't out of the woods at all. Pharaoh and his army weren't about to let them off the hook that easy. Why do you think Pharaoh wanted the Israelites back? What benefit would it have been for him to have them back in Egypt? Do you think any of the Israelites were already getting antsy about their***

situation in the wilderness? Explain.

Ask the teams to turn to Nahum 1:7 and have a volunteer read it out loud. Ask, ***What kind of trouble did the Israelites find themselves in soon after leaving Egypt? How was the Lord good to the Israelites in their situation? In what specific ways might the Israelites have had to trust God as they walked on dry land that minutes before was covered by raging water? Do you think Moses lived up to his role as leader in this situation?*** Invite various teens to call out their answers. When all teens have had a

Option

Ask your teens to talk about any video clip of Moses and the Israelites leaving Egypt, entering the desert, crossing the Red Sea, and escaping the Egyptian chariots and soldiers that they may have seen. Take time to have them describe the video segment, then invite teens to share their reactions. Many of them may have seen the same videos. *(You may describe to your teens the scene in one of these videos if you have seen one.)* Encourage them to tell their impressions of what it might have been like for Moses and the Israelites as they escaped. Discuss the following questions:

- ***How do you think Moses felt within the first few hours of leaving Egypt?***
- ***What might his initial reaction have been when he discovered the Egyptian army behind the people?***

Name some modern-day leaders who have led masses of people. What unique challenges did these people face? Explain. *(If teens can't think of their own, suggest George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, etc.)*

Moses was up to the challenge. After leaving Egypt there was no way he was turning around. As you think about the people you follow, ask yourself these questions: Will your leader take risks to make sure you get where you need to go? Will he or she ditch you at the first sign of trouble? Are you a leader worth following? Why or why not?

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SESSION ONE

chance to share, continue with the following.

The Israelites were barely out of Egypt when they found their world turned upside down. They had a pop-quiz right away to test their faith in God. What kinds of situations have you found yourself in where you needed to turn to God? Encourage various X-Team members to share.

CHALLENGE Who are you following?

Time: 10 minutes

Supplies:

- Strips of colored paper for paper chains
- Staplers
- Pens

We began today by playing games that dealt with following a leader. Then we studied about Moses, a man who wasn't afraid to lead his people—even if it meant crossing a raging sea of water.

Nahum 1:7 is a great reminder of the One we can choose to follow. The Lord is someone we can trust. Just like we trusted our friends in the games when we were helpless and blindfolded, we can trust Jesus, too. Not only is the Lord good, but He is a refuge in times of trouble and cares for those who trust in Him. The challenge we'd like to present to you all today is to think about who you're following. If the one you're choosing to follow is Jesus, then

you're in really good shape. If you're choosing to follow good role models, leaders, and friends, along with following Jesus, then that's good too! The problem comes, however, when we start following people who lead us into bad things like drug and alcohol use, sexual relationships before marriage, rebellious acts against authority, to name a few. It's important to stop and ask these two questions from time to time:

Is Jesus really #1 in my life?

Are the people I'm choosing to follow leading me toward good things or bad things?

Give a few moments for teens to comment on what you've just said. Then hand out your strips of construction paper, staplers, and pens to the X-Teams. Make sure there are at least five strips of paper for each student. Give the students five minutes to write on each strip the name of a person he or she is following and why. Then have teens turn their strips over and write on the back side whether or not this person is leading them toward Jesus or away from Him. After all teens have finished, have the members of each team staple their strips as interlocking rings of a paper chain. Say: ***Each person we follow leads us in one direction or another. If we try to follow leaders who go in different directions, we might end up confused, aimless, or in places we don't want to be. When we follow Jesus and people who also follow Him, we***

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Pick-me-up Let Jesus be your guide.

SESSION ONE

go in the right direction.

Moses followed God. This is what made Moses a great leader. If you're in the middle of following someone who is leading you the wrong way, it isn't too late to change directions. You can start anew today by choosing more carefully the leaders around you and by following Jesus, the best Guide of all!

Close by having an X-Team leader pray for the team. Have X-Team leaders spend a few minutes at the end of the session talking with teens and answering questions they may have. Remind students that Jesus is the ultimate guide and is

the only One they can confidently trust their futures to.

Note: As you have noticed, this lesson lends itself perfectly to offering the students an opportunity to come by faith to Jesus. Be sure to give your students a chance to talk with an X-Team leader and pray about this decision. Your students can't follow Jesus as their guide until they know Him personally.

Extra Study Option: "Jesus—Ultimate Leader" would be a helpful handout for those who want to know more about finding their identity in Jesus.

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Pick-me-up Let Jesus be your guide.

TABLE TALK WORKSHEET

Hurry Up—Already!

Think about a time when you were in a hurry to get somewhere or do something fun. If you can't think of a time when you were in a hurry, try to think of a time when you had to wait a long time for someone. Write a few sentences about that situation:

Reflect further and be specific. ***What about this situation made you especially impatient? Explain.*** (For example, was it because the activity you were anticipating was so awesome or was it the people you were going to be with?)

Looking back on this time of anticipation, when you finally did get to do this thing, or go to this place, was it as awesome as you expected it to be? Explain.

The Israelites were anxiously awaiting their escape from Egypt. Their ancestors had hoped for this for hundreds of years! Now that's a long wait. Let's find out if what they'd anticipated was really as great as they'd hyped it up to be.

MESSAGE WORKSHEET

A Leader in Progress

Directions: Read the assigned passages and as a group, come up with a number of ways that each incident was preparing Moses to be a great leader someday.

Passage # 1: Exodus 2:1-10—Moses Stays Afloat

How might this incident have been preparing Moses for leadership? Explain.

Passage # 2: Exodus 2:11-15—Moses Bolts

How might this incident have been preparing Moses for leadership? Explain.

Passage # 3: Exodus 2:16-22—Moses Plays Hero—Gains a Wife

How might this incident have been preparing Moses for leadership? Explain.

Passage # 4: Exodus 3:1-10—Moses' Calling

How might this incident have been preparing Moses for leadership? Explain.

Passage # 5: Exodus 3:11-13—Moses Makes Excuses

How might this incident have been preparing Moses for leadership? Explain.

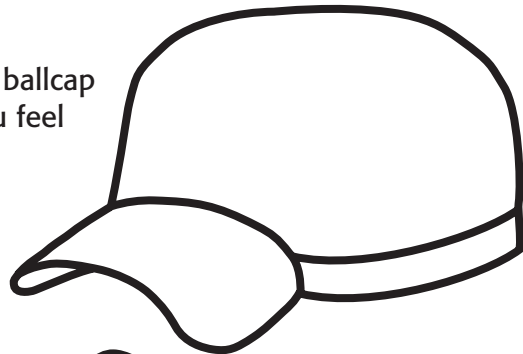
Passage # 6: Exodus 3:14-22—Moses Gets Instructions

How might this incident have been preparing Moses for leadership? Explain.

EXTRA STUDY OPTION

Jesus—Ultimate Leader

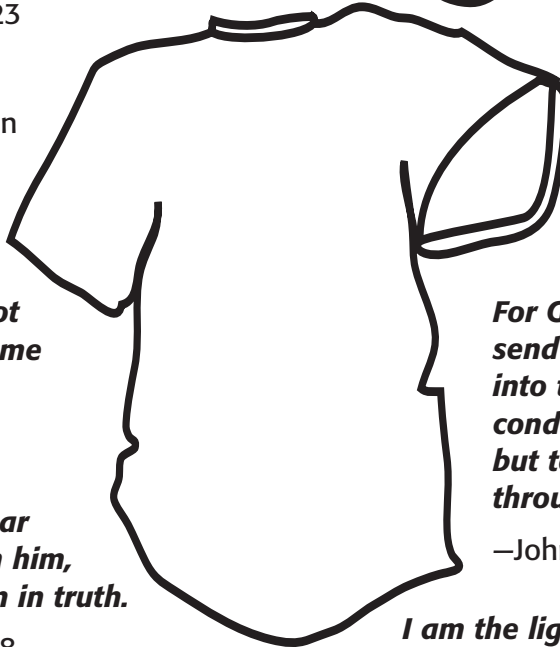
Based on what you know about Jesus, draw a ballcap logo here that you feel best describes how you feel about Jesus as your leader.



***For the wages of sin is death,
but the gift of God is eternal life
in Christ Jesus our Lord.***

—Romans 6:23

What kind of a T-shirt slogan might a follower of Jesus wear? Make it here.



***I am the
resurrection
and the life.***

—John 11:25a

***And anyone who does not
carry his cross and follow me
cannot be my disciple.***

—Luke 14:27

***For God did not
send his Son
into the world to
condemn the world,
but to save the world
through him.***

—John 3:17

***The LORD is near
to all who call on him,
to all who call on him in truth.***

—Psalm 145:18

***I am the light of the world.
Whoever follows me
will never walk in darkness,
but will have the light of life.***

—John 8:12b

***Anyone who does not
take his cross
and follow me
is not worthy of me.***

—Matthew 10:38



***Follow me, . . .
and I will make you
fishers of men.***

—Matthew 4:19

Why would you want
to follow in Jesus'
footsteps?

Extra Study Option Make photocopies of this Extra Study Option and give it to any student who received salvation today or others who are interested in learning more about salvation. (For more information about the use of Extra Study Options, see page 5.)

DAY TWO

The theme for this day is connecting. Each of the games requires in some way that the students be connected together. This will tie into how God provides when we are connected to Him and others.

Reach Out

Supplies:

- One foam swimming noodle per group

Place groups in small circles so the person in the middle can touch each person in the circle with a foam swimming noodle. The person standing in the middle says the name of another person in the circle. The person in the middle attempts to touch that person with the foam noodle before he or she can say the name of another person in the circle. When the middle person succeeds in touching someone, then he or she will exchange places with that person and the game will begin again.

Needy Noodle

Supplies:

- Two foam swimming noodles

Give one person two foam swimming noodles and tell him or her that he or she needs everyone in the group. The way this “noodler” will “get everyone” is for him or her to touch others with the noodle. Once a person has been touched with the noodle, he or she will join hands with the person on the side where he or she was touched. This person must then take the noodle from that side and proceed to help the person get another person who, when touched, also joins the needy noodlers. If there is a break in

the hands when attempting to touch someone then it does not count.

Sinking Island

Supplies:

- Carpet sample squares
- Masking tape

Tape off one large island for all of the X-Teams to begin. Tape off some smaller destination islands, all different directions but equal distances from your one large island. Have all the X-Teams stand inside the larger island. Give each X-Team enough carpet sample squares so about three out of four teammates get a square. Tell each team which smaller island it must get to. More than one team can go to any island. X-Teams must use their carpet squares as boats to go across the open “sea” to their destination islands. They may stand, squat, kneel, sit, and hold onto their boats however they wish, as long as their boats keep them from touching the floor.

The floor is the “sea,” which is full of “sharks” waiting to attack. Anyone who falls or steps off of his or her boat is out. Of course more than one team member will need to be on some of the boats since all team members didn’t get a carpet square. All members of X-Teams must travel at the same time.

Blob

Supplies:

- One rope for each X-Team

Rope X-Team members together and have them go through a simple obstacle course together as a blob.

WHO R U CONNECTED??

SESSION TWO

OPENER

Whadda Ya Got?

Time: 15 minutes

Supplies:

- Large sheet of butcher paper or whiteboard (*one per X-Team*), and markers

After completing the Crazy Comp tournament games, gather the group together and have them sit with their X-Teams. Say, ***Today in Amazing Journey with Jesus we're going to explore how God provides for all our needs. We'll take a good look at our stuff and consider what we have and what we actually need. We'll also talk about what we should give to God as well as what we should trust Him to provide for us.***

Nahum 1:7 encourages us to trust God. That includes learning to trust Him with our desires, wants, and genuine needs.

(Prior to this game set up the area so each X-Team has access to markers, and a whiteboard or butcher paper. They will use this area as a part of their relay.)

Instruct each X-Team to choose a designated scorekeeper. Scorekeepers will stay next to their team's butcher paper or whiteboard and won't participate in the relay. The rest of the X-Teams form lines (starting 20 feet or so away from the scoring area) and get ready to run a relay race. When all X-Teams are lined up and have a

designated person at the scorekeeping area, explain the game.

In this game the last person in line must run around to the first person in line and find as many brand labels on his or her shoes, shirt, jeans, socks, cap, etc, as he or she can. The first person in line can help this person by saying things like, "My jeans were made by _____," or "my shoes are _____." Once all labels are accounted for, the first person will go to the end of the line and the last person will run to the scorekeeper and list all of the brands, then run to the end of the line as well. Repeat this activity until all teens have had a chance to participate in the race. When teams

Optional Opener

Supplies: Paper, pens (for writing skit ideas)

Give each X-Team a minute or two to come up with a product that they want to endorse in a commercial. After each team has chosen a product, give them five minutes to come up with their commercial in a skit-type format. After X-Teams have had a chance to practice and plan out their skits, allow them to present their "commercial" for the other teams. After all teams have presented, discuss the following questions:

Based on these commercials you've just seen, what product would you want to buy? Why? Was there anything "advertised" here that you need? Explain. Why do you think TV commercials are so effective? What do you like about TV commercials? What annoys you? Explain.

Pitfall
Pick-me-up

Don't put your trust in the wrong stuff.
Let Jesus meet your needs.

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are finished they should sit down and wait for the other teams to finish. Award points to the team that finished first as well as to the team with the most variety of brands listed on their scoreboard.

When all have completed the activity read aloud the number of different labels or designer names found on all of the combined scoreboards. Then ask, ***Is the brand of clothing you wear important to you? Why or why not?*** Invite various students to share. ***Are you willing to pay more for designer stuff? If you can't afford to buy something that is a certain brand, do you save up until you can afford it? Do you buy the same item in a cheaper brand?*** Explain your answers.

A lot of emphasis in society is placed on having stuff. Not just stuff, but the best stuff. Today we're going to look at why this is and how we can learn to put less emphasis on things, and more emphasis on Jesus.

TABLE TALK

Whadda Ya Want?

Time: 10 minutes

Supplies:

- Copies of Table Talk, "Whadda Ya Want?" (from page 21)
- Pencils

Hand out "Whadda Ya Want?" and pencils. Allow the students to work in their X-Teams as they go through the

questions and discuss them. (For a description of X-Teams and their purpose, see page 6.) Remember to let the students talk and react without the leaders judging their comments. Teens need to know their opinions will be heard and not instantly rejected.

MESSAGE

God Provides

Time: 15 minutes

Supplies:

- "Ravens, Bread, or We'll All Be Dead" rap (from page 22)
- Paper and pencils
- Several volunteers (to perform their rap)

Open the Message session by asking: ***Why do you think some people put so much emphasis on material possessions?*** Invite students to give their ideas. ***Do you think having things makes people happy? Why or why not? Explain. The happiness from having things seems to wear off rather quickly. What might make a person happy for the long run?*** Invite your students to share their answers here. ***Other than material things, what brings you happiness and satisfaction?*** Invite interaction.

Have your students read 1 Kings 17:1-7 on their own. Then as a group, read 1 Kings 17:8-16 aloud. Give five minutes for the X-Teams to read the worksheet "Ravens, Bread, or We'll All Be Dead." This worksheet contains one rap (based on

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the story of Elijah) and also provides a model for your teens to come up with their own rap. After teens have had a chance to be creative and practice, have your groups perform either the provided rap or a rap based on this story that they've come up with on their own. After you have applauded your rappers, have them return to their seats.

Share, ***In a time of great need Elijah's needs were met. God told Elijah what to do every step of the way. He told Elijah where to go to find water and sent ravens with bread and meat for Elijah to eat! What a miracle! How do you think Elijah might have felt when the brook he was drinking from dried up? (vs. 7). Do you think he may have doubted God's provision and instructions? What might have Elijah's reaction been to his new instructions for finding a widow who would provide him with food? How do you think Elijah felt when the widow's oil never dried up and her flour never ran out? Do you think this widow trusted God because of her experience with God? (Have students read 1 Kings 17:17-24.) After they have read this passage ask: What true test did the widow and her son have to go through before they truly trusted God to provide? How does this story influence you?***

Say, ***Elijah totally put his trust in God. God provided what Elijah needed. What needs do you have today? How***

can you trust God to provide for these issues in your lives? Invite various X-Team members to share.

CHALLENGE

Whadda Ya Need?

Time: 10 Minutes

Supplies:

- Pieces of paper and pencils

All people have needs. Sometimes these needs are physical. Other times needs are spiritual and still other times they are emotional. Whatever you need, it's important to realize that you have Someone who wants to take care of you! Distribute the pieces of paper and pencils to teams. Instruct them to come up with two lists. A WANT list and a NEED list. After they have completed this, allow teams to share with the large group what some of their real needs are. Have X-Teams break into small groups and take time to pray in their groups for these various needs that have been discussed. Popcorn or sentence prayers may work best. Leave it up to the various groups to decide. Also have a volunteer from each group be the "opener" and have another volunteer be the "closer." This way teens who aren't comfortable praying out loud won't feel pressured to do so.

Pitfall	Don't put your trust in the wrong stuff.
Pick-me-up	Let Jesus meet your needs.

TABLE TALK WORKSHEET

Whadda Ya Want?

If you could have one thing, what would it be? Why?

Would having this one thing make you happier? Explain your answer.

What spiritual benefit, if any, would this thing add to your life?

Could having this thing, if you were to get it, hurt you in any way? Explain.

MESSAGE WORKSHEET

Ravens, Bread, or We'll All Be Dead

Directions: In your group, on another piece of paper, write a rap based on the Bible story about Elijah. You may look up 1 Kings 17:1-16 and use the passage to help you in creating your rap, or use the rap provided below. Add as much humor as possible, and present it to the rest of the X-Teams.

RAP: *Ravens, Bread, or We'll All Be Dead*

*Elijah, a Tishbite from Tishbe,
In Gilead found Ahab a bit naughty.
Well you've messed up,
Your time is through.
From here on out
There won't be rain or dew.
Elijah took off,
Yes he did hide
By a river where birds
Came by his side.
They brought a treat;
It was very sweet.
Lots of bread and meat
Did Elijah eat.
Then the brook dried up.
Li-Jah had a thirst.
His happy bubble
Had begun to burst.
He learned of a widow
Who had some grub.
On his way to find her
His tummy he did rub.*

*She wasn't real hip
On meeting a dude
Who seemed to be after
Her little bit of food.
Elijah worked real hard
To convince her to trust.
He promised that they
Wouldn't turn to dust.
The oil and flour
They kept a-giving,
And Elijah and the widow
Good food they were digging.
The moral of this rap
Is that God's in charge.
When times are thin
You can trust in Him!*

For those of you who are feeling brave . . .
give your own rap a try. Just make it a few
verses long.

EXTRA STUDY OPTION

Knowing our Needs

Read the following passages. ***What do each of these passages have to say about how Jesus provides for all of our needs?***

Proverbs 3:5; Matthew 6:25-34; Philippians 4:19.

Read the following passages and ***determine what kinds of things can get in the way of following God:*** Luke 12:15; Luke 16:13; Luke 18:22-27.

Read the following passages and ***list how they relate to God's provision for His people:*** Psalm 68:10; Psalm 111:9; 1 Corinthians 10:13.

In what ways does Jesus provide for your needs?

What can help you learn to completely put your trust in Jesus?

Extra Study Option Make photocopies of this Extra Study Option and give it to any student who received salvation today or others who are interested in learning more about salvation. (For more information about the use of Extra Study Options, see page 5.)

DAY THREE

The theme for this day is defending each other. It is also “ball day.”

Name Toss

Supplies:

- One or more balls per team

Put teams in circles and give them each a ball. Team members toss the ball to another team member and say that person’s name aloud. Keep the ball going to a different person each time. After teams have practiced, have teens compete for the best time to get the ball to every team member. For an added challenge have team members switch places or have leaders add more balls for each team to keep moving.

Attack

Supplies:

- Small soft balls such as ping pong, soft sponge, paper wads, etc. or beanbags—several for each team

Give teams many small soft balls or beanbags. One person from each team will be chosen to be their protected target while the rest of the team acts as the shield that protects their target person. At the sound of the whistle each team throws their balls to attempt to hit the protected target person on the other teams while at the same time protecting their own target person. If a target person is hit by any ball then that person is out and the team must quickly pick another person to be the target. With each person eliminated a team gets smaller and has more difficulty protecting their target person.

Outta Here!

Supplies:

- Masking tape
- Soft balls, beanbags, or paper wads for each team

Each team makes a taped off area of floor or ground to protect. Provide each team with an equal number of soft balls, beanbags, or paper wads. The object of this game is to throw balls into opponents’ taped areas while defending your own area so balls do not land in it. Play for a timed period, and then count balls or beanbags in taped areas.

Maully Ball

Supplies:

- Several volleyballs

Play a traditional game of volleyball but use many balls.

Mine!

Supplies:

- One numbered ball for each person

Have a pile of numbered balls. Assign numbers to each person in the group and make sure there is a ball that corresponds to their number. At the whistle all teams attempt to get all the balls that belong to their group. If your groups are large play only one or two X-Teams at a time and allow the other teams to watch. Then rotate.

PLAY DEFENSE—OR DUCK!

SESSION THREE

OPENER

Take Shelter!

Time: 15 minutes

Supplies:

- Four foam balls
- Optional: *Cruisin' the Amazon™* CD and CD player

After completing the Crazy Comp tournament games, gather all of the teens in one giant circle, sitting on the floor.

Choose two volunteers to be "It." Pick these volunteers from opposite sides of the large circle. Give each volunteer two foam balls. Explain the following directions:

This game is a glorified version of "Duck, Duck, Goose." Only we will call it, "Duck, Duck, and Keep Ducking!" When I say, "Go," the two volunteers will run in opposite directions around the circle, carrying the foam balls with them. As they round the circle, it is up to them to decide when and where to drop their first foam ball. If you sense a ball has been dropped behind your back, turn around, grab the ball, jump up, and start chasing the person who dropped it. As soon as the person who dropped a ball is chased, he or she must drop the second ball behind a person's back, all the while running from the first person. Both chasers pursue "It" and try to hit him or her with a foam ball. If "It" runs around the circle without getting hit and sits

down in an empty space, then the first "chaser" becomes "It" in his or her place. If a foam ball hits "it," then he or she is "It" again. Keep in mind that runners will be going in both directions, so, whatever you do, be careful to not collide with someone as you run around the circle!

Allow this game to progress for about six minutes. Then gather everyone together and discuss the following questions: ***How did it feel to be chased? Was it more fun being chased, or being the chaser? Explain. How is this game of Duck, Duck, and Keep Ducking similar to our everyday lives?*** Invite student interaction and reaction to these questions.

Then share, ***Today we're going to talk about what we're afraid of. In life, we***

Optional Opener

Supplies: Large cushions, old pillows, blankets, sheets, various chairs and obstacles suitable for making a fort

Give teams five minutes to create a fort using the provided supplies. After groups have created their forts, invite other groups to check them out, go inside them, or just hang out in them for a few minutes. Then gather your students together and ask, ***Did you ever have a fort or tree house as a kid? Tell about it. When did you go to this place? Did you feel safe inside? Where else did you go to hide when things got rough? Tell about some of these places.***

**Pitfall
Pick-me-up**

Don't be afraid.
Let Jesus protect you.

SESSION THREE

often feel like a runner, dodging problems and fears that continually fling themselves our way. We're going to learn today that there is Someone we can turn to during difficult, even dangerous, times.

TABLE TALK Fears & Tears

Time: 10 minutes

Supplies:

- Copies of Table Talk, "Fears & Tears" (page 28)
- Pencils

Nahum 1:7 calls the Lord a refuge in times of trouble. The following worksheet will give you a chance to talk about times when you've been upset or scared and how you felt during these times.

Pass out copies of Table Talk "Fears & Tears" to the students. Allow the students to work in their X-Teams as they go through the questions and discuss them. You may want to have students write down their answers to these questions first, then discuss them together in their small group. Remember to let the students talk and react without judging their comments. Teens need to know that their opinions will be heard and not instantly rejected.

MESSAGE

What It Was Like

Time: 15 minutes

Supplies:

Copies of "What It Was Like" (page 29)

Have each group read Genesis 6:9–8:22 and complete the short story activity described in the worksheet "What It Was Like." After your students have finished their short stories, invite a few volunteers to read their stories aloud. Open up discussion by sharing something like, *Noah was in a tough spot. He was the only person doing the right thing. Do you ever feel like the only person who's interested in doing what's right? Why might you feel this way? Does it make you fearful to think that people could dislike you because you choose to follow God? Explain.*

Direct your students to Genesis 6:9. Read it aloud, then ask, *What might a blameless person look like today?* Invite teens to explain. Next direct teens to Genesis 6:13-14. Ask, *Why do you think God chose to destroy the people of the earth rather than try to change them? Do you think this makes God less loving toward those people than He is toward us today? When will God's wrath fall on the earth again? (If teens don't know this answer, tell them that the Bible describes events in which God will once again pour down His judgment on the earth.)*

**Pitfall
Pick-me-up**

Don't be afraid.
Let Jesus protect you.

SESSION THREE

How do you think Noah felt as he worked on this giant ark, trusting only in what God said would happen—having no physical proof that this big rainstorm would come? How do you think Noah felt once he and his family and all of the animals were safely inside the ark? How do you think the people outside the ark, those who had made fun of Noah, felt once they realized that he had been right about the flood? How can this story of Noah apply to Christians today? Explain.

Sometimes you might feel like you are the only one doing the right thing. That's scary, especially if your peers, teachers, or your parents are making fun of you. The truth is, following Jesus isn't easy. It's full of ups and downs. But God has promised that He will protect from trouble those who believe in Him (Psalm 32:7). Although you might not feel great about circumstances in your life right now, remember that you can always run to Jesus. He will shelter you in the tough times and help you find peace.

CHALLENGE

Jesus Shelters Me

Time: 10 Minutes

Supplies:

- Clear plastic umbrellas (one per X-Team), permanent markers

Have you ever been caught in a thunderstorm? Sometimes you don't see the storm coming, but when it does, all of a sudden it's a downpour and you're running for cover. Jesus wants us to turn to Him in the midst of life's downpours.

Give each team a plastic umbrella and have them open it up. Instruct teams to brainstorm ways that Jesus shelters them. As they come up with their ideas, have a team member use a marker to write them down on the open umbrella. After all ideas have been exhausted have each X-Team huddle together and try to fit as many people as they can under the opened umbrella.

Invite various teams to read aloud the things on their umbrellas while other teams listen. Share, *Jesus wants to shelter us with His love. It's up to us to make sure we're under His umbrella of care for us.*

Close this time in prayer, asking for guidance and help as teens search out Jesus as their place of shelter in tough times.

Pitfall
Pick-me-up

Don't be afraid.
Let Jesus protect you.

TABLE TALK WORKSHEET

Fears & Tears

Before you start discussing these questions, have your group get together for a “group high five” just to add some variety!

List 10 things that scare you.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

List 10 things that make you sad.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Who do you go to when you're scared or sad? Why do you go to this person? Explain.

Where do you like to hide out? (For example, your room, the mall, a friend's house, your basement, etc.) Why do you like to hide out in this place?

When you're afraid or sad, do you seek out someone to be with? Or would you rather be by yourself? Explain.

What role does Jesus play in your life when you're scared or sad? Explain.

MESSAGE WORKSHEET

What It Was Like

Read Genesis 6:9–8:22. After reading this long passage, choose one of the characters from the story and rewrite it from this person’s point of view. For instance, you could write as if you were a person who made fun of Noah, Noah’s wife, one of Noah’s sons (*Shem, Ham, or Japheth*), one of Noah’s sons’ wives, or even a person on the outside of the ark trying to get in. If you want to write from an animals’ point of view, that’s OK too.

Think about these questions as you write:

- ***What might this person have been saying at this time?***

- ***What might the scene have looked like as God sent this devastating flood to the earth?***

- ***What smells might you experience on the ark or outside the ark?***

- ***What sounds might you hear on the ark or outside the ark?***

- ***How might you feel as this person whose perspective you are writing from?***

EXTRA STUDY OPTION

The Climate of the World

Take a minute to look up and read Genesis 6:1-8. Describe here what the spiritual “climate” of the world was during Noah’s time.

During Noah’s time the world was . . .

Take a moment and describe what the spiritual “climate” of the world is now . . .

What things about Noah’s time might have scared him? List them below.

What things about the time period you live in now are scary to you? Explain below.

Nahum 1:7 says, “The LORD is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in him.”

How will you trust Jesus for your protection today?

Why is Jesus trustworthy? Explain.

Extra Study Option Make photocopies of this Extra Study Option and give it to any student who received salvation today or others who are interested in learning more about salvation. (For more information about the use of Extra Study Options, see page 5.)

DAY FOUR

The theme of this day is battle and winning by working together.

Group Obstacle

Supplies:

- Items from your area to make obstacle course

Develop a large obstacle course and then have groups race to complete the course. The key requirement is that each group must go through the course connected in some way. Let each team decide how to be connected. They might hold hands, hook pinkies, lock arms, etc.

Group Stand

Have each group sit on the floor together. All of the members of each team must stand at the same time without any hands or knees touching the ground.

Flour Sock

Supplies:

- Tube socks
- Flour

Fill tube socks with a little flour. At the whistle, teams must attempt to “flour” members of other teams by hitting them with the flour filled socks. Socks must be tossed into the air, not used as a club! Teams with the overall least amount of flour on them win the game.

Pull Apart

This is a whole group game not intended as an X-Team competition. Have all the guys sit in the middle of the room and join hands, legs, and whatever they can to stay attached to each other. Girls attempt to pull the guys from their group. Once a guy is pulled away and is no longer in physical contact with any other guy, he is eliminated. Tickling is allowed but make sure leaders are watching closely to discourage any overtly rough behavior.

Flag Grab

Supplies:

- Bandanna for each person

Place a bandanna as a flag in the back pants pocket of each member so it can be easily grabbed and pulled away. If people don't have pockets have them put their bandannas in a sock or hanging off a shoe. When the game begins people should attempt to grab the bandanna flag of as many people as possible. Once a person's flag is grabbed he or she must remain frozen in one place until a member of his or her team brings him or her a flag. At the close of the game the team with the most flags and the team with the most people still playing wins.

BATTLE CRY

SESSION FOUR

OPENER

Villain-Alert

Time: 15 minutes

Supplies:

- Sticky name labels with names of villains
- Markers

After completing the Crazy Comp tournament, instruct students to go to a designated area where one of the leaders will put a name label on each person's back. Tell the students that they aren't allowed to tell others what name is written on their back. They will have to guess who they are by asking simple "Yes" or "No" questions. For example, they might ask, "Am I in a movie?" or "Do I have a green face?" etc. All of these names on the labels will be of famous villains from popular movies or T.V. shows.

Be creative and come up with as many different villains as you can. If there are more teens than villain ideas it's OK to double-up on some names, just make sure to tell the students that there may be more than one of "them" out there.

After all students have figured out who they are, regroup into X-Teams to discuss the following questions:

Why are villains, or "bad guys," so popular in movies? Who usually comes to the rescue when villains are involved? Do you find yourself rooting for the "bad guy" or the "good guy"? Why?

Share, Today we're going to talk a little bit about Someone who is our defender against villains we face. Why might we need a defender in this day and age? What kind of villains do teenagers face today?

Optional Opener

Supplies:

- Paper, pens or pencils

Have each X-Team select a superhero to write a résumé for. Give teens five minutes to list their superhero's qualifications, objective, job experience, etc. After groups have finished writing their résumés, go around and have a volunteer from each group share aloud about their superhero. Conclude by asking all groups the following questions:

What makes your character a hero? Do any of these heroes have realistic characteristics? Explain. What or who do these heroes defend? Do superheroes always win? Why or why not? Explain.

**Pitfall
Pick-me-up**

Don't forget who's in charge.
Let Jesus take care of you.

SESSION FOUR

TABLE TALK

Questions of Faith

Time: 10 minutes

Supplies:

- Copies of Table Talk, “Enemies in Our Midst” (page 35), pencils

Hand out “Enemies in Our Midst” and pencils. Allow the students to work in their X-Teams as they go through the questions and discuss them. Remember to let the students talk and react without the leaders judging their comments. Teens need to know their opinions will be heard and not instantly rejected.

MESSAGE

Brutal Battleground

Time: 15 minutes

Supplies:

- Bibles

Have your students turn to 2 Kings 6:8-23. Call on various volunteers to read these verses aloud. Ask the following questions to check for understanding. **Why was the king of Aram angry?** (The king of Aram was at war with Israel. However, the Arameans could never outsmart the Israelites because Elisha would tip off the Israelites about where the enemy was hiding.) **What did the king of Aram think was happening?** (The king of Aram thought that one of his own men was a spy and was giving inside information. He didn’t understand

that God was helping the prophet Elisha and was giving him the secret information.) **What happened when the king of Aram found out where Elisha was living?** (Men were sent to capture Elisha. Chariots and horses and strong troops were sent to surround the city where Elisha was.) **What did Elisha’s servant say when he saw the enemy troops and chariots that had surrounded them?** (He asked, “What shall we do?”) **What’s the sequence of events that happened next?** (Elisha prayed that his servant’s eyes would be opened. The servant saw the hills that were full of the Lord’s army of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. Elisha then prayed that the enemy would be blinded. God answered his prayer and Elisha tricked the enemy into following him to Samaria where the king of Israel was waiting.) **How did Elisha and the king of Israel show mercy on the enemy?** (Instead of killing them, they fed them a feast and gave them water to drink.) **What was the end result?** (The troops from Aram stopped raiding Israel’s territory.)

Then share, **From our perspective it probably looked like Elisha and his servant didn’t stand a chance. What confidence did Elisha have?** Allow students to answer. You might refer them to 2 Kings 6:16. Then say, **Elisha said, “Don’t be afraid. . . . Those who are with us are more than those who are with them.” Elisha knew who defended him!**

**Pitfall
Pick-me-up**

Don’t forget who’s in charge.
Let Jesus take care of you.

SESSION FOUR

Ask, *How does this Bible story help you recognize Jesus as your defender? Explain.*

We don't have to fear anything or anyone! Just as God protected Elisha, God also is available as our defender today. And He has given us His Son, Jesus, who died to protect us from the consequence of our sins. Not only that, but Christians are armed with the Holy Spirit as well. We don't face our enemies alone!

What kind of enemies are you facing today? Who are the villains in your life? Jesus is greater than all our enemies. He delivers you from all kinds of trouble, be it drugs, gangs, peer pressure, addictions, whatever! These are our modern-day enemies. But remember, Jesus is in control. Nahum 1:7 says, "The LORD is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in him." It's up to us to trust Him to defend us.

CHALLENGE

Chariots of Fire

Time: 10 Minutes

Supplies: Copies of "Chariots of Fire" (p. 36), pencils

Distribute copies of "Chariots of Fire" to your teens and instruct them to read and add to the prayer on their sheets. Let teens know their prayers are confidential. Encourage them to take this time to really open up to Jesus and share with Him their struggles.

After teens have had sufficient time to write their prayers, conclude by saying, *Elisha wasn't a superhero with super powers. It was God who performed all of the miracles in this story. God sent the chariots of fire. God also caused the enemies' eyes to be temporarily blinded.*

**Pitfall
Pick-me-up**

Don't forget who's in charge.
Let Jesus take care of you.

TABLE TALK WORKSHEET

Enemies in Our Midst

Enemies aren't just people out to get us. An enemy is anyone or anything that drags you down. Take a minute to answer the following questions and to reflect on your own life and the battles you are facing right now.

How could the following things be enemies to teens today?

Selfishness

Materialism

Gangs

Addictions

Sex

Lying

Cheating

Stealing

Other (Add additional issues here that you feel are of concern to teens today.)

What or who are some enemies you are encountering in your life today?

How can you trust Jesus with these battles you are facing?

MESSAGE WORKSHEET

Chariots of Fire

In the story of Elisha we just read, we saw that God was more than prepared to take on Elisha's battle. Read the following letter and fill in the spaces with ways that you want Jesus to help you.

Dear Jesus,

There are some big issues I deal with. I really struggle with _____

_____ and _____

the most. I need Your help in fighting this ongoing battle for me. When I look up at the "hills" and challenges all around me, I see _____

What I really want to see are Your chariots of fire protecting me. I know You are there, but at times I _____

I John 4:4 says, ". . . . The one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world." This verse encourages me to _____

Lord, I want to trust You with my battles. I know You are greater than my struggles with _____

Please help me to bring my battles to You and trust You with the enemies that I face each day.

In Your name I pray. Amen

EXTRA STUDY OPTION

Defense, Defense, and Defense

We don't need to fear anything because Jesus is our defender. Read the following verses about why we don't need to be afraid with God on our side.

The wicked man flees though no one pursues, but the righteous are as bold as a lion.
—Proverbs 28:1

How can this verse encourage you to be strong in the battles you face?

Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be men of courage; be strong.
—1 Corinthians 16:13

This verse applies to men and women. ***What do you think it means to be on guard? How can being on guard help you be strong against your enemies?***

For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline. —2 Timothy 1:7

Do you ever feel timid or afraid? Why? What kind of spirit have you been given? How can this verse encourage you?

It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in man. —Psalm 118:8

What steps can you take to trust in the Lord and make Him your place of refuge?

The LORD is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth. —Psalm 145:18

How could this verse apply to your personal quiet time? How might having a time set apart to talk to God help you in the battles you face?

Extra Study Option Make photocopies of this Extra Study Option and give it to any student who received salvation today or others who are interested in learning more about salvation. (For more information about the use of Extra Study Options, see page 5.)

DAY FIVE

This is water day to go along with the water that Jesus saved Peter from.

Water Balloon Toss

Supplies:

- One water balloon for each pair of students

Have your X-Teams divide into pairs of teens. Give each pair a water balloon. Each pair tosses their water balloon back and forth, taking one step back after each catch. The pair tossing their water balloon the greatest distance wins points for their X-Team. Add whatever variations on this you desire.

Water Relay

Supplies:

- One water bucket for each team
- Cup
- Water

Have a volunteer from each team lie down on the floor at the end of your relay race field. Place an empty bucket on each volunteer's stomach. Team members must race one at a time carrying a cup of water to pour into the bucket on their teammate's stomach. The team that fills its bucket first wins. For a bit more of a challenge, put a few pinholes in the cups.

Cup Relay

Supplies:

- One cup of water for each team member

Team members carry cups of water on their heads as they walk a relay course.

Soaker

Supplies:

- Two buckets for each team (*one filled with water*)
- Sponge for each team member

Give each team a bucket of water at the start and an empty bucket at the finish. Provide a sponge for each teen. Team members carry water soaked sponges to transfer the water from the full bucket to the empty one. All team members work at the same time. First team done wins.

Water Grab

Supplies:

- Two grab bags
- Waterproof items for grab bag such as (*a different color of water balloons for each team, rubber duckies, pennies, nickels, and dimes, etc.*)
- Wading pool

Adapt the "Grab Bag" game from day one. Use waterproof items in a wading pool with water. The first team to retrieve all of its items wins.

WASHED CLEAN

SESSION FIVE

OPENER

Who's Worth Rescuing?

Time: 15 minutes

Supplies:

- Chalkboard and chalk, or whiteboard and markers (*You may want to have group leaders write the hypothetical characters' information on a whiteboard or chalkboard prior to this opener.*)

After completing the Crazy Comp games have students sit with their X-Teams.

Reality-based shows and games seem to be popping up everywhere! Why do you think reality shows are appealing to many people? After students have answered say, ***Perhaps these shows are popular because the people in them are real and we identify with them somehow. Today we're going to have our own reality show. In your X-Teams I want you to decide who is worth rescuing first and who should be "left behind!" Here is the scenario:***

Your ship has suffered a tragic accident at sea and is sinking. All the passengers are able to safely make it to a nearby island. Soon after arriving on the island a small boat arrives to rescue passengers and return them to the mainland. Eight people need rescuing, but only four can safely travel on the lifeboat. The rest of the passengers will have to wait for another boat to arrive. The next boat may not arrive for several weeks or

even a month or two. From the following list of people, who should be the four on the first lifeboat? You decide!

BOB is a thirty-two-year-old fireman. He has a wife and two young kids at home.

PATRICIA is a seventy-two-year-old lady. Her husband died a year ago and she now lives alone. She has five grown children and 15 grandchildren who love her very much.

EDDIE is a fifty-five-year-old man. Eddie is dying of liver failure caused by a lifetime of alcohol abuse. He is divorced and has no children.

MARIA is a ten-year-old girl. Maria is the best tennis player in her age group in the entire country. She has a

Optional Opener

Discuss rescue attempts and rescues that your students have seen on TV. (If time permits show some video clips from TV rescue programs.) Invite students to talk about rescue situations that impressed them. Dig deeper to explore what the appeal is for the programs. ***Are people attracted to watching the risk a person experiences (such as a burning car, cliff, or ravine, etc.)? Do people like to watch the rescue workers apply their skills? How important is the outcome of the situations in our desire to watch?*** Have teens give as many specifics as they can. Next ask teens to share about a rescue attempt they personally were involved with or witnessed first-hand. Allow as many students as possible to share their experiences.

**Pitfall
Pick-me-up**

Don't trust yourself to save you.
Let Jesus save and keep you.

SESSION FIVE

good chance of making it as a professional athlete one day.

KENNY is an eighteen-year-old aspiring musician. Kenny plays guitar in a pop band and hopes to cut his first CD in the next few months.

BUZZ is a twenty-five-year-old man with a criminal record. Buzz is on parole for good behavior after a car-jacking attempt four years ago. Buzz had a conversion experience in jail and now is in seminary studying to be a pastor.

NICKY is a thirty-year-old waitress. Nicky works nights and weekends to support her two-year-old daughter. The father of the baby is long gone. Nicky wants to make a better life for her daughter and is contemplating quitting her job and going to college.

Give groups time to decide who should be rescued first and who should not. Then go around the groups and have them share aloud who they chose to rescue first and explain the criteria they used in making these judgments.

TABLE TALK

Rotating Responses

Time: 10 minutes

Supplies:

- Copies of Table Talk, "Rotating Responses" (page 43)

Hand out copies of "Rotating Responses." Have students get into their X-Teams and

form two circles, a smaller inner circle and a large outer circle, that face each other. Each circle must have the same number of people so each person faces another. In this activity students will read and answer the questions on their sheets with a partner. The first pairs of people facing each other address the first question in a minute or two. The inner circle rotates to the next person in the outer circle. Have these pairs talk about the second question. Keep going until the inner circle has rotated once for each question given on the "Rotating Responses" sheet. Remember to let the students talk and react without the leaders judging their comments. Teens need to know their opinions will be heard and not instantly rejected.

MESSAGE

Someone to Save Me!

Time: 15 minutes

Supplies:

- Bibles
- Paper, pencils or pens

Have the students open their Bibles to Matthew 14:22-36. Invite three volunteers to read this passage. Have one volunteer be the narrator who reads the story, have another volunteer read the part of Jesus and another read the part of Peter. After students have finished reading aloud, use the following questions to lead a discussion.

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SESSION FIVE

Why do you think Jesus sent the disciples on ahead of Him? How important do you think prayer was to Jesus? When Jesus walked out onto the lake to the disciples, what do you think their reaction was? Do you think they were lacking in faith to think Jesus was a ghost? What would your reaction be if you saw someone walking across the sea at night? What did Jesus say to them? Do you think they were less afraid when they realized it was Jesus walking toward them? When Peter first stepped on the water, why do you think he didn't sink? When Peter became afraid and started sinking, what did he say to Jesus?

Share, Jesus wanted Peter to "Come" out on the water because He wanted to test Peter's faith in Him. When Peter began sinking, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" All Jesus had to do was reach out and Peter was saved from drowning. Not a lot has changed since that time. We still have doubts about who Jesus is. Sometimes we test Jesus just to make sure He's really there. We may not walk on water, but we still do things to test our boundaries and see what we can get away with. When we find ourselves hurting, alone, and scared, we often—like Peter—call out, "Lord, save me!"

Jesus wants to save us today. If you don't know Him as your Savior, He wants to bring you to that saving knowledge in Him. Others of you may know Him as your Savior, but still find

yourself testing His love for you by doing outlandish things or running away from Him when you find yourself in trouble. Jesus promises to save us if only we'll call on Him. Today you can have assurance of His saving grace and love for you!

CHALLENGE Hanging On

Time: 10 Minutes

Supplies:

- Challenge worksheet "Hanging On for Dear Life" (p. 44), pencils

This week we've looked at how we can depend on the Lord. Nahum 1:7 says, "The LORD is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in him."

Think back to the opening activity when we chose who we thought should be rescued first. Because we are human, we are able to look at a person and, based on his or her worth, decide if he or she is worth rescuing. You guys were just following directions to a game so don't feel bad . . . but think for a minute about yourselves. Are you worth saving? Why or why not? What merit do you have on your own that makes you a good person? Give students some time to contemplate these questions on their own. Then say, **None of us are worth saving based on the things we do. All of us are sinners in God's eyes. The good news is, Jesus**

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SESSION FIVE

Christ wants to save you, not because of anything you've done, but because of everything He has done on your behalf. Just as Jesus reached out and saved Peter from drowning, He too wants to reach out to you. Like Peter, it's up to us to put out our hand and say, "Lord, save me!" Don't wait until the waves are crashing all around you and your life is in danger. Realize your need for Jesus today.

Some of you want to put off becoming a Christian until you're older because you're worried that Jesus might "cut into" your fun. It's not like that at all. Life with Jesus is what it's all about. He wants to save you, not because you've earned it, but because He loves you no matter what.

In a few minutes I'm going to hand out a pair of scissors and a life preserver worksheet. The top life preserver is between you and Jesus. Check the box that you feel most comfortable with or fill out your own response to Him. We'll give you five minutes to do this.

The second life preserver is for you to give to a trusted friend. You'll both sign this life preserver as a pact to help out each other and be there for each other in times of hardship that may come.

We all need saving. Sometimes we need a helping hand from a friend. Just knowing there is someone to call in times of need can make a difference. But most importantly, we all need

Jesus Christ. His saving grace is what is most important. He wants to save you from sin and hell and give you eternal life. John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." Today can be the first day of the rest of your life. Won't you personally believe in Jesus and let Him save you?

Hand out the worksheets (p. 44) and allow teens at least five minutes to fill them out and get their signatures from a trusted friend.

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Pick-me-up**

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TABLE TALK WORKSHEET

Rotating Responses

Discuss the following questions and responses with different people that you face in your circle. After you and the person you face have shared, the inner circle will rotate and you will discuss the same question and response with a different person. After you have shared with a number of people you will be directed to move on to the next question.

Describe a time you were physically hurt. Who came to your rescue?

Share about a time when you were scared. What was going on? What did you do to deal with your fear?

What three things in your future make you anxious or worried?

What three things in your future are you excited about or looking forward to?

Who is Jesus to you? What role does He play in your life?

CHALLENGE WORKSHEET

Hanging On for Dear Life

Directions: Everyone needs help from time to time. That much is a given! You are an important person to Jesus Christ and to those who have gotten to know you during this *Amazing Journey with Jesus* program. Take scissors and cut apart the two sections with life preservers below. On the life preserver section to Jesus, acknowledge His ability to save you from the consequences of sin by filling in a checkbox. On the other life preserver section write a note that you will be giving a member of this program. Find someone you trust, either an adult leader, a teammate or a friend you've made. There is a place for you to sign both of these life preservers. The one to Jesus that you sign will designate your level of commitment to Him and His saving grace in your life. The one to a trusted friend will signify his or her willingness to be by your side in future times when you need help. Your trusted friend will also sign the life preserver.



I want to save you! I love you so much that I came to earth and died for you. All you need to do is put your faith in My ability to save you and you can have eternal life! Check one of the following, then sign and date this life preserver as a reminder of My desire to save you!

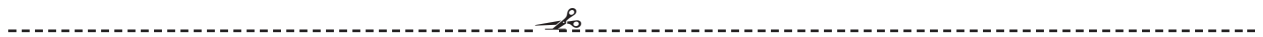
Signed, Jesus Christ



- Lord Jesus, I'm tired of running from You. I know You love me and want to save me. I want to trust You today. Please save me.
- Jesus, I've known You a long time. I know I belong to You. Today I want to recommit myself to You and help others in need of being saved to find You.
- Jesus, I haven't really thought much about You before. This program has really impacted me and how I think about You. I'm not sure yet about my level of commitment to You, but I want to know more and will contact a leader and let him or her know this.

Write your own response if different from above. _____

Signature _____ Date _____



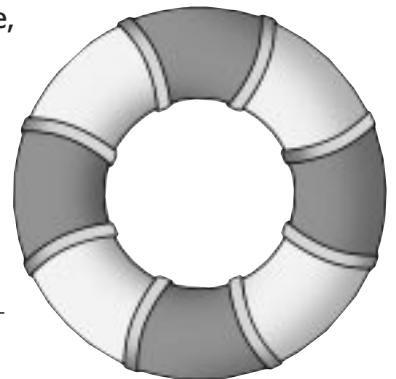
You are a trusted friend. I know I am going to face hard times in the future, but knowing you are there makes my life much easier. Thanks for being someone I can turn to.

Friend's Signature _____

Friend's Phone # _____

Friend's e-mail Address _____

Your Signature _____ Date _____



EXTRA STUDY OPTION

Learn More about the Savior

Look up the following Scriptures to find out more about how Jesus can save you and direct your life.

Proverbs 3:5-6 "Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight." *How can you trust in the Lord this week?*

Ephesians 3:12 "In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence." *How do you approach God? Are you fearful of Him? What level of trust in God do you demonstrate? How might you gain more freedom and confidence in God this week?*

Psalms 49:15 "But God will redeem my life from the grave; he will surely take me to himself." *If you have faith in God, how should you feel about your own impending death?*

Romans 5:1-2 "Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand." *Because of Jesus, you can be saved. You can have peace in your heart and soul. How does this make you feel?*

Ephesians 2:8 "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God." *Take a moment to thank God for this gift of grace He has given you. Most of all, thank Jesus for saving you.*

Extra Study Option Make photocopies of this Extra Study Option and give it to any student who received salvation today or others who are interested in learning more about salvation. (For more information about the use of Extra Study Options, see page 5.)