

Lesson 1 / December 6, 2009

Mission Impossible

for use as

STEP 1

Lesson 1 Focus:

Nothing is impossible
with God.

Lesson 1 Bible Basis:

Luke 1:26-38

Your students will learn to let God take control of their impossible circumstances.

Imagine yourselves in a crowded theater. The lights are dimmed. A hush falls over the crowd. The theme music begins and the black-clad spy crawls his way up the walls. Your hearts pound in anticipation. Can the odds be beat? What if probabilities could be defied?

Impossible missions and tight situations sell a good movie or story. But what happens when the impossible circumstance isn't coming from the page of a good novel or the movie screen? What if the insurmountable problem is something you are facing in your own life?

You could be facing tough relationships, complicated friendships, strained family life, addictions you can't fight, depression, or any other thing that surrounds your life like an impassable fortress. Unfortunately, we can't script out our lives, leave ourselves loopholes to escape through, or map out last minute rescue plans.

But we do have a God that can defeat the impossible, and His master plan is all encompassing. He knows exactly when to intervene in the situation and when to rescue you. He knows when you need an escape route and when you need to face the problem head-on. We are given the task to trust, which is an ongoing mission.

▶ When you are caught in the middle of a hard situation, how do you respond? What is your initial trigger emotion? (*Anger, bravery, bitterness, regret, complete shutdown, etc.*)

While the emotion will vary depending on the situation and your personality, God's response never changes. He is always steady and ready to listen to your problems.

Often we want God to be like a secret gadget that we can pull out of our back pocket when we are in a tight spot to instantly make everything right again. However, God may ask us to face our problems ... without expecting results immediately.

Lesson 1
Memory Verse

What is impossible with men is possible with God.
—Luke 18:27

▶ What good can come out of facing our impossible circumstances in God's strength and timing?

If there were always escape routes, we would become lazy. We would expect the easy way out each and every time. Opportunities for character building would be lost, leaving us ill-equipped for the next mission God may ask us to take. Sometimes, He wants us to learn from our hardships instead of supplying the exit door right away.

Play the following video clip for your students if you have access to an electronic device with Internet access.
[http://www.tangle.com/view_video?viewkey=658f145f8262f1bd2526] If you do not have Internet access, preview the video and explain it to the class.

The little girl in the video was faced with what seemed to be an impossible situation—either her brother would die or she believed that she would die giving him a blood transfusion. While she didn't understand that giving a blood transfusion wasn't life threatening, she was willing to lay down her life for someone else. She trusted her parents even when she could not fully see the whole picture.

When we're in an impossible situation, we don't always know or understand all that is going on around us. It is easy to panic when you don't understand why you are in the situation you find yourself in. God may ask us to do what seems to be impossible in order to test our hearts and inner motives. Just like the little girl in the video clip, we have to trust that our Father knows what is best and that we might not be seeing the whole picture. God sees everything, and trusting Him is the first step to overcoming impossibilities.

- ▶ If God laid some person on your heart to reach, but doing so would cost you something (social status, pride, etc), would you still do it? What if the person seemed impossible to witness to? Would you still be willing to follow God, despite the cost? Explain.**
- ▶ Like the girl in the video clip, we don't always fully understand what we're asked to do. Why do you think that we have many misconceptions and fears that are often unfounded?**

We are afraid of what we don't know or understand. It's puzzling to us to be asked to trust when we can't see the reasons why. But like a parent, God will explain in His time and in a way that we can understand. In the meantime, we are asked to trust Him regardless of the outcome.

(Continue on to Steps 2 and 3 in your *Middle School Teacher's Guide*. Your Step 4 appears below.)

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Divide your class into two teams (Note: If your class is small, then have everyone play on a single team, and see how long it takes the group to complete this game). Have your students make fists, so they can't use their fingers to communicate with during the game. Instruct them that there is to be complete silence during the game – talking will grant victory to other team. Then, instruct them that the first team to line up in order of their birthday (month, day, and year) wins. They must be able to line up without using the normal means of communication such as talking or using their fingers to form numbers. However, they can bend their body into the shape of a number (i.e. the number four to represent the month of April) or they can act out the weather climate for that particular month (i.e. shivering would represent December). As an additional resource, you can set a time limit on accomplishing this feat while playing the theme song to the movie *Mission Impossible*. It can be found at the following website:

[<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XAYhNHhxN0A&NR=1>]

Although the game doesn't completely represent an "impossible mission", there are a lot of similarities. On our own, we can't break through the communication barrier that leads to the vicious cycle of broken relationships that seem impossible to repair. Only God knows how to best direct our actions to overcome the barriers we have between ourselves and other people. During the game, the best chance for success would be to appoint one person to direct the group's efforts to align themselves correctly. The same principle applies to our life—without God to direct us, we will find ourselves stuck in a rut of ongoing problems.

- In life (just like the game), misunderstandings can build into impossible situations in which no one can understand each other. Why can't we solve these problems on our own?** (*All our efforts fall short. God's ability to see the whole picture is why He asks us to give Him control and to trust His plans for us.*)

Mission Impossible was a movie that featured Tom Cruise as Agent Hunt. While the cards are stacked against him, Hunt defies the odds to uncover the truth about a fatal mission that set him up to take the fall. Yet, in the Bible, God has asked many people throughout the ages to do things that seemed impossible. Abraham was told to sacrifice his only son. Moses was called to bring a whole nation out of slavery. Young David had to face larger-than-life

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adversaries (bears, lions, as well as Goliath and his giant race of brothers).

- ▶ Add your story to the list of people who dared to do the impossible with God's strength. What missions has God given you in your life to accomplish (both big and small)?
- ▶ What can we learn from past Christians in the Bible who trusted God in the middle of facing their biggest problems?
- ▶ How can our lives be an example to other people of God's strength through our circumstances?

End with prayer: Father, we come to You as Your children. While we may not fully grasp what You have planned, but we know that in our times of need, You are there. Our idea of what is impossible is vastly different from Your concept. You are the God of limitless possibilities and answers to our circumstances. We ask for continued guidance throughout our lives so we can show others the way to Christ.

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