

Bible Talk Sunday Intro: MIDDLE OF THE WHEEL

Bible basis:

Romans 12:12 (New Living Translation)

¹² *Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying.*

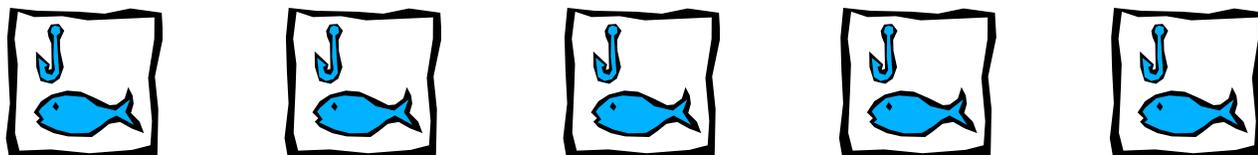
Where do we find hope? *We find hope when we look to Christ as our guide and keep the love of Christ at the Center of our lives.*

Theme Words For The Day: **HOPE, CONFIDENCE, PATIENCE, BROKEN**

Focus Point:

JESUS IS THE MIDDLE OF THE WHEEL – OUR HOPE IN THE DARKNESS.

Materials: *Cabin Mural, Chalk, Paint or other supplies to create Weekly Mural.*



What do the campers think of when they hear the word HOPE?

What does it mean to be confident of something OR confident in someone?

Have the campers name things they are confident about. What does it mean to be sure about something? Are there things the campers do not question – but know in their hearts or minds with certainty just are or will happen. Hopefully they have answers like: I am confident that my family loves me. I am confident that I am going to have a great time this week at camp. I am confident that if I have a problem this week at camp, I can go to my counselor for help. I am confident that I can pass the swim test. I am confident that God created me. I am confident that God loves me.

Are there things the campers are NOT confident about? Another way of looking at this question is to ask, "What are campers afraid of?" There could be any number of answers to this question: Storms, Snakes, Spiders, Bugs, The Forest At Night, The Dark, Being Alone, Being Made Fun Of, Being At Camp For The First Time. Counselors may need to help prompt with ideas if the campers can't think of anything at first.

Theme Verse: Find Romans 12:12 and read together as a cabin. What is our confident hope? Does this verse have any meaning to the campers' lives? How so?

(Older Campers) *Do we need hope? Do the campers know anyone who does not have hope? What are people like who do not have any hope for the future?*

We live in a broken world. We sin every day and are in need of forgiveness. We find HOPE in a future that is filled with love and grace.

Why do we lose HOPE? What happens when we hope for something and day after day – year after year, we do not see anything that tells us we are right to hope for it? For example, parents and children who live in poverty and day after day without food or shelter – who HOPE and PRAY every day that things will change in the country where they live – but it doesn't. Why would this make it hard to continue hoping?

Who are some of the people that we might need to help bring HOPE to?

People in prison, People who are sick, People who are hungry, People who are sad. Can the campers list more people who might need help finding HOPE in their lives?

MAKING THE CABIN MURAL BOARD

Where do we find HOPE in a broken world? Show campers the Mural Board and tell them that our theme for this week is MIDDLE OF THE WHEEL. Draw a wheel on the Mural Board – with enough space to write the theme verse on the outside circle of the wheel.

Explain that each day during bible talk this week, as a cabin group they will be adding sections to the wheels that fit with the summer theme. On Friday, through all the bible stories and daily themes - all the parts of the wheel will come together to help answer the question: ***Where do we find hope? How do we respond as Christians to the fear in our lives?***

Choose some of the Additional Bible Texts to look up and read and talk about.

Romans 5:4

Romans 8:20-24

1 Thessalonians 5:8

John 8:32

Romans 15:13

Psalms 39:7

1 Peter 1:13

Galatians 5:5

Bible Talk Day 1: HUNGER



Bible basis:

Exodus 16:1-35 (New Living Translation)

¹⁷ So the people of Israel did as they were told. Some gathered a lot, some only a little. ¹⁸ But when they measured it out, everyone had just enough. Those who gathered a lot had nothing left over, and those who gathered only a little had enough. Each family had just what it needed.

Where do we find hope? We find hope through faith.

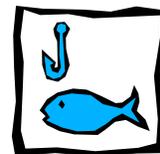
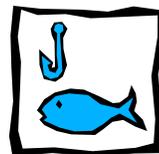
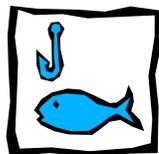
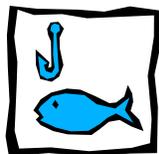
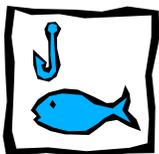
Theme Words For The Day: **HUNGER, UNCERTAIN, WANDER, FAITH**

Old Testament Story Reference: *Israelites Wandering in the Desert*

Focus Points:

- Just as the Israelites wandered in the desert searching for a home, we are wandering in our uncertainty, hungry for understanding and searching for guidance.
- When we are hungry and in pain, we often are not patient and want God to act on our timeline. We make ourselves more important than God.
- Faith comes to us not of our own doing, but by the grace of God and the power of the Holy Spirit.
- We find hope in our weakness when God strengthens our faith.

Materials: *Bibles, Food Tokens, "Good Deed" Supplies: (cardstock, markers, etc), Materials for Yeast Air Balloon: Yeast, Warm Water, Sugar, Balloon, Water Bottle, Funnels, Paint for Cabin Mural, Food Shelf Items.*



Yeast Air Balloon (All) Before you start the Hook, do the beginning of the Yeast Air Balloon activity, mixing up the yeast, sugar, warm water in a bottle and putting the balloon on top. Explain to the campers what you did and set it aside for later.

What Is It? (3rd Grade - Adult) Tell campers that we will be playing 7 rounds of a game called "What is it?". Tell them the following rules: **1. During the first 6 rounds, "food" will be distributed in the playing area. The campers have 10 seconds to gather food. 2. For the 7th round, no food will be distributed.**

After Round One, take from the “rich” and give to the “poor” so that everyone has at least 3 pieces of “food”. To start off with, you may have a lot of food, then slowly distribute less and less so that there are only three pieces of food per camper. Make sure after each round, you go around so everyone has three pieces.

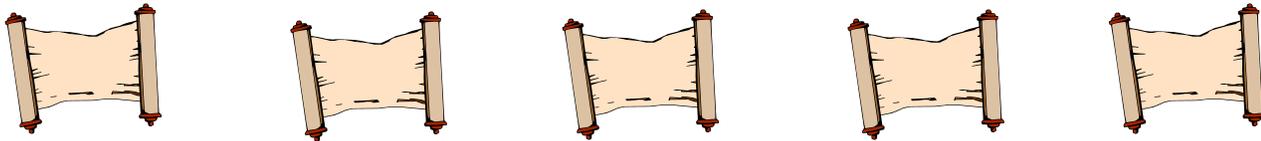
For the 7th round, have them “sleep” (close eyes), but do not distribute food. Say “GO” and see who goes to look for food. Let them search for awhile. When they get frustrated, remind them that you said the seventh round would have no food spread around.

What Is It? After playing the game, engage the campers in a conversation about how Manna has a funny name in Hebrew that literally means “What is it?” Have the campers ever ate something or been asked to eat something that looked weird and made them wonder “what is it?” Manna was a sweet gum or resin type of bread that God supernaturally sent from Heaven to feed His people.

Manna started on the sixteenth day of the second month after they had come out of Egypt and they ate manna until they reached the border of Canaan.

Manna lasted only for one day other on the sixth day it lasted for two days as the seventh day was a holy rest day. Read the Bible story of the day. Once read, have a discussion about the game. **Does the game seem similar to the story? How so? How is it different?**

FP: When we are hungry and in pain, we often are not patient and want God to act on our timeline.



The game we just played is very similar to something that happened in the Old Testament to the Israelites while they were lost in the wilderness. Let me tell you the story of the Israelites complaining and hungering as they wandered in the desert because they would not listen and did not have faith.

Dramatic Reading *Manna and Quail (All)*

Either you can choose to read the story to your campers, seeing as it is the first day. OR if you have a fairly dramatic group – you can have them take turns reading. However, the key is to read as dramatically as possible – giving different voices and inflections to the various characters in the story. If the Israelites are whiney, then you must read with a whiney, irritating voice.

Read Exodus 16:1-35 ¹ Then the whole community of Israel set out from Elim and journeyed into the wilderness of Sin, between Elim and Mount Sinai. They arrived there on the fifteenth day of the second month, one month after leaving the land of Egypt. ² There, too, the whole community of Israel complained about Moses and Aaron. ³ “If only the LORD had killed us back in Egypt,” they moaned. “There we sat around pots filled with meat and ate all the bread we wanted. But now you have brought us into this wilderness to starve us all to death.”

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Look, **I'm going to rain down food from heaven for you. Each day the people can go out and pick up as much food as they need for that day. I will test them in this to see whether or not they will follow my instructions.**"⁵ **On the sixth day they will gather food, and when they prepare it, there will be twice as much as usual."**⁶ So Moses and Aaron said to all the people of Israel, "By evening you will realize it was the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt."⁷ In the morning you will see the glory of the LORD, because he has heard your complaints, which are against him, not against us. What have we done that you should complain about us?"⁸ Then Moses added, "The LORD will give you meat to eat in the evening and bread to satisfy you in the morning, for he has heard all your complaints against him. What have we done? Yes, your complaints are against the LORD, not against us."

⁹ Then Moses said to Aaron, "Announce this to the entire community of Israel: 'Present yourselves before the LORD, for he has heard your complaining.'"¹⁰ And as Aaron spoke to the whole community of Israel, they looked out toward the wilderness. There they could see the awesome glory of the LORD in the cloud.¹¹ Then the LORD said to Moses,¹² "I have heard the Israelites' complaints. Now tell them, 'In the evening you will have meat to eat, and in the morning you will have all the bread you want. Then you will know that I am the LORD your God.'"

¹³ That evening vast numbers of quail flew in and covered the camp. And the next morning the area around the camp was wet with dew.¹⁴ When the dew evaporated, a flaky substance as fine as frost blanketed the ground.¹⁵ The Israelites were puzzled when they saw it. "What is it?" they asked each other. They had no idea what it was. And Moses told them, "It is the food the LORD has given you to eat."¹⁶ These are the LORD's instructions: Each household should gather as much as it needs. Pick up two quarts for each person in your tent."

¹⁷ So the people of Israel did as they were told. Some gathered a lot, some only a little.¹⁸ **But when they measured it out, everyone had just enough. Those who gathered a lot had nothing left over, and those who gathered only a little had enough. Each family had just what it needed.**¹⁹ Then Moses told them, "Do not keep any of it until morning."²⁰ But some of them didn't listen and kept some of it until morning. But by then it was full of maggots and had a terrible smell. Moses was very angry with them.

²¹ After this the people gathered the food morning by morning, each family according to its need. And as the sun became hot, the flakes they had not picked up melted and disappeared.²² **On the sixth day, they gathered twice as much as usual—four quarts for each person instead of two. Then all the leaders of the community came and asked Moses for an explanation.**²³ **He told them, "This is what the LORD commanded: Tomorrow will be a day of complete rest, a holy Sabbath day set apart for the LORD. So bake or boil as much as you want today, and set aside what is left for tomorrow."**

²⁴ So they put some aside until morning, just as Moses had commanded. And in the morning the leftover food was wholesome and good, without maggots or odor.²⁵ Moses said, "Eat this food today, for today is a Sabbath day dedicated to the LORD. There will be no food on the ground today."²⁶ You may gather the food for six days, but the seventh day is the Sabbath. There will be no food on the ground that day."

²⁷ Some of the people went out anyway on the seventh day, but they found no food. ²⁸ The LORD asked Moses, **"How long will these people refuse to obey my commands and instructions?"** ²⁹ **They must realize that the Sabbath is the LORD's gift to you. That is why he gives you a two-day supply on the sixth day, so there will be enough for two days. On the Sabbath day you must each stay in your place. Do not go out to pick up food on the seventh day."** ³⁰ **So the people did not gather any food on the seventh day.**

The Israelites called the food manna. It was white like coriander seed, and it tasted like honey wafers. Then Moses said, "This is what the LORD has commanded: Fill a two-quart container with manna to preserve it for your descendants. Then later generations will be able to see the food I gave you in the wilderness when I set you free."

³³ Moses said to Aaron, "Get a jar and fill it with two quarts of manna. Then put it in a sacred place before the LORD to preserve it for all future generations." ³⁴ Aaron did just as the LORD had commanded Moses. He eventually placed it in the Ark of the Covenant—in front of the stone tablets inscribed with the terms of the covenant. ³⁵ **So the people of Israel ate manna for forty years until they arrived at the land where they would settle. They ate manna until they came to the border of the land of Canaan.**

FP: Just as the Israelites wandered in the desert searching for a home, we are wandering in our uncertainty, hungry for understanding and searching for guidance.



HOPE IN ACTION (Hiya-Hiya!!!) – New Testament Connection

Yeast Air Balloon (All)

Jesus tells us that He is the Bread of Life. *So what do we know about bread?* It is made from flour, water, butter/oil, AND – YEAST! Check out the following experiment to see what we can learn about the power of THE BREAD OF LIFE.

The purpose of yeast is to produce the gas that makes bread rise. Yeast does this by feeding on the sugars in flour, and expelling carbon dioxide in the process. *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*, commonly known as baker's yeast, is the one most often used in the kitchen. Yeast is tiny: Just one gram holds about 25 billion cells. That amount of fungi can churn out a significant amount of carbon dioxide, provided it has the simple sugars it uses as food. Fortunately, yeast can use its own enzymes to break down more complex sugars—like the granulated sugar in the activity below—into a form that it can consume.

You will need the following items:

- **1 packet of active dry yeast**
- **1 cup very warm water (105° F–115° F)**
- **2 tablespoons sugar**
- **a large rubber balloon**
- **a small (1-pint to 1-liter) empty water bottle**

1. Stretch out the balloon by blowing it up repeatedly, and then lay it aside.
2. Add the packet of yeast and the sugar to the cup of warm water and stir.
3. Once the yeast and sugar have dissolved, pour the mixture into the bottle. You'll notice the water bubbling as the yeast produces carbon dioxide.
4. Attach the balloon to the mouth of the bottle, and set both aside.
5. After several minutes, you'll notice the balloon standing upright. If you don't see anything happen, keep waiting. Eventually, the balloon will inflate.

As the yeast feeds on the sugar, it produces carbon dioxide. With no place to go but up, this gas slowly fills the balloon. A very similar process happens as bread rises. Carbon dioxide from yeast fills thousands of balloon-like bubbles in the dough. Once the bread has baked, this is what gives the loaf its airy texture.

Jesus spins the idea of bread to refer to spiritual food. Jesus is the Bread of Life. What is this supposed to mean? Take a look at the following verses:

1. **John 6:27** [*Jesus, the **Bread of Life**] Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For on him God the Father has placed his seal of approval."*
2. **John 6:32-34** *The true **bread** of God is the one who comes down from heaven and gives **life** to the world."*
3. **John 6:34-36** *Jesus replied, "I am the **bread of life**. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry again. Whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."*
4. **John 6:47-49** *Yes, I am the **bread of life!***

What does it mean for Jesus to say that He is the "bread of life"? The yeast-air balloon symbolizes how "the bread of life" has an enormous amount of power. Next to the power of love, HOPE is possibly one of the most powerful things there are in any relationship we have with God and with others. Hope is like the yeast that even though it is small, produces a huge amount of bubbling in our gut and helps us to find courage, helps us to trust even when we are afraid or angry.

FP: Faith comes to us not of our own doing, but by the grace of God and the power of the Holy Spirit.

(Junior and/or Senior High) Catechism Connection

Define Hunger. What are some of the things we "hunger" for? When we are children? When we start going to school? When we become teen agers? When we are parents? When we start a job? When we are older grandparents?

Take a look at the 3rd Petition of the Lord's Prayer: On Earth as it is in Heaven. How does this relate to the story about the "Manna from Heaven"? What mistake did the Israelites

make when gathering the gift they were given from heaven? *They tried to store it up. They didn't trust that God would give them what he promised?*

How do we do this today? Name a time when you did not trust the God would provide what you needed? Do we confuse what we think we need with what God actual gives and provides for us? The 4th Petition of the Lord's Prayer tells us "Give us this day our daily bread." What does this mean?

Can we think of any examples of how we might live "on earth as if it was heaven"?

Hunger Spin

Read Temptation Story Matthew 4:1-4 The Temptation of Jesus

¹ Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted there by the devil.
² For forty days and forty nights he fasted and became very hungry. ³ During that time the devil came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become loaves of bread."

⁴ **But Jesus told him, "No! The Scriptures say, 'People do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"**

Jesus spins the idea of food to mean spiritual food. He is the Bread of Life.



MIDDLE OF THE WHEEL - Cabin Mural

Using your Cabin Mural Board that your Cabin created together on Sunday, **Add today's verse from Exodus 16:18** *But when they measured it out, everyone had just enough.* **Add the word "Hunger" to the First Spoke on the Wheel.** List the various things the campers can do to find HOPE when we are hungry for something to let us know everything will be ok. *We learned that there are lots of ways to hunger besides just needing food to eat. Jesus tells us that HE IS THE BREAD OF LIFE – THE MIDDLE OF THE WHEEL for us when we are lost or afraid or upset.*

FP: We find hope in our weakness when God strengthens our faith.

Closing Prayer

Random Acts of Kindness (Grade 7-Adult) If you have time: Have campers brainstorm a quick, easy "good deed" that they might do to help someone else in camp. For example, there are tons of places they can clean. They could make "cheer you up" notes for another cabin. They could make thank you cards for the office or kitchen or whoever. They could clean up the environment. They could bring wood out to a campout area. Take about 15 minutes to do this "good deed".

Read James 2:14-17 Faith without Good Deeds Is Dead

¹⁴ *What good is it, dear brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but don't show it by your actions? Can that kind of faith save anyone?* ¹⁵ *Suppose you see a brother or sister who has no food or clothing,* ¹⁶ *and you say, "Good-bye and have a good day; stay warm and eat well"—but then you don't give that person any food or clothing. What good does that do?* ¹⁷ *So you see, faith by itself isn't enough. Unless it produces good deeds, it is dead and useless.*

What does this passage from James tell us about how we are to live out our faith? What if we sit at home on our couches saying to ourselves --- what a great Christian I am – I have so much faith in God. I don't need to leave this couch because God and the Holy Spirit have given me such a strong faith. Is this what we do with a gift we are given by God?

FOOD SHELF PRAYER (All) Have campers who brought food shelf items go and get these. Go to the Chapel and gather in the front by the Cross. As the campers place the food items in the Collection Container, circle together and say the following Prayer. **Dear God. Thank you for the many gifts you give us every day. Just like the Israelites, I may wonder "what is it" that you are giving me and I may wonder "where are you taking me" – but I trust that you will strengthen my faith and my hope in Jesus – who is the Bread of Life for us all when we are hungry for more than just food to eat – when we are hungry for the love and grace that only you can provide for us. Amen**

Bible References

Matthew 4:1-4 (The Temptation of Jesus) *Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted there by the devil. ² For forty days and forty nights he fasted and became very hungry. ³ During that time the devil came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become loaves of bread."⁴ But Jesus told him, "No! The Scriptures say, 'People do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"*

1 Kings 17:8-16 (The Widow at Zarephath) *But Elijah said to her, "Don't be afraid! Go ahead and do just what you've said, but make a little bread for me first. Then use what's left to prepare a meal for yourself and your son. ¹⁴ For this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: There will always be flour and olive oil left in your containers until the time when the LORD sends rain and the crops grow again!"*

¹⁵ *So she did as Elijah said, and she and Elijah and her family continued to eat for many days. ¹⁶ There was always enough flour and olive oil left in the containers, just as the LORD had promised through Elijah.*

Matthew 25:35-45 *For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. ³⁶ I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me.'* ³⁷ *"Then these righteous ones will reply, 'Lord, when did we ever see you hungry and feed you? Or thirsty and give you something to drink?' ³⁸ Or a stranger and show you hospitality? Or naked and give you clothing? ³⁹ When did we ever see you sick or in prison and visit you?'* ⁴⁰ *"And the King will say, 'I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!'*

Matthew 5:1-12 (The Sermon on the Mount) *God blesses those who hunger and thirst for justice, for they will be satisfied.*

2 Peter 1:3 (Growing in Faith) *By his divine power, God has given us everything we need for living a godly life. We have received all of this by coming to know him, the one who called us to himself by means of his marvelous glory and excellence.*

Philippians 1:20 (Paul's Life for Christ) *For I fully expect and hope that I will never be ashamed, but that I will continue to be bold for Christ, as I have been in the past. And I trust that my life will bring honor to Christ, whether I live or die.*

Romans 5:1-5 (Faith Brings Joy) *We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance. ⁴ And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation. ⁵ And this hope will not lead to disappointment.*

Acts 2:32-33 *"God raised Jesus from the dead, and we are all witnesses of this. ³³ Now he is exalted to the place of highest honor in heaven, at God's right hand. And the Father, as he had promised, gave him the Holy Spirit to pour out upon us, just as you see and hear today.*

Additional Bible Dive Resources: Hungering and Thirsting for God: Hunger for God by Mike Cope

*Until we understand that and respond to his love, we are like the prodigal son, searching again for the security of our home. And our search will end in disappointment until we search for God. No human relationship, no job, no possession, and no amount of money or success can ultimately satisfy us. **Our hunger is for God. Not God as a doctrine... or as an idea... or as the necessary conclusion of our "proofs."** But God as a living Being. As a Someone who pursues a relationship — with us!*

For those of us with a Christian heritage this seems so obvious. But there are a couple of problems we face as Christians: barriers that can easily sidetrack us in our response to God, barriers that keep us from realizing we are all God-hungry and that only he can fill us.

Barrier One: Our Confusion One problem is our tendency to confuse knowledge about God with knowing God. We easily fall into the trap of believing that information is the key to eternal life. So we turn to "data-based Christianity" to fill us with knowledge about God. We then open the pages of Scripture to memorize events that can later be regurgitated as if Christian living were similar to a sophomore history class. What happened on the fifth day of Creation? Who were Moses' parents? Who was the second judge? What objects were in the Ark of the Covenant? How many chapters are in the Book of Psalms? As a result, we can become proficient in biblical information without becoming closer to God or more sensitive to the people he created.

Don't misunderstand me: I'm all in favor of learning the information of Scripture. But biblical knowledge shouldn't necessarily be the goal of our reading. Scripture was written to reveal to us a God who longs for relationships. It pleads with us to long for him as well. The goal of Scripture isn't minds filled with facts about God but hearts using those facts to be full of his presence.

Scripture was written to reveal to us a God who longs for relationships.

I remember reading about Dennis Wise, a young man who spent all his time collecting Elvis memorabilia: clothes, records, photographs, programs. He even underwent plastic surgery to try to look more like his hero. But his great regret was that he never got to meet the man he adored.

A similar but much greater tragedy with many Christians is that they spend years listening to sermons, reading Scripture, and teaching Sunday school classes, but fail to enjoy an intimate relationship with God. They could pass any theological exam or answer any Bible trivia question. But they don't hunger and thirst to know God personally, to be filled with his presence, to be changed into his likeness. No wonder religion often becomes empty!

Barrier Two: Our Satisfaction A second problem we face is that we're too easily satisfied. We're like the toddler who could wait and have a wonderful meal at 6:00 but who finds an old hot dog from lunch on the floor at 5:40 and gobbles it down. We are offered a fabulous vacation by the ocean and settle instead for wading in a ditch.

Instead of craving a vibrant relationship with the God who made us, we settle for a house, a family, a few friends, a job, a TV and DVD, and a yearly vacation. We think we can survive with this and just a bit of religion. Yet our souls starve!

That is the sobbing that can be heard all around us — even though people may not know what or whom they are crying for. But the things we accumulate in life can't satisfy us and can't give us purpose.

Only God can fill our deepest hunger.

Bible Talk Day 2: OBEY



Bible basis:

Daniel 6:1-28 (New Living Translation)

*Very early the next morning, the king got up and hurried out to the lions' den. ²⁰ When he got there, he called out in anguish, "Daniel, servant of the living God! Was your God, whom you serve so faithfully, able to rescue you from the lions?" Daniel answered, "Long live the king! ²² My God sent his angel to shut the lions' mouths so that they would not hurt me, for I have been found innocent in his sight. And I have not wronged you, Your Majesty." The king was overjoyed and ordered that Daniel be lifted from the den. **Not a scratch was found on him, for he had trusted in his God.***

Where do we find hope? We find hope through the Word of God.

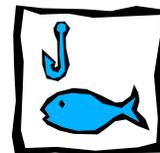
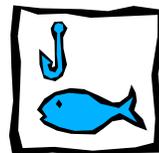
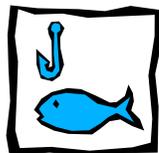
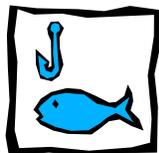
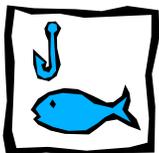
Theme Word For The Day: Listen, Faithful, Trust

Old Testament Story References: Daniel and the Lion's Den

Focus Points:

- God not only strengthens our faith, but gives us His word to feed our hungry hearts and minds.
- Just as God is faithful to us, so should we be faithful and obedient servants to God and to each other.
- God's word gives us conscience and direction.
- We find hope through the power of the word of God.

Materials: Bibles, Coin to Flip, Object to Grab, Piece of Wood (Pine), Hammer, Nails, Foam Microphones, Mousetraps, Paint for Cabin Mural.



Listen Carefully – Electric Pulse Game modified (3 Grade-Adult)

Divide the campers into 2 teams. Have them sit with their backs to each other and hold onto each other's hand so that they can feel the light squeeze that will be passed from person to person along the line. Only the person sitting next to the counselor can see the coin drop. When the coin drops, if it is tails, both groups do nothing. If it is heads, a hand squeeze should be sent down each line. The first team to have the pulse reach the end, grabs the item that has been placed between the two groups and the team rotates 1 person forward. When every person has rotated through once – this team wins.

Each time one of the teams accidentally sends a pulse when the coin is tails – this symbolizes that they have just disobeyed (or they have not listened). How does this affect the team? How do they respond to the person who “didn’t listen”? ---the team goes backwards instead of forwards. There are consequences for our actions – and we regret that we did not listen or do what we knew was the right thing to do.

Extend this to a conversation about the power of listening and following the rules – as when the group was successful and working together. Or how disobeying can destroy relationships and people as well. What happened if the group was talking or not listening or joking around? Usually the message was mixed up. Sometimes disobeying can lead to someone getting seriously hurt – both physically and emotionally. Rules are in place to help us.

How often do we think we know better than God or our parents or our teachers? How often do we follow others because we are scared to say NO when we know doing something is wrong? The power of forgiveness!!! In the game, was the game over when we made a mistake and went backwards. NO!!! We got many more chances to make it right and move forward again. This is what the love of Jesus does for us – we make mistakes, but if we can ask for forgiveness if we are sorry in our hearts!!!

FP: God not only strengthens our faith, but gives us His word to feed our hungry hearts and minds.

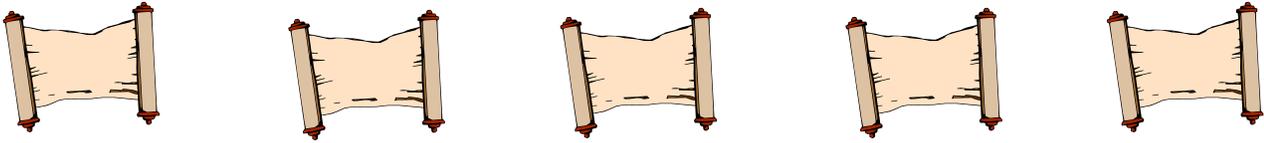
OR

Leaving a Mark (ALL)

1. ***Have the campers use the hammer to put nails into the piece of wood.*** After they have each had a chance, tell the story about the young boy who was very angry and his father told him to pound a nail into a fence post each time he couldn’t control his anger and said harsh words to someone else. After awhile, hundreds of nails had been pounded into the fence – but over time, the boy learned to control his anger until he didn’t need to pound nails into the fence anymore.

2. ***Have the campers remove some of the nails from the board so they can see the holes left behind.*** Finish telling the story: Then his father told him to remove a nail each time a situation came up where he was able to control his anger. Nail by nail, the boy was able to remove all the nails that he had pounded into the fence. His father pointed out however, that each nail, which represented a harsh word that had been spoken, left a hole behind – just as the harsh words we say leave a hole in the people they are spoken to when we get angry. This is the same when we disobey God – a hole is left behind that can be very painful.

Take campers to one of the living trees around camp that have been tapped with a hole for maple syrup. An interesting extension of this story is that these “living trees” (unlike the dead fence posts in the story) have holes that are able to fill themselves in over time --- just like the power of forgiveness and the love that goes along with forgiving someone else can heal the wounds. However, if we remain angry we are like the dead fence post and the holes will never fill in or heal. You can relate this to the amazing way God created people so that they might heal over time.



The following bible story tells us a little more about how hard it can be sometimes to follow the rules. Rules can be confusing. **How do we know which rules to follow? What if we are told one thing from our parents and another thing from our friends and yet another thing from television? Who should we listen to?**

FP: God's word gives us conscience and direction.

Persian Nightly News Hour

Assign campers various parts of the story. There are plenty to go around. 1. Daniel, 2. King Darius, 3. The High Officers, 4. The Lions. As the counselor reads the story, the various characters will act out their parts, not necessarily saying anything, but they can act as if they are talking if the story calls for this.

Read Daniel 6:2-28 Daniel in the Lions' Den

² King Darius chose Daniel and two others as administrators to supervise the high officers and protect the king's interests. ³ Daniel soon proved himself more capable than all the other administrators and high officers. Because of Daniel's great ability, the king made plans to place him over the entire empire.

⁴ Then the other administrators and high officers began searching for some fault in the way Daniel was handling government affairs, but they couldn't find anything to criticize or condemn. He was faithful, always responsible, and completely trustworthy. ⁵ So they concluded, "Our only chance of finding grounds for accusing Daniel will be in connection with the rules of his religion."

⁶ So the administrators and high officers went to the king and said, "Long live King Darius! ⁷ We are all in agreement—that the king should make a law that will be strictly enforced. Give orders that for the next thirty days any person who prays to anyone, divine or human—except to you, Your Majesty—will be thrown into the den of lions. ⁸ And now, Your Majesty, issue and sign this law so it cannot be changed, an official law of the Medes and Persians that cannot be revoked." ⁹ So King Darius signed the law.

¹⁰ **But when Daniel learned that the law had been signed, he went home and knelt down as usual in his upstairs room, with its windows open toward Jerusalem. He prayed three times a day, just as he had always done, giving thanks to his God.** ¹¹ Then the officials went together to Daniel's house and found him praying and asking for God's help. ¹² So they went straight to the king and reminded him about his law. "Did you not sign a law that for the next thirty days any person who prays to anyone, divine or human—except to you, Your Majesty—will be thrown into the den of lions?" "Yes," the king replied, "it is an official law of the Medes and Persians that cannot be revoked."

¹³ Then they told the king, "That man Daniel, one of the captives from Judah, is ignoring you and your law. He still prays to his God three times a day." ¹⁴ Hearing this, the king was deeply troubled, and he tried to think of a way to save Daniel. He spent the rest of the day looking for a way to get Daniel out of this predicament. ¹⁵ In the evening the men went

together to the king and said, "Your Majesty, you know that according to the law of the Medes and the Persians, no law that the king signs can be changed." ¹⁶ So at last the king gave orders for Daniel to be arrested and thrown into the den of lions. The king said to him, "May your God, whom you serve so faithfully, rescue you."

¹⁷ A stone was brought and placed over the mouth of the den. The king sealed the stone with his own royal seal and the seals of his nobles, so that no one could rescue Daniel. ¹⁸ Then the king returned to his palace and spent the night fasting. He refused his usual entertainment and couldn't sleep at all that night.

¹⁹ **Very early the next morning, the king got up and hurried out to the lions' den.**

²⁰ **When he got there, he called out in anguish, "Daniel, servant of the living God! Was your God, whom you serve so faithfully, able to rescue you from the lions?"**

²¹ **Daniel answered, "Long live the king!"** ²² **My God sent his angel to shut the lions' mouths so that they would not hurt me, for I have been found innocent in his sight. And I have not wronged you, Your Majesty."** ²³ **The king was overjoyed and ordered that Daniel be lifted from the den. Not a scratch was found on him, for he had trusted in his God.**

Optional for Older Campers: ²⁴ Then the king gave orders to arrest the men who had maliciously accused Daniel. He had them thrown into the lions' den, along with their wives and children. The lions leaped on them before they even hit the floor of the den.

²⁵ Then King Darius sent this message to the people of every race and nation and language throughout the world: "Peace and prosperity to you!" ²⁶ "I decree that everyone throughout my kingdom should tremble with fear before the God of Daniel. For he is the living God, and he will endure forever. His kingdom will never be destroyed, and his rule will never end. ²⁷ He rescues and saves his people; he performs miraculous signs and wonders in the heavens and on earth. He has rescued Daniel from the power of the lions." ²⁸ So Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

Upon finishing the story, either the counselor or campers, if they are comfortable with this role, can use the foam microphone to interview the characters as if they are going to be the number one story on the evening news hour. "This is "Counselor's Name" reporting live from Persia. Today, an incredible story has taken place and we are on the scene to talk with those involved. Daniel, can you tell us your story? What happened? How do you feel?", etc. etc with each of the various characters until all have been interviewed.

Discussion: So, what do we learn about obeying God from this story? Even though Daniel knew that the high officers of the King were jealous of him and trying to get the King to make a law that would make him have to choose between praying to God and disobeying God. What did Daniel do? What happened? How did the King feel about this? Why did the King make the law if he didn't want to hurt Daniel? Why didn't Daniel get eaten? **God wanted everyone, especially King Darius to know that he was the one, true God and had the power to save Daniel, his faithful, obedient servant.**

FP: Just as God is faithful to us, so should we be faithful and obedient servants to God and to each other.



HOPE IN ACTION (Hiya-Hiya) – New Testament Connection

Obeying Requires Courage Read Matthew 14:22-34 Jesus Walks on Water

²² Immediately after this, Jesus insisted that his disciples get back into the boat and cross to the other side of the lake, while he sent the people home. ²³ After sending them home, he went up into the hills by himself to pray. Night fell while he was there alone.

²⁴ Meanwhile, the disciples were in trouble far away from land, for a strong wind had risen, and they were fighting heavy waves. ²⁵ About three o'clock in the morning^[b] Jesus came toward them, walking on the water. ²⁶ When the disciples saw him walking on the water, they were terrified. In their fear, they cried out, "It's a ghost!"

²⁷ **But Jesus spoke to them at once. "Don't be afraid," he said. "Take courage. I am here!"** ²⁸ Then Peter called to him, "Lord, if it's really you, tell me to come to you, walking on the water." ²⁹ "Yes, come," Jesus said. So Peter went over the side of the boat and walked on the water toward Jesus. ³⁰ But when he saw the strong wind and the waves, he was terrified and began to sink. "Save me, Lord!" he shouted. ³¹ Jesus immediately reached out and grabbed him. "You have so little faith," Jesus said. "Why did you doubt me?" ³² When they climbed back into the boat, the wind stopped. ³³ Then the disciples worshiped him. "You really are the Son of God!" they exclaimed.

FP: We find hope through the power of the word of God.

Mouse Trap Demonstration

Through the various stories and conversation we have had during the bible dive, we have learned that obeying requires a certain amount of COURAGE. Using a regular mousetrap and a blind fold, first set the mousetrap and set it on the picnic table or flat surface nearest to you.

Have the campers blindfold the counselor, turn them in a circle and then as the campers give vocal instructions, the goal is to lead the counselor to the mousetrap and place their hand directly over the set mousetrap. Once the campers have assured the counselor that their hand is directly over the mousetrap, the counselor is to very quickly put their hand on the set mousetrap and hold it their (be careful, once you let go, the mousetrap will go off).

The idea is to demonstrate the level of courage and trust the counselor has through a "leap of faith" exercise. Just like Daniel trusted God in the Lion's Den. If you believe that your campers are mature enough to handle the exercise, you can let them try the activity once they have seen how to do it. In pairs or groups, they can blindfold each other and test their level of trust.

(Junior and/or Senior High) Catechism Connection

Think about the following: 1) 6th Petition (And Lead Us Not Into Temptation); 2) 7th Petition (But Deliver Us From Evil)

How might each of these relate to what we have been talking about today? What temptations are campers dealing with every day? Is this hard? How so? What do you decide to do? Where do you go for help?

Have campers share their stories about being tempted to: Lie, Cheat, Steal, Do Drugs, Have Sex, Make Fun of Others, Write nasty things about others, etc.

*Even Jesus struggled. **Read Matthew 26:36-43** Garden of Gethsemane ³⁶ Then Jesus went with them to the olive grove called Gethsemane, and he said, "Sit here while I go over there to pray." ³⁷ He took Peter and Zebedee's two sons, James and John, and **he became anguished and distressed.** ³⁸ **He told them, "My soul is crushed with grief to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me."***

³⁹ He went on a little farther and bowed with his face to the ground, praying, "My Father! If it is possible, let this cup of suffering be taken away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine."

⁴⁰ Then he returned to the disciples and found them asleep. He said to Peter, "Couldn't you watch with me even one hour?" ⁴¹ Keep watch and pray, so that you will not give in to temptation. For the spirit is willing, but the body is weak!"

⁴² Then Jesus left them a second time and prayed, "My Father! If this cup cannot be taken away^[g] unless I drink it, your will be done." ⁴³ When he returned to them again, he found them sleeping, for they couldn't keep their eyes open.

Read the rest of the Temptation Story Matthew 4:5-11

The Temptation of Jesus ⁵ Then the devil took him to the holy city, Jerusalem, to the highest point of the Temple, ⁶ and said, "If you are the Son of God, jump off! For the Scriptures say, 'He will order his angels to protect you. And they will hold you up with their hands so you won't even hurt your foot on a stone.'" ⁷ **Jesus responded, "The Scriptures also say, 'You must not test the LORD your God.'"**

⁸ Next the devil took him to the peak of a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. ⁹ "I will give it all to you," he said, "if you will kneel down and worship me."

¹⁰ **"Get out of here, Satan," Jesus told him. "For the Scriptures say, 'You must worship the LORD your God and serve only him.'"** ¹¹ Then the devil went away, and angels came and took care of Jesus.



MIDDLE OF THE WHEEL - Cabin Mural

Using your Cabin Mural Board, **Add today's verse from Daniel 6:23** *Not a scratch was found on him, for he had trusted in his God.* **Add the word "Obey" to the Second Spoke on the Wheel.** List the various ways that you commit to obeying and listening to God.

Closing Prayer: *Dear God, Where is my hope in the midst of distraction and temptation? When my hope seems to run out, I will think about how even Christ struggled and asked for help. When my hope seems to run out, I will remember that Christ was given the strength He needed. When my hope seems to run out, I will remember that even the disciples were afraid and made mistakes. When my hope seems to run out, I will ask "Lead me not into temptation" and trust in God, just as Daniel did in the middle of the Lion's Den. Amen.*

Bible References

Genesis 12:1-7 *The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father's family, and go to the land that I will show you. ² I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others. ³ I will bless those who bless you and curse those who treat you with contempt. All the families on earth will be blessed through you."*

⁴ **So Abram departed as the LORD had instructed,** and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he left Haran. ⁵ He took his wife, Sarai, his nephew Lot, and all his wealth—his livestock and all the people he had taken into his household at Haran—and headed for the land of Canaan.

When they arrived in Canaan, ⁶ Abram traveled through the land as far as Shechem. There he set up camp beside the oak of Moreh. At that time, the area was inhabited by Canaanites. ⁷ Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, "I will give this land to your descendants." **And Abram built an altar there and dedicated it to the LORD, who had appeared to him.**

Joshua 1:8 *Study this Book of Instruction continually. Meditate on it day and night so you will be sure to obey everything written in it. Only then will you prosper and succeed...*

John 14:15 **"If you love me, obey my commandments.**

Luke 6:46 *"So why do you keep calling me 'Lord, Lord!' when you don't do what I say?"*

Matthew 7:21 *"Not everyone who calls out to me, 'Lord! Lord!' will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. **Only those who actually do the will of my Father in heaven will enter.**"*

Ephesians 6:5-9 *Slaves, obey your earthly masters with deep respect and fear. Serve them sincerely as you would serve Christ.* ⁶ Try to please them all the time, not just when they are watching you. As slaves of Christ, do the will of God with all your heart. ⁷ Work with enthusiasm, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people. ⁸ Remember that the Lord will reward each one of us for the good we do, whether we are slaves or free. ⁹ Masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Don't threaten them; remember, you both have the same Master in heaven, and he has no favorites.

Isaiah 1:19 *If you will only obey me, you will have plenty to eat.*

Luke 5:3-9 *Stepping into one of the boats, Jesus asked Simon, its owner, to push it out into the water. So he sat in the boat and taught the crowds from there.* ⁴ When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Now go out where it is deeper, and let down your nets to catch some fish." ⁵ "Master," Simon replied, "we worked hard all last night and didn't catch a thing. **But if you say so, I'll let the nets down again.**" ⁶ And this time their nets were so full of fish they began to tear! ⁷ A shout for help brought their partners in the other boat, and soon both boats were filled with fish and on the verge of sinking. ⁸ When Simon Peter realized what had happened, he fell to his knees before Jesus and said, "Oh, Lord, please leave me—I'm too much of a sinner to be around you." ⁹ For he was awestruck by the number of fish they had caught, as were the others with him.

Bible Talk Day 3: PRAY



Bible basis:

Jonah 2:1-10 (New Living Translation)

Then Jonah prayed to the LORD his God from inside the fish. He said, "I cried out to the LORD in my great trouble, and he answered me. I called to you from the land of the dead, and LORD, you heard me!"

Where do we find hope? *We find hope through prayer.*

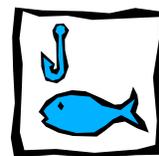
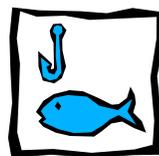
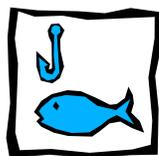
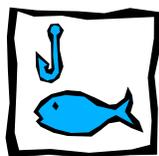
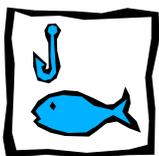
Theme Words For The Day: **Pray, Connect, Talk, Ask**

Old Testament Story Reference: *Jonah and the Whale*

Focus Points:

- We pray to a God that we can't see, but we see what God does.
- Prayer helps us build our relationship with God.
- Jesus prayed during times of struggle and uncertainty.
- We find hope through prayer and the ability to talk to God about anything and everything.

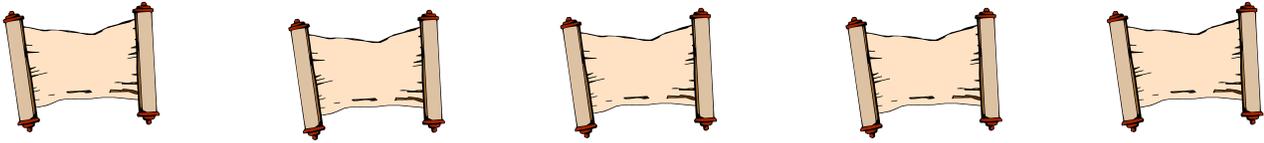
Materials: *Bibles, Poles, Magnets, Hula Hoop, Question Cards, Obnoxious Noise Cards, Cardstock, Markers, Butcher Paper, Chalk Paint for Cabin Mural.*



Fishing Game (All)

One at a time, give each camper a fishing pole with a magnet. Place the hula hoop in the center of the campers and have them go "fishing". When they "catch" a card, have them read the question on the card and answer the question for the rest of the group. The questions provided will be a variety of "get to know ya" questions that they have to answer.

Make the connection to the daily theme of "how do we find hope through prayer". Ask the campers questions about difficult times when prayer was needed or about when we pray.



Obnoxious Noise Reading (All)

Divide the campers into 2 groups with each group having certain key words that they are to listen for in the story. Give each group the card with their noises on to remind them when they are to participate. **Group 1:** Pray or Call, Belly/Fish, Lord or God, Praise.

Group 2: Trouble or Distress, Water/Sea (Waves), Vomit, Jonah (I or me).

Campers are given a moment to come up with a sound and action for each of the words. The counselor reads the story and the campers do their sound or action each time the words are read in the story.

Read Jonah 2:1-10 Jonah's Prayer

¹ Then Jonah **prayed to the LORD his God from inside the belly of the fish.**

² He said, "**I cried out to the LORD in my great trouble, and he answered me. I called to you from the land of the dead, and LORD, you heard me!**

³ You threw me into the ocean depths, and I sank down to the heart of the sea. The mighty waters engulfed me; I was buried beneath your wild and stormy waves.

⁴ Then I said, 'O LORD, you have driven me from your presence. Yet I will look once more toward your holy Temple.'

⁵ "I sank beneath the waves, and the waters closed over me. Seaweed wrapped itself around my head. ⁶ I sank down to the very roots of the mountains. I was imprisoned in the earth, whose gates lock shut forever. But you, O LORD my God, snatched me from the jaws of death! ⁷ As my life was slipping away, I remembered the LORD. **And my earnest prayer went out to you in your holy Temple.**

⁸ Those who worship false gods turn their backs on all God's mercies. ⁹ But I will offer sacrifices to you with songs of praise, and I will fulfill all my vows. For my salvation comes from the LORD alone." ¹⁰ Then the LORD ordered the fish to spit/vomit Jonah out onto the beach.

Reflection: Take a moment to talk about what happens in this story. Maybe even re-read the story one more time without the distractions of the obnoxious noises.

- 1. What do we learn about prayer from Jonah?**
- 2. When does God hear us? Can we think of examples when God might not listen to us? What would be doing that would make God not listen?**
- 3. What are the different reasons Jonah gives for praying? When we are in trouble? When we are singing songs of praise?**
- 4. How can a prayer be a covenant (an agreement) between us and God? Jonah says, "I will fulfill my vows." What does this mean?**

FP: We pray to a God that we can't see, but we see what God does.



HOPE IN ACTION (Hiya-Hiya!!!) – New Testament Connection

FP: Prayer helps us build our relationship with God. We are told in Psalm 145:18 ¹⁸ *The LORD is close to all who call on him, yes, to all who call on him in truth.*

Read Jesus at Gethsemane Story (Grade 4-Adult)

Matthew 26:36-46 ³⁶ Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." ³⁷ He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. ³⁸ Then he said to them, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me."

³⁹ Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."

⁴⁰ Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "Couldn't you men keep watch with me for one hour?" he asked Peter. ⁴¹ "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

⁴² He went away a second time and prayed, "My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done." ⁴³ When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. ⁴⁴ So he left them and went away once more and prayed the third time, saying the same thing. ⁴⁵ Then he returned to the disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Look, the hour has come, and the Son of Man is delivered into the hands of sinners. ⁴⁶ Rise! Let us go! Here comes my betrayer!"

Compare and Contrast

Jonah	Jesus
Why did Jonah pray?	Why did Jesus pray?
How did Jonah pray?	How did Jesus pray?
Where is Jonah? How did he get there?	Where is Jesus? Why is He there?
How are they the same?	
How are they different?	
How is Jonah building a relationship with God through his prayer?	How is Jesus building a relationship with God through prayer?
Is Jonah really praying? Or is he just telling a story of something terrible happening to him...	Is Jesus really praying? Or is He just "complaining" to His Father about how bad things are going to be...

Compare and contrast their situations. *How are their stories similar and How are their stories different? Were they both really a prayer? How and why? Talk about the results as a group.*

Take a look at the following verses about praying and talking to God. What do we learn from these?

Ephesians 6:18 ¹⁸ *Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere.*

OR Luke 11:5-13 ⁵ *Then Jesus said to them, "Suppose you have a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; ⁶ a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have no food to offer him.' ⁷ And suppose the one inside answers, 'Don't bother me. The door is already locked, and my children and I are in bed. I can't get up and give you anything.' ⁸ I tell you, even though he will not get up and give you the bread because of friendship, yet because of your shameless audacity he will surely get up and give you as much as you need.*

⁹ *"So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. ¹⁰ For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. ¹¹ "Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? ¹² Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? ¹³ If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"*

What other stories from the New Testament can the campers think of that talk about someone praying? Why do these individuals pray?

(Junior and/or Senior High) Catechism Connection

4th Petition: Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread

3rd Article: The Holy Spirit has called me and **kept me in the true faith.**

Think back to the Jonah and Jesus comparison again. Add a third column with ME as the main character being looked at. *Have each camper compare themselves to Jonah and Jesus. Alike? Different? Have the campers reflect on how and when and why they pray.*

Using the 5th Petition and the 3rd Article from Luther's Small Catechism, *what do these things mean in terms of how we pray? Do we truly believe that the Holy Spirit calls us? Do we believe that God gives us our "daily bread"? What does this mean for us personally? What does this mean from a global perspective? What about inequity in terms of who has food to eat and who doesn't? What does this mean for us as we think about HOPE IN ACTION on a daily basis?*

Have each camper take a moment to think quietly about how they might make a personal change to act in a way that creates HOPE for others. Either through prayer or through another means...have them share their ideas with the group.



MIDDLE OF THE WHEEL - Cabin Mural

Using your Cabin Mural Board, **Add today's verse from Jonah 2:2** *I cried out to the LORD in my great trouble, and he answered me.* **Add the word "Pray" to the Third Spoke on the Wheel.** List the various things the campers can do to find HOPE IN ACTION through prayer. *What if we did not believe in the ability to "talk" to God? How would this change the way we see God?*

FP: We find hope through prayer and the ability to talk to God about anything and everything.

Closing Prayer: FP: Jesus prayed during times of struggle and uncertainty. Jesus prayed for us. What are some of the ways that Jesus prays for us? Imagine the voice of Jesus is speaking to you as you read the following closing prayer together.

John 17:15-24 ¹⁵ *I'm not asking you to take them out of the world, but to keep them safe from the evil one.* ¹⁶ *They do not belong to this world any more than I do.* ¹⁷ **Make them holy by your truth; teach them your word, which is truth.** ¹⁸ **Just as you sent me into the world, I am sending them into the world.** ¹⁹ *And I give myself as a holy sacrifice for them so they can be made holy by your truth. I pray that they will all be one, just as you and I are one—as you are in me, Father, and I am in you. And may they be in us so that the world will believe you sent me.* ²⁴ **Father, I want these whom you have given me to be with me where I am. Then they can see all the glory you gave me because you loved me even before the world began!**

Bible References

Hebrews 11:1 (Great Examples of Faith) *Faith is the confidence that what we hope for will actually happen; it gives us assurance about things we cannot see.*

Ephesians 6:18 *Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere.*^[a]

Psalms 145:18 *The LORD is close to all who call on him, yes, to all who call on him in truth.*

1 Samuel 1:9-28 (Story of Hannah) ²⁶ *"Sir, do you remember me?" Hannah asked. "I am the woman who stood here several years ago praying to the LORD.* ²⁷ *I asked the LORD to give me this boy, and he has granted my request.* ²⁸ *Now I am giving him to the LORD, and he will belong to the LORD his whole life."* And they^[a] worshiped the LORD there.

Philippians 4:6 *Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done.*

Mark 11:24 *I tell you, you can pray for anything, and if you believe that you've received it, it will be yours.*

Bible Talk Day 4: EMBRACE



Bible basis:

Genesis 50: 14-21 (New Living Translation)

¹⁹ But Joseph replied, "Don't be afraid of me. Am I God, that I can punish you?" ²⁰ You intended to harm me, but God intended it all for good. He brought me to this position so I could save the lives of many people. ²¹ No, don't be afraid. I will continue to take care of you and your children." So he reassured them by speaking kindly to them.

Where do we find hope? We find hope through Acceptance.

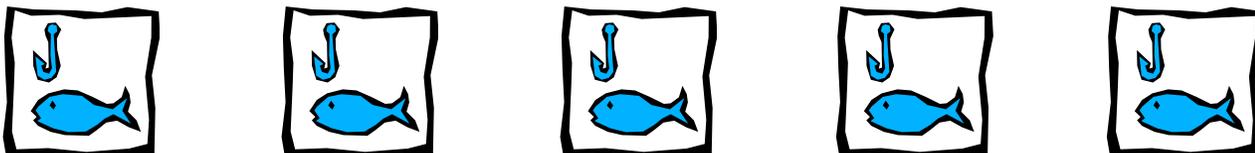
Theme Words For The Day: **Accept, Tolerant, Humility, Topsy-Turvey**

Old Testament Story References: *Joseph And His Brothers*

Focus Points:

- God created the world out of nothing. Nothing is God's favorite material to work with.
- We come into the world with nothing.
- We don't have what it takes to "be something", but we have God.
- We find hope through humility and acceptance.

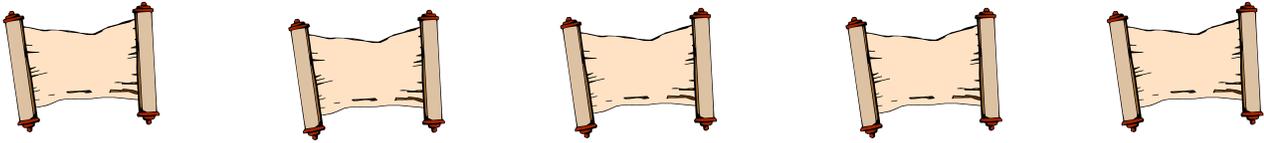
Materials: **Bibles, Playdough, Nothing Is Something Cards, Cardstock, Markers, Crayons, Cardstock Wheel Pieces, Pens/Pencils, Paint for Mural.**



Nothing Is Something Game (K-Adult)

Using playdough or other items – perhaps items around you in nature, have campers create something out of nothing, Have campers create something that they love. It could be family, it could be a musical instrument, it could be a computer, it could be a pet, it could be a sport... Tell the campers that just as they just did, God created them out of nothing. God changes nothing into something amazing through His amazing love for us!!!

Let me tell you a not so well known secret of God. FP: God created the world out of nothing. Nothing is God's favorite material to work with.



Comic Book Joseph in a Nutshell (All)

In Joseph's story, he had nothing at times as well. His brothers wanted to kill him. They sold him into slavery and told his father who loved him that he was dead. Wrongfully accused of a crime he did not do and thrown into jail. Left for dead again. Yet, out of the nothing – God always had plans for Joseph to be something.

Assign the following basic points from the Joseph story to each camper. Give each camper a piece of cardstock and markers to draw a comic book page about 1 of the following assigned parts of the Joseph story. When all are done, put the pages together in order and show the campers the "comic book" they have made.

Assign the following basic points from the Joseph story:

1. *Family – was the favorite, saw visions. (Genesis 37:1-36)*
2. *Plot against him by his brothers*
3. *Sold into slavery*
4. *Good servant Pontifer's house (Genesis 39:1-23)*
5. *Jailed, Interprets Dreams of Inmates (Genesis 40:1-23)*
6. *Interprets Pharaoh's Dreams (Genesis 41:1-57)*
7. *Made Ruler of Egypt, 2nd only to Pharaoh*
8. *Brothers starving come to visit (Genesis 42:1-38)*
9. *Brothers 2nd Visit/Benjamin & Stolen Cup (Genesis 43:1-34, Genesis 44:1-34)*
10. *Joseph Reveals His Identity (Genesis 45:1-28)*
11. *Jacob comes to Egypt (Genesis 46:1-34)*

Flip of Grace (All) We just retold the story up to the point where they returned to Egypt after Jacob, Joseph's Dad, dies. The brothers are extremely nervous because they think Joseph will want to take revenge against them, and Dad isn't around anymore to protect them. *WHAT IS GOING TO HAPPEN? What would you do if you were Joseph and you finally could deal with the brothers that had left you for dead so long ago?*

Read Genesis 50:14-21 Joseph Reassures His Brothers

¹⁴ After burying Jacob, Joseph returned to Egypt with his brothers and all who had accompanied him to his father's burial. ¹⁵ But now that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers became fearful. "Now Joseph will show his anger and pay us back for all the wrong we did to him," they said. ¹⁶ So they sent this message to Joseph: "Before your father died, he instructed us ¹⁷ to say to you: 'Please forgive your brothers for the great wrong they did to you—for their sin in treating you so cruelly.' So we, the servants of the God of your father, beg you to forgive our sin." When Joseph received the message, he broke down and wept. ¹⁸ Then his brothers came and threw themselves down before Joseph. "Look, we are your slaves!" they said.

¹⁹ **But Joseph replied, "Don't be afraid of me. Am I God, that I can punish you?"**
²⁰ **You intended to harm me, but God intended it all for good. He brought me to this position so I could save the lives of many people.** ²¹ **No, don't be afraid. I will continue to take care of you and your children." So he reassured them by speaking kindly to them.**



HOPE IN ACTION (Hiya-Hiya!!!) – New Testament Connection

FP: We find hope through humility and acceptance.

Read Luke 14:7-9 Jesus Teaches about Humility

⁷ When Jesus noticed that all who had come to the dinner were trying to sit in the seats of honor near the head of the table, he gave them this advice: ⁸ **"When you are invited to a wedding feast, don't sit in the seat of honor. What if someone who is more distinguished than you has also been invited?"** ⁹ The host will come and say, 'Give this person your seat.' Then you will be embarrassed, and you will have to take whatever seat is left at the foot of the table!

What is Jesus trying to teach in this story? Is he telling us that we don't deserve to be recognized when we do something awesome? NOT AT ALL. But there is a difference between waiting for others to praise us AND telling everyone ourselves how great we are. This is called boasting. And most often when we say we are the best or that we have all the answers, something happens to prove that we are not the best – usually in a very humiliating, embarrassing way. **Do the campers have any examples of when this might have happened to them? Some time when they thought they were "all that" and something happened to "bring them down a notch."**

We all make mistakes and we all fall short in some way. A humble person doesn't need to tell everyone else how great he or she is. Honor is given to us by others.

FP: We don't have what it takes to "be something", but we have the God that it takes.

But, I'm Not Good Enough?

Read Exodus 3:9-15 Moses Called to Lead Israel ⁹ Look! The cry of the people of Israel has reached me, and I have seen how harshly the Egyptians abuse them. ¹⁰ Now go, for I am sending you to Pharaoh. You must lead my people Israel out of Egypt."

¹¹ But Moses protested to God, "Who am I to appear before Pharaoh? Who am I to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt?" ¹² **God answered, "I will be with you.** And this is your sign that I am the one who has sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God at this very mountain."

¹³ But Moses protested, "If I go to the people of Israel and tell them, 'The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,' they will ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what should I tell them?" ¹⁴ God replied to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. Say this to the people of Israel: I AM has sent me to you." ¹⁵ God also said to Moses, "Say this to the people of Israel: Yahweh, the God of your ancestors—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob—has sent me to you. This is my eternal name, my name to remember for all generations.

What do we learn from this story? How does Moses react to what God tells him or asks of him? There is a difference between being HUMBLE and being SCARED or even WHINEY because you don't want to do something you are asked to do. It is interesting to see that even someone like Moses was kind of scared and replies "*but God, I don't wanna do that...*" How often do we whine or come up with excuses when our parents, teachers, grandparents, adult leaders, etc ask us to do something that we "don't wanna do"?

Moses didn't want to have anything to do with being a leader. Again and again he pleaded with God to choose someone else, but God wouldn't give up on Moses. God knew Moses better than Moses knew himself and God had a plan for Moses to be one of the most famous and faithful servants of all the stories in the bible.

FP: We come into the world with nothing. All that we are was created by God.

If all that we are was created by God, even though we come into the world with nothing, God gives us something good to share with the rest of the world, just like Moses or Noah. What are some of these good things?

Wheel Puzzle Affirmation

Take a wheel made out of cardstock and cut into 8-12 puzzle pieces. Give each camper and the counselor 1 piece of the puzzle. Have them write their name on that puzzle piece.

Now pass each puzzle piece one person to the left. Have each person write one thing on the puzzle piece that is positive and affirming about that person (the person on their right). Continue passing the puzzle pieces one person to the right until each camper has written 1 affirmation on every puzzle piece and the piece finally ends up back with the original person whose name is on the puzzle piece.

Put the pieces together to create a wagon wheel. Ask the campers, what is our theme for this summer? *MIDDLE OF THE WHEEL!!!* Ask the campers to notice that even though Jesus is the middle of the wheel, we each have amazing things about us AND that Jesus wants us to be His hands and feet in the world – working to show everyone the love of Christ every day. This is hard work – but Jesus wouldn't ask us to do this if He didn't know that we were the perfect people for the job.

(Junior and/or Senior High) Catechism Connection

Give each camper three colored cards to represent 1 of 9 types of people: **Gamer, Athlete, Outdoor-Lover, Joker, Hippy, Intellectual, Profiler, Gossiper, People-pleaser, etc. OR perhaps have them label themselves as a "type of person".**

Counselors gives the group a situation: E.g., You are all going to the movie, look around the group and find and tag the ones that you would not usually spend time with and you get their color tokens. If anyone runs out of tokens they are out for the rest of the game. *How do we judge people? How did it feel to be the one who ran out of tokens first – knowing that this meant you are the a person that people wouldn't spend time with? Have you ever been left out? Have you ever felt like you had nothing?*

Think about the following: 1st Article: I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth. ***How does our belief that an almighty, all-knowing God created everything relate to what we have been talking about today?***

God created everything, including us and it was good. We aren't the ones who say that it was good. God said it was good. God also created us in His own image. ALL PEOPLE were created in God's image, not just us. This isn't some personal gift that only certain, chosen individuals were given. *When it comes to doing a better job of embracing ALL PEOPLE as chosen and created in God's image – how does this thought change the way we might look at and treat certain people?*

ACCEPTANCE AND TOLERANCE REQUIRES A LITTLE PAIN AND SACRIFICE!!!

Think back to the game you played at the very beginning where certain people are left out, not accepted and possibly not even tolerated. We do things that make it clear to these "outsiders" that we don't want them anywhere near us. ***What are some of these things that we might do to tell certain people that we don't want them to even exist in our perfect world?***

To make ourselves feel better about ourselves, we laugh or say, "we were just kidding OR can't you take a joke". **HURTING OR BULLEYING SOMEONE ELSE TO MAKE YOURSELF SEEM COOL OR FUNNY ISN'T FUNNY AT ALL – IT IS MEAN, TOTALLY SELF-FOCUSED BEHAVIOR THAT LEADS TO VERY SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES.** *Young people cutting, turning to drugs or alcohol to feel better, committing suicide, beating or killing others in revenge often begin with something that seems "harmless" to those who aren't the ones being made fun of.*

IT IS TIME TO STOP LAUGHING AND START TOLERATING. IT IS TIME TO STOP TALKING ABOUT THE PROBLEM AND START INVITING ALL TO PARTICIPATE. This doesn't mean you have to be best friends with every single person you meet. All it means is that you might want to consider a kind word to someone who is left out or

perhaps take 1 day to go to a movie or hang out with someone on the fringe. This little action could mean the difference between life and death sometime later on.

If you are the one on the outside, remember the story of Joseph and what he said to His brothers who left him for dead, "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good." God intends your life to be something good. **DON'T GIVE UP HOPE, BUT REMEMBER THAT HOPE IS FOUND THROUGH TOLERANCE AND PATIENCE, EVEN WITH THOSE WHO WOULD DO HARM TO US.**

We find HOPE through humility and acceptance.



MIDDLE OF THE WHEEL - Cabin Mural

Using your Cabin Mural Board, **Add today's verse from Genesis 50:20** *You intended to harm me, but God intended it all for good.* **Add the word "Embrace" to the Fourth Spoke on the Wheel. Write the names of anyone that you are going to try harder to embrace either while you are at camp or when you get home.** We don't need to know who these people are – you know why you put their name on the mural. Perhaps there is someone that makes you mad or that you have made fun of at school. Perhaps there is someone who has done something mean to you and you are having a hard time forgiving them.

Closing Prayer:

Read the following as a Prayer asking God to open your heart to welcome anyone that God puts in your path. God does not always present us with exactly the situation or exactly the people that we "want". How can we learn to "want" exactly what God gives us – even the mean, nasty or scary?

Dear God. This being human is a guest house. Every morning a new arrival. A joy, a depression, a meanness, some momentary awareness comes. As an unexpected visitor.

Welcome and entertain them all! Even if they're a crowd of sorrows, who violently sweep your house empty of its furniture, still treat each guest honorably. He may be clearing you out for some new delight.

The dark thought, the shame, the malice, meet them at the door laughing, and invite them in. Be grateful for whoever comes, because each has been sent as a guide from beyond.

Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi

Bible References

Jeremiah 29:11 *For I know the plans I have for you," says the LORD. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.*

Acts 8:29-40 (Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch) *The Holy Spirit said to Philip, "Go over and walk along beside the carriage." ³⁰ Philip ran over and heard the man reading from the prophet Isaiah. Philip asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?" ³¹ The man replied, "How can I, unless someone instructs me?" And he urged Philip to come up into the carriage and sit with him. ³² The passage of Scripture he had been reading was this: "He was led like a sheep to the slaughter. And as a lamb is silent before the shearers, he did not open his mouth. ³³ He was humiliated and received no justice. Who can speak of his descendants? For his life was taken from the earth."*

³⁴ *The eunuch asked Philip, "Tell me, was the prophet talking about himself or someone else?" ³⁵ So beginning with this same Scripture, Philip told him the Good News about Jesus. ³⁶ As they rode along, they came to some water, and the eunuch said, "Look! There's some water! Why can't I be baptized?"^[c] ³⁸ He ordered the carriage to stop, and they went down into the water, and Philip baptized him.*

Romans 8:28 *And we know that God causes everything to work together^[a] for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.*

Proverbs 23:18 *You will be rewarded for this; your hope will not be disappointed.*

Romans 12:3 *Because of the privilege and authority God has given me, I give each of you this warning: Don't think you are better than you really are. Be honest in your evaluation of yourselves, measuring yourselves by the faith God has given us.*

Bible Talk Day 5: SAVIOR



Bible basis:

Isaiah 53:1-6 (New Living Translation)

⁵ *But he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins.*

He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed.

⁶ *All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God's paths to follow our own. Yet the LORD laid on him the sins of us all.*

Where do we find hope? *We find hope through Redemption.*

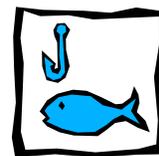
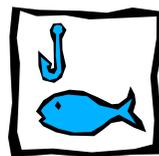
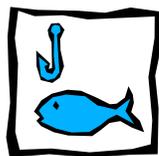
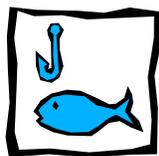
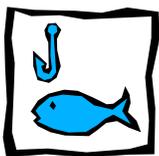
Theme Words For The Day: Anticipate, Redeem, Fulfill, Promise

Old Testament Story References: *Prophecy Story*

Focus Points:

- Our hope is strengthened when we are reassured about the future.
- Immanuel – Christ, our Savior, is with us in all times in all places.
- Jesus puts the hope of prophecy into action through His own words and promises during His life of earth.
- We find hope through grace, forgiveness and redemption.

Materials: Bibles, Hope Stones, Paint for the Mural, Butcher Paper, Markers for Prophet Hangman.



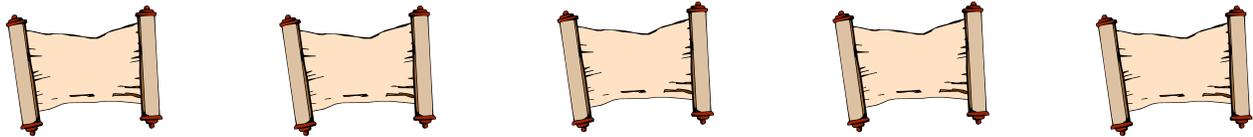
Shields and Enemies (All)

Have all the campers sit in a circle and close their eyes. Tell them that when they are told to open their eyes, the first person they see or look at is their enemy. Tell campers that they will also need a shield. They should look around the circle and pick 1 person to be their shield. The goal of the game is to stay shielded from their enemy throughout the game – but they have to keep moving at all times. And they cannot control where their shield (the person they picked) and their enemy (the first person they looked at) will move to. Chaos tag ensues as all participants attempt to move themselves into a position that keeps them shielded from their enemy.

To signal that the game is over and the campers should gather back together, Sing "You're my rock, my sword, my shield." As loud as you can. You may also hear other cabins singing this song as well. See if your cabin can be the loudest!!!

The idea of this final bible talk is to pull our Overall Summer Theme – **Middle of the Wheel** together with the past few days – equipping the campers to go back home knowing where they can find hope when they need it and trusting that hope is always present in Christ. Christ is our shield.

So, let's take a closer look at the question, **why do we need Jesus to be our "Rock, Sword and Shield."** **What are we worried about and afraid of?**



FP: Our hope is strengthened when we are reassured about the future.

When asked what people are afraid of, many people say they are most afraid of what they don't know. They are afraid of what will happen tomorrow. They are afraid of not being in CONTROL of everything. What if we had a way of knowing the future? The bible has Prophets that were supposed to tell everyone what God's plan was...to learn more about the prophets, let's play a little Hangman.

Prophet Hangman? (All)

Engage the campers in a few quick rounds of Hangman using the following Prophet related definitions. Pick a word or phrase for each of the nine things listed that some might say a Prophet does. For example, the first round of Hangman could be the word REVEAL or the phrase **To Reveal God To Us**, taken from Number One.

God chose men to be prophets who would obey Him faithfully and He gave them authority to speak on His behalf. Prophets were not chosen or elected by men, and they were not permitted to inherit the title or regard it as an official post to be filled by a man specially trained for it. Notice also that **God told them what to do**. Their work was:

1. To REVEAL the nature and attributes of God to men. He said: "I am the Lord your God, he who brought you from the land of Egypt, from the place of slavery. You must not have any other gods besides me. You must not make for yourself an image of anything in heaven above, on earth below, or in the waters beneath. You must not worship or serve them, for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God." (Deuteronomy 5:4-10).

2. To make known to men the laws of God.

3. To call the people back to obedience to God's laws. Read 2 Chronicles 24:19— *The Lord sent prophets among them to lead them back to him. They warned the people, but they would not pay attention.*

4. To exhort the people to sincerity in worship. An example of this is found in Jeremiah 7:1-11: *The Lord said to Jeremiah: "Stand in the gate of the Lord's temple and*

proclaim this message: 'Listen, all you people of Judah who have passed through these gates to worship the Lord. Hear what the Lord has to say. You must change the way you have been living and do what is right. You must treat one another fairly. Stop oppressing foreigners who live in your land, children who have lost their fathers, and women who have lost their husbands. Stop killing innocent people in this land. Stop paying allegiance to other gods. That will only bring about your ruin. If you do all this, I will let you continue to live here in this land which I gave to your ancestors as a lasting possession.

5. To warn them of Divine judgment upon sin, both personal and national. See Jeremiah 36:30-31: *So the Lord says concerning King Jehoiakim of Judah, "None of his line will occupy the throne of David...I will punish him and his descendants and the officials who serve him for the wicked things they have done..."*

6. To foretell future events which God had willed. A good illustration of this would be Jeremiah 30:1-3: *The Lord spoke to Jeremiah. He said, "The Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, 'Write everything that I am about to tell you in a scroll. For I, the Lord affirm that the time will come when I will reverse the fortunes of my people, Israel and Judah,' says the Lord. 'I will bring them back to the land I gave their ancestors and they will take possession of it once again.'"*

7. To foretell the coming of the Messiah, the Savior. See for example Isaiah 9:6: *For a child has been born to us, a son has been given to us. He shoulders responsibility and is called: Extraordinary Strategist, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

8. To record the history of God's relationship with people. An example of this is in Deuteronomy 31:9-13: *Then Moses wrote down this law and gave it to the Levitical priests, who carry the ark of the Lord's covenant, and to all Israel's elders.*

9. To record the Word of God in the Holy Scriptures. The following are examples of this: *And the Lord said to Moses, "Write this as a memorial in the book, and rehearse it in Joshua's hearing; for I will surely wipe out the remembrance of Amalek from under the heavens." (Exodus 17:14).*

FYI: Who are the prophets OR books of the prophets in the bible? Have the campers look in their bibles to see if they can figure out who the prophets are.

Major: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations (written by Jeremiah), Ezekiel, Daniel

Minor: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

"HE" is Coming Lectio Divina (Grade 3-Adult)

Ok, so if Isaiah was one of the great prophets, what did he have to tell us about finding hope in the midst of the unknown. What does he say about keeping Jesus at the Middle of my Wheel?

Using the Lectio Devina Method, Read Isaiah 53:1-12 four different times, each time focusing on a different aspect of the words of scripture and how we can gain insight

into the bible passage. Remind the campers that this is a kind of different way of reading the bible and requires a little more focus.

LECTIO DIVINA Some 1800 years ago men and women retreated to lonely places to escape the stresses of daily life and developed Lectio Divina or 'Sacred Reading', a way of meditating that people have found helpful ever since. Traditionally it involved a 'slow reading' of a chosen text from the Bible and allowing the words to speak in new ways. There are four parts to a Lectio Divina exercise.

- 1. Reading (lectio)** – Have your campers close their eyes and stay quiet for a moment. Slowly begin reading the biblical passage as if it were a long awaited letter addressed to them. Approach it reverentially and expectantly, in a way that savors each word and phrase. Read the passage until each camper hears a word or phrase that touches them, resonates, attracts or even disturbs them. **Have the campers share what word or phrase popped out to them.**
- 2. Reflecting (meditatio)** – Tell campers to ponder this word or phrase as the passage is read a second time. Tell your campers, *"Listen for what the word or phrase is saying to you at this moment in your life, what it may be offering to you, what it may be demanding of you."* **How is this passage relative to our lives today? Why did this word or phrase pop out to them at this time? Is there something happening in their lives that relates to the bible verse?**
- 3. Expressing (oratio)** – When the campers seem ready, ask them to openly and honestly express to God the prayers that arise within them as they think about their word or phrase. These may be prayers of thanksgiving, asking, intercession, lament, or praise. **Take a few minutes of silence for each camper to pray (silently or out loud) as you read all or part of the passage a third time.**
- 4. Resting (contemplatio)** - Allow campers to simply rest silently for a time in the stillness of their hearts, remaining open to the quiet fullness of God's love and peace.

Allow yourself freedom. The aim is to move into the depths of silence and stillness where we can hear the Word spoken to us in love and respond to this Word with our love and our life. This is a gentle invitation into a movement from silence into the Word and back into silence, dwelling there in the presence of God.

Isaiah 53:1-12 *Who has believed our message? To whom has the LORD revealed his powerful arm? ² My servant grew up in the LORD's presence like a tender green shoot, like a root in dry ground. There was nothing beautiful or majestic about his appearance, nothing to attract us to him. ³ He was despised and rejected - a man of sorrows, acquainted with deepest grief. We turned our backs on him and looked the other way. He was despised, and we did not care.*

⁴ *Yet it was our weaknesses he carried; it was our sorrows that weighed him down. And we thought his troubles were a punishment from God, a punishment for his own sins! ⁵ But he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed. ⁶ All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God's paths to follow our own. Yet the LORD laid on him the sins of us all.*

⁷ He was oppressed and treated harshly, yet he never said a word. He was led like a lamb to the slaughter. And as a sheep is silent before the shearers, he did not open his mouth.

⁸ Unjustly condemned, he was led away. No one cared that he died without descendants, that his life was cut short in midstream. But he was struck down for the rebellion of my people. ⁹ He had done no wrong and had never deceived anyone. But he was buried like a criminal; he was put in a rich man's grave.

¹⁰ But it was the LORD's good plan to crush him and cause him grief. Yet when his life is made an offering for sin, he will have many descendants. He will enjoy a long life, and the LORD's good plan will prosper in his hands. ¹¹ When he sees all that is accomplished by his anguish, he will be satisfied. And because of his experience, my righteous servant will make it possible for many to be counted righteous, for he will bear all their sins. ¹² I will give him the honors of a victorious soldier, because he exposed himself to death. He was counted among the rebels. He bore the sins of many and interceded for rebels.

Reflection: Isaiah refers to "a servant" who we turned our backs on, who was despised and rejected, unjustly condemned and led away.

What other lines from Isaiah tell us who this "servant" is? How do we feel about the fact that this was written long before Jesus was even born?

What if we lived during the time of Isaiah, would knowing that Jesus was coming have made a difference in our lives? Would we have believed Isaiah or would we have thought he was a crazy person?

There are lots of people today to make predictions about Jesus coming again. **How do we know who to believe?**



HOPE IN ACTION (Hiya-Hiya!!!) – New Testament Connection

FP: Jesus puts the hope of prophecy into action through His own words and promises during His life of earth.

Read Romans 5:1-11 Faith Brings Joy ⁵ Therefore, since we have been made right in God's sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us. ² Because of our faith, Christ has brought us into this place of undeserved privilege where we now stand, and we confidently and joyfully look forward to sharing God's glory.

³ We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance. ⁴ And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation. ⁵ And this hope will not lead to disappointment. For we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love.

⁶ When we were utterly helpless, Christ came at just the right time and died for us sinners. ⁷ Now, most people would not be willing to die for an upright person, though someone might perhaps be willing to die for a person who is especially good. ⁸ But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners. ⁹ And since we have been made right in God's sight by the blood of Christ, he will certainly save us from God's condemnation. ¹⁰ For since our friendship with God was restored by the death of his Son while we were still his enemies, we will certainly be saved through the life of his Son. ¹¹ So now we can rejoice in our wonderful new relationship with God because our Lord Jesus Christ has made us friends of God.

On the Line (All)

How many sins do you have? Draw a line in the dirt or with chalk on the sidewalk or create a line in some way. Ask "Have you ever..." questions, and if they have done it they have to stand on the line. For example, "Have you ever lied?" Counselors keep track in their head, if anyone gets to 3 times – they are told that this is too many sins and they need to sit off to the side.

After a few campers are sent to the side, 77X7 rule is injected into the game. Jesus tells us that we will be forgiven as many times as we need. There is no 1 sin that condemns us or a number of sins that is too many for Christ to love us enough to forgive us. His grace is sufficient (enough) for us. Create some way of having the campers form a cross. How does the cross make us all equal no matter how many sins or mistakes we make?

FP: We find hope through grace, forgiveness and redemption.

(Junior and/or Senior High) Catechism Connection

2nd Article: *I believe that Jesus has purchased and won me from all sins in order that I may be His own, even as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity.*

5th Petition: *Forgive us our trespasses and we forgive those who trespass against us.*

How might each of these relate to what we have been talking about today?

- 1. Just as we are forgiven by Christ even though we do not deserve it, how can we learn to forgive others no matter what they might have done?**
- 2. How do find hope through the idea that we don't have to save ourselves, that Jesus has already paid the price for us and reconnected us to our Creator, God who loves us more than we can ever know or understand?**



IF TIME ALLOWS (Grade 4-12): There are numerous Net Flix shows and stories about how 2012 will be the end of the world. Let's investigate the prophecy stories today?

The Mayans The Mayan civilization is noted for the only known fully developed written language of the pre-Columbian Americas, as well as its art, architecture, and mathematical and astronomical systems. Some believe that in reference to the Mayan Calendar, 11:11 GMT on December 21, 2012 is supposed to result in a slew of natural disasters culminating in the end of the world and the Mayans prophesied this hundreds of years ago.

Other prophecies The Mayans were not the only people to predict the end of the world. Incan and Egyptian calendars, as well as the prophecies of Nostradamus, Edgar Cayce (who predicted from 1958-1998 that a tilting of the Earth's axis would result in "The earth will be broken up in the western portion of America. The greater portion of Japan must go into the sea."), and the Hopi Indians, along with others have indicated that the apocalypse will occur in December 2012. Nostradamus predicted a great comet, Nibiru, would impact the Mediterranean on December 21, 2012.

Natural disasters Not content with just one disaster at a time, 2012 will unleash the ultimate in earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, hurricanes, tsunamis, floods, and droughts (at the same time and place!). These events are thought to be caused by a polar shift, enormous asteroids, violent solar activity, the emergence of Planet X or Nibiru, and the planetary alignment of Venus. At the same time, there will be a massive pole shift caused by the galactic alignment between the center of the galaxy and the Sun that will cause massive earthquakes, volcanoes, and tsunamis.

What does the Bible say about this? *For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. 2 Timothy 4:3-4*

Where do we find hope in a world with stories out there like these predictions? How do we know who to believe and who not to believe. Let's take another look at what we have been talking about all week. WHO DO WE HAVE AT THE MIDDLE OF OUR WHEEL??? **WHO DO WE PUT OUR TRUST IN?**

MIDDLE OF THE WHEEL - Cabin Mural

Using your Cabin Mural Board, **Add today's verse from Isaiah** *Yet the LORD laid on him the sins of us all.* **Add the word "Savior" to Cross in the Middle of the Wheel.** List the various ways that you commit to obeying and listening to God.

Point out how each of the spokes Hunger, Obey, Pray and Embrace each starts with letters that spell out the word **HOPE** – and that Jesus, our Savior is the Center that our Hope comes from as long as we **Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying.**

The Thing with Feathers (3 Grade – Adult)

Read the following poem by Emily Dickinson OR you may choose to read the first stanza...

***Hope is the thing with feathers That perches in the soul,
And sings the tune without the words, And never stops at all,***

***And sweetest in the gale is heard; And sore must be the storm
That could abash the little bird That kept so many warm.***

***I've heard it in the chilliest land And on the strangest sea;
Yet, never, in extremity, It asked a crumb of me. Emily Dickinson***

Have campers talk about what they think this poem might mean. Especially the line, "and sings the tune without the words, and never stops at all..."

- *How is this line like the power of the Holy Spirit working in our lives?*
- *Have the campers try to remember a time when they were scared or angry or sad.*
- *Did they also feel somewhere inside them – in their heart and soul, there was this "feeling" that they couldn't explain that gave them courage and made them not want to give up or give in to whatever the situation was about?*
- ***Hope doesn't ask anything of us – it is a free gift to us from God.*** *We don't have to pay a fee to receive it – just like God's love and grace. How cool is this? Most things in the world are not just given out without having some cost in the long run. Isn't it a wonderful thing that God isn't like the rest of the world? The gift of the Savior is free and forever and always.*

FP: Immanuel - Christ, our Savior, is with us in all times in all places.

HOPE STONE Closing Prayer: Give each camper a hope stone to keep and take home with them (a small, pocket-sized stone) that they can keep in their pocket, available whenever needed. Sometimes we need something to grab onto when something happens that make us feel angry, make us lose hope, make us feel sad, make us feel separated from God, etc. Have each camper hold onto the stone as you read the following prayer together.

Gracious God. May the power of the Holy Spirit build up hope in my heart as I keep Christ as the Center of my life. May hope be the thing with feathers that perches in my soul and sings a tune of love and grace. And May I be reminded that the love of my Creator and Savior is a love that never stops at all. Amen.

Bible References

Galatians 1:3-5, 13-24 ³ *May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ^[a] give you grace and peace.* ⁴ *Jesus gave his life for our sins, just as God our Father planned, in order to rescue us from this evil world in which we live.* ⁵ *All glory to God forever and ever! Amen.*

¹³ *You know what I was like when I followed the Jewish religion—how I violently persecuted God's church. I did my best to destroy it.* ¹⁴ *I was far ahead of my fellow Jews in my zeal for the traditions of my ancestors.* ¹⁵ *But even before I was born, God chose me and called me by his marvelous grace. Then it pleased him* ¹⁶ *to reveal his Son to me^[d] so that I would*

proclaim the Good News about Jesus to the Gentiles. When this happened, I did not rush out to consult with any human being.^[e] ¹⁷ Nor did I go up to Jerusalem to consult with those who were apostles before I was. Instead, I went away into Arabia, and later I returned to the city of Damascus.

¹⁸ Then three years later I went to Jerusalem to get to know Peter,^[f] and I stayed with him for fifteen days. ¹⁹ The only other apostle I met at that time was James, the Lord's brother. ²⁰ I declare before God that what I am writing to you is not a lie. ²¹ After that visit I went north into the provinces of Syria and Cilicia. ²² And still the Christians in the churches in Judea didn't know me personally. ²³ All they knew was that people were saying, "The one who used to persecute us is now preaching the very faith he tried to destroy!" ²⁴ And they praised God because of me.

Hebrews 9:15 *That is why he is the one who mediates a new covenant between God and people, so that all who are called can receive the eternal inheritance God has promised them. For Christ died to set them free from the penalty of the sins they had committed under that first covenant.*

Luke 2:38 *She came along just as Simeon was talking with Mary and Joseph, and she began praising God. She talked about the child to everyone who had been waiting expectantly for God to rescue Jerusalem.*

Isaiah 42:1-9 *"Look at my servant, whom I strengthen. He is my chosen one, who pleases me. I have put my Spirit upon him. He will bring justice to the nations. ² He will not shout or raise his voice in public. ³ He will not crush the weakest reed or put out a flickering candle. He will bring justice to all who have been wronged. ⁴ He will not falter or lose heart until justice prevails throughout the earth. Even distant lands beyond the sea will wait for his instruction."*

⁵ *God, the LORD, created the heavens and stretched them out. He created the earth and everything in it. He gives breath to everyone, life to everyone who walks the earth. And it is he who says, ⁶ "I, the LORD, have called you to demonstrate my righteousness. I will take you by the hand and guard you, and I will give you to my people, Israel, as a symbol of my covenant with them. And you will be a light to guide the nations. ⁷ You will open the eyes of the blind. You will free the captives from prison, releasing those who sit in dark dungeons.*

⁸ *"I am the LORD; that is my name! I will not give my glory to anyone else, nor share my praise with carved idols. ⁹ Everything I prophesied has come true, and now I will prophesy again. I will tell you the future before it happens."*

Isaiah 44:21-22 *"Pay attention, O Jacob, for you are my servant. I, the LORD, made you, and I will not forget you. I have swept away your sins like a cloud. I have scattered your offenses like the morning mist. Return to me, for I have paid the price to set you free."*

Revelations 21:4 *He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever."*

Hebrews 3:6 *But Christ, as the Son, is in charge of God's entire house. And we are God's house, if we keep our courage and remain confident in our hope in Christ.*

Psalms 130:7 *O Israel, hope in the LORD; for with the LORD there is unfailing love. His redemption overflows.*