

I AM: THE GREATEST BATTLE OF YOUR LIFE

Dudley's Cave and the Circle of Fire

Book Two: The Journey to Light



Prelude

DUDLEY'S CAVE AND THE CIRCLE OF FIRE

Book Two: The Journey to Light

It seemed like we had been in the caverns of the cave Dudley had found for weeks, but as I would find later, it had only been a few hours. As we followed Nimbah, the Spirit Woman, deeper into the cave, we seemed to be going farther down as well until the air felt cold and the darkness overwhelming. Dudley, my pet dog and best friend, stayed close to my side to share what warmth we could.

We were walking again with the other “I Am Tribe” members of the Circle of Fire through another passage that seemed to go on forever. It turned and dropped and narrowed until I thought we could go no farther. But Nimbah continued to encourage us to go on, that the Dream of God for each of us was still ahead.

Suddenly I could hear water flowing as if down a large falls. In the eerie light from the Fire which Nimbah carried, the mist from the water seemed ghostly. As I struggled through a narrow passageway, Dudley growled in his low voice of warning. The falls were just barely visible now in the glow of the Fire. There was a large pool at the foot of the falls that churned from the force of the water striking it. It was difficult to hear over the noise of the falls, but Dudley caught my attention by nipping at my leg. He forced me to turn to look at one side of the cavern.

Out of the mist and darkness came a horrible looking man, or at least I hoped it was a man, for he really was terrifying to see. Dudley growled louder and started barking. The man or creature screamed so loudly that the water fall seemed silent. Dudley hid behind my legs and peered between them. I was too frozen with fear to move.

Calmly Nimbah walked close to the pool and placed the Fire in front of the creature. Its glow seemed to drive the darkness away and I felt comfort to be near it. "Form the Circle of Fire", she said and we all took our places around the Flame and sat down. It was a relief to have Nimbah with us. What would the crazy man do to us if she were not present? Again he screamed, but came no closer to the Fire as if it held some strange power over him. Were we going deeper into darkness or had we begun our way out?

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BOOK TWO: THE JOURNEY TO LIGHT

Course Outline

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Unit 1: Second Chances



Failure is not uncommon, but we are not to let it destroy our life with God. We worship a God of forgiveness and second chances as we will see in this unit. When we fall on our face, our loving God picks us up and holds us in his comforting hands. Giving up at this age in life is a horrible choice that could lead to irrevocable actions as well as missing the joy of becoming the dream God has for that life.

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The Journey to Light

Unit 1: Second Chances

Lesson 1: Freedom

The Cave of Wisdom

The Cave Opening: The Burning Bush

Welcome back to the cave of the “Demons of Life”. Do you believe in Demons? This lesson deals with the demons that torment our lives each day and cause us to lose the path to God’s dream for us. These demons come in many forms. Surely you have experienced some or seen them in others. A “demon” is anything that takes away your freedom to follow God’s path to your dream. Sometimes the demon is even you, because actions you take toward others prevent them from doing what God wants them to do. In this lesson, we will take a look at a few “demons”.

The Circle of Fire: Freedom to serve others gives freedom from human demons

Scripture: Mark 5: 1-20 – This is the story of “Legion”, a man who had many bad demons in his life, thousands, hence his name, “Legion, for we are many.” Jesus was the opposite side of a lake from “Legion”, but he knew of Legions need to be set free of the demons that held him captive. Legion was unable to come to Jesus for help, the demons drove him wild. But Jesus

came to Legion, and the demons were afraid. Freedom from life's demons is obtainable through Jesus. He is all powerful!

Biblical Character: Legion obtains freedom through Jesus.

Act the part of Legion, the wild man who lived in the cemetery. This is a fun time if you like to act wild, dress in torn garments, and look dirty! Legion appears in front of the Tree of Darkness with his back to the Circle of Fire. Turn around quickly and yell very loudly like you are in terrible pain. Grab your head and scream with agony. You will definitely get their attention for this lesson (and maybe some other people in the area!)

Legion: "It wasn't my fault! I couldn't help myself. Demons possessed me and forced me to run wild in the streets screaming, knocking people down, biting and kicking them. I used foul language, but it wasn't me, it was another demon who swore continually.

You know what I'm talking about, don't you? Parents and adults are always blaming you for doing wrong things, but it's not your fault. They expect too much from you at school and home. Even the couch expects you to be perfect.

And your friends are even more expectant of you. They think you should like all the things they want to do or wear. If you don't agree with them, they tease you until you feel awful. Don't you just want to scream sometimes yourself? I bet you've yelled at your parents plenty of times or argued with someone.

Of course you wouldn't take drugs, or steal from someone, or get drunk, would you? What you do isn't all that bad is it? But

those demons of life get hold of you and make you do crazy things. Why can't people understand that it's not our fault?

Jesus understood that it wasn't my fault. He drove the demons away. Now I am free to be me. And you can as well. Just trust Jesus to drive away the bad stuff."

Show the video of Jesus and Legion. With freedom comes the desire to follow the dream to the Father.

Show the video: "Pay It Forward" for the secret to helping others.

Modern Character(s): Joel Olsteen. Show the video of Joel Olsteen on Larry King Live. What is a Christian to be about according to Joel?

Anorexic, Bullying, or Helping, you have a choice. Show the two negative videos and explain that these are only two of the demons of life which do harm to others and destroy the dream for us. Then show the "Opie Questions Andy about Helping Others" video and explain the power of helping.

Show the video "Teenage 'affluenza' is spreading fast." This is perhaps the most common teenage demon, and it leads to other demons.

The Cave Dark Side Journey: The Demons of Life are countless as the story of Legion indicates. Some of them are encountered in the Cave to make you aware of them. But there are many more demons. Beware of anything which turns you aside from the path God wants you to follow.

The Tribe: There is no demon which God cannot overcome.

Craft: “Free to be ME” Button. See Appendix 8 Craft for material and instructions.

Recreation Activity: “What would you do?” Have part of the students perform various situational skits such as tempting to smoke or mocking someone. Encourage the other students to react to the situation.

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Unit 1: Second Chances

Lesson 2: Passion

The Cave of Wisdom

The Cave Opening: The Burning Bush

Welcome back to the cave of “I’m right!” Our government is deadlocked, the economy is a mess of mistaken rights, our churches are splitting over issues, and everyone seems to have the “right” answer to any subject. Is our individual knowledge really this great? What if your belief is wrong, terribly wrong; so wrong it could cost you eternal life? Just how sure are you of your current beliefs? Are you willing to stand up for your beliefs? Are you ready to share them passionately with others? Are you right?

Circle of Fire: The Passion of a focused life.

Scripture: Matthew 6: 21, “for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” What we value greatly is what we are willing to fight to keep. Our self becomes defined by it. And our heart becomes deeply involved in it. We spend our time and money to obtain it. Does your heart desire anything greatly now? What are you the most focused on with your efforts and dreams? Are you “right” about the choices you are making? Jesus saw that many people were focused on material and not spiritual things. Their heart did not belong to God.

In this lesson we will take a look at two people who gave passionately of themselves to accomplish their calling: Paul and Randy Pausch.

Biblical Character: Saul of Tarsus

Saul considered his knowledge of the Law to be the “right” way. The followers of the crucified Jesus were wrong and a threat to the nation. They claimed Jesus was alive, but he looked pretty dead on the cross that day. There was a powerful group of Jews who didn’t believe in life after death, the Sadducees. For Jesus to have risen from the grave would destroy their way of belief.

Paul started a conflict during his trial, by claiming that his accusers were motivated by his advocacy of the doctrine of the resurrection. In the book of Acts 23:8 Paul asserted that “The Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, or angel, or spirit; but the Pharisees acknowledge all three”. Another group, the Pharisees, of which Saul was a prominent member, believed in strict adherence to the Law as given to Moses and added to by the priests. In their viewpoint, Jesus broke the Law and was a blasphemer who claimed to be the Son of God. And they all agreed that was not true since he was killed by the Romans.

Saul was passionate in his zeal to follow the Law. Those who opposed the Law must be punished. Saul held the cloaks of those who stoned Stephen, a believer. He was given authority by the Chief Priest to track down and punish other followers of Jesus. He was on his way to Damascus to carry out those orders when Jesus stopped him.

After Paul’s conversion experience, he would make four journeys, travelling over 15,000 miles. For comparison, the distance from Myrtle Beach to San Francisco is 2,436 miles. Paul’s travels covered the equivalent of over 6 trips across the United States, much of it by foot. Are you passionate enough to go the distance in anything in your life?

Act the part of “The High Priest” giving Saul his orders to capture and punish followers of Jesus. Saul was passionate to serve God. But misdirected passion is dangerous. The High Priest trusted Saul to help him keep the dissidents in line. Saul was tough, dedicated, and passionate to his path in life as a Pharisee. But he was wrong, and Jesus would show him the correct road.

Show the video of Saul’s Damascus Road conversion.

Modern Character(s): Randy Pausch’s Graduation Speech. In this speech, passion is defined for you to follow. When your life is at an end, you will regret most what you wanted to do, but did not do it, for this was your heart’s desire.

The Cave Dark Side Journey: As you have seen with Saul versus Paul, Passion can be good or bad. Make sure your passion comes from love which is not of the dark side.

The Tribe: What you really want in life becomes the home of your heart.

Craft: The Passion Plant – See Appendix 8 Craft for instructions. Explain that the plant represents their passion to obtain the dream which God has for them. But for the dream and the plant to grow, it must be well cared for with proper nourishment. Have the members take the plant home and begin care of it.

Recreation Activity: “In Search of the Holy Grail”, Paul’s Missionary Journeys to find the Passionate Heart. See Appendix 6 Recreation for details.

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Unit 1: Second Chances Lesson 3: Moving Day

The Cave of Wisdom

The Cave Opening: The Burning Bush

Welcome back to the cave of “The Outsider”. Life is comfortable and cozy for you now in your comfort zone at home. You’ve lived in your home with your family for over ten years. You have friends to share with, encourage you, and comfort you. You are a member of special groups. You have received much recognition. You have earned the respect of teachers. You are first chair in the band or lead singer in the chorus. There is even a special someone who you may date soon.

But life is not so easy. Dad takes a new job and must relocate to a new city or even a new state or country. It’s not your fault, but you must give up your comfort zone, even first chair in the band. You must begin all over proving yourself. And as if this isn’t bad enough, the youth where you are moving to are not like you. You are a “Southerner” with a funny accent. And they already have their groups and positions. How will you ever make that first chair in the band again? Will you ever have another best friend, much less a first date?

Circle of Fire: From Outsider to Insider.

Scripture: Ruth 1: 16, “Don’t ask me to leave you and turn back. Wherever you go, I will go; wherever you live, I will live. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God.¹⁷ Wherever you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord punish me severely if I allow anything but death to separate us!”.

Biblical Character: Ruth

Ruth made a difficult decision. She had a choice. Many times in life you will not have a choice, but still you must react to the situation. Leaving the home she had known for her life was a scary thought. And Ruth was a Moabite, from a country that had fought Israel for decades. She was the enemy. How could she ever survive in Israel? Ruth, are you crazy? Stay home with your sister! You will not be accepted in Israel. They may even kill you. How will you survive?

But Ruth had someone on her side, God. Others may not accept us, but God does, even before we are worthy. We do not have to prove ourselves worthy of “first chair in the band” with God. He has already made us worthy by the offering of His Son, Jesus. He is with you, no matter where you may go. God has already taken you as an “Outsider” and made you an “Insider” in His Kingdom. Shouldn’t we do the same for others, like Ruth, who come into our “space”. Shouldn’t we show them love as well?

Act the scene of Ruth 1:1-16. You will need a Narrator, Ruth and her sister, Naomi, and a Jewish heckler. After the skit, the heckler leads the group in taunting Ruth as a Moabite enemy. Discuss “Un-acceptance” based on stereotyping.

Modern Character(s): Ruth Graham

Show the video of Ruth Graham. Discuss the dedication she showed to support Billy Graham in his ministry.

The Cave Dark Side Journey: Stereotyping closes you mind to the uniqueness of each individual and the blessing each may bring to you.

The Tribe: Be aware of your treatment of others as someday it may be you in a similar situation. Remember Jesus' words to "Love thy neighbor as thyself" and the old golden rule, "Do unto others as you would have done unto you."

Craft: "Devotion" decoupage plaque. This is a humorous craft which states: DEVOTION "All we ask here is that you give us your heart!" See craft section. Sticker may be placed on any object. See Appendix 8 Craft for material.

Recreation Activity: "New in Town": Have a person "visit" a new land that speaks a different language. The rest of the group is the new land. Without speaking English, the person must get directions to the restroom. Do not tell the group the direction being asked. Have members of the group turn against the person or not speak to them. Play the role several times with various questions being asked.

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Unit 1: Second Chances

Lesson 4: Pride Precedes a Fall

The Cave of Wisdom

The Cave Opening: The Burning Bush

Welcome back to the cave of “Pride”, perhaps the darkest of all “weapons” which Satan has to separate you from the dream which God had for you before you were born. This weapon is so powerful that God even states in Proverbs 8:13 “I hate pride and arrogance”. Isn’t pride really just self-confidence?

Webster’s Dictionary defines Pride as “Unreasonable and inordinate self-esteem (personified as one of the deadly sins).”

Catch that last part: “personified as one of the deadly sins”.

Read deadly as separates us from God forever.

No wonder God hates pride. He doesn’t want to lose you forever and He created you with a dream in mind which pride destroys. The dream God has for you can only be achieved through relationship with God and His guidance. Separation from Him blocks our guidance from Him and blinds us to the guideposts He places in our path. While we need some self-esteem, “unreasonable” self-esteem is a false. We become “puffed up” and dependent upon ourselves alone.

Circle of Fire: God's Humbling Power. God Hates Pride

Scripture: Daniel 4:28-37; Proverbs 8:13 and 16:18.

Key Verse 37: "those who walk in pride he is able to humble

Verse Pr 8:13 I hate pride and arrogance

Verse Pr 16:18 Pride goes before destruction, and haughtiness before a fall.

Biblical Character: Nebuchadnezzar

King Nebuchadnezzar had conquered the largest kingdom ever to be ruled in the Middle East region. He built a beautiful city at Babylon to be his palace and center of government. Success can lead us to a terrible characteristic which God hates ... pride. When we believe that our efforts alone have accomplished success, we refuse to acknowledge the power of God over us. In effect we set ourselves up as equal to God in our minds.

This was the downfall of the Archangel Lucifer, he believed himself to be equal or better than God. Such behavior resulted in his fall from heaven. Still today, people behave like Nebuchadnezzar and Lucifer by placing themselves on the pedestal of success and pride. With your achievements so far, have you begun to develop pride in your heart? Have you already forgotten that everything good comes from God?

Show the video: King Nebuchadnezzar conquers Jerusalem and kills the leaders.

Act the scene of Daniel 4:28-31.

Dress in royal garments with a golden crown. Pretend to be standing on the balcony of your mansion and survey the vast city which you govern. Tell the story of the vision seen earlier in the chapter and Daniel's interpretation. Looking out over the city, claim your greatness and all

that you have done. Have an assistant say the voice from heaven words: "You are driven from people and will live like an animal eating grass for seven years, until you acknowledge that God is sovereign over the kingdoms of men." Then "go wild", eat celery, and act like a wild animal. Have narrator tell the passing of seven years.

Act the words in verse 37 and praise God.

Modern Character(s): Mother Theresa

Show the video: Tribute to Mother Theresa. Discuss her humble spirit and complete dependence on God.

The Cave Dark Side Journey: Pride is the pit of darkness. It causes one to love self more than God. Be careful to never "think more highly of yourself than you ought."

The Tribe: We are to practice a humble heart, giving God the glory for all things. Remember to give praise to God for your successes. Many athletes set an example of this by thanking God for their success.

Craft: "Humbleness Cup". See Appendix 8 Craft for instructions.

Recreation Activity: "Blind Sundae": This activity is to teach students that they cannot do everything on their own, they need others. When we recognize our dependency instead of our self-sufficiency, we go a long way toward avoiding Pride. Blindfold one member. Have this person make an ice cream Sundae using the other members to yell instructions.

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Unit 1: Second Chances

Lesson 5: The Love of a Friend

The Cave of Wisdom

Cave Opening: The Burning Bush

Welcome back to the cave of “Treachery”. Have you ever been betrayed by someone you thought you could trust? Or perhaps you have betrayed someone’s confidence by telling others a shared secret. Treachery is common in our society driven by gossip and a desire to be accepted by others. Even pastor’s and their wives have to be wary of this dark part of the cave. Problems shared in confidence once shared with another become a spreading disease of destruction.

But life doesn’t have to be filled with treachery. It can be filled with love, true friendship, and trust. In today’s lesson we see both the dark cave of treachery in King Saul against David and the light of the cave, love and trust, shown by King Saul’s son, Jonathan. God’s dream for each of us before we were born was for each of us to become like Him so we could be in relationship with Him. Even better, God wants us to be his children. But to accomplish the dream, you must become like Jesus, self-sacrificing. Who is the “Jonathan” in your life today?

Circle of Fire: Saved from the King of Israel - A Faithful Friend

Scripture: 1 Samuel 18: 1-4; 20:4; 14-15; 17 Jonathan and David, friends forever.

Key Passage Proverbs 18:24:

²⁴A man of many companions may come to ruin, but a true friend sticks closely in trouble.

Biblical Character: Jonathan

Jonathan was the king's son, the next in line for the throne. But God had chosen another person to replace King Saul, David a shepherd son of Jesse.

Play the role of Jonathan and tell the story of friendship with David. Focus on the part about King Saul, your father, trying to kill David to protect the throne. This is treachery for King Saul had taken David into his household and was to care for him the remainder of his life, like a son. Then act out the outcry of King Saul against Jonathan found in 1 Samuel 20:24-33. In verse 31, King Saul declares that as long as David is alive, he is a threat to Jonathan's succession to the throne. Saul's intent to kill David is confirmed and the treachery of Saul is magnified. But Jonathan still sides with his friend David even to his father who throws a spear at him.

Show the video: David and Jonathan, best friends.

Modern Character(s): Christian the Lion

Show the video of Christian the Lion. Friendship is forever to those who truly believe. But being a friend is hard work. You

must give much of yourself to the relationship. But to those who give all, much is received in return.

Show the video: “This is real friendship” (titled: Love and Friendship). This video gives a very good overview of the character of a friend.

The Cave Dark Side Journey: Betrayal sends cold chills up our spine. We see the dark side Judas, a name that will forever be linked with betrayal.

The Tribe: “Greater love has no man than to lay down his life for his friend.” These words of Jesus in John 15:13 describe the relationship of a true friend, like Jonathan. A true friend will sacrifice his/her own best interest for the good of the friend.

Craft: “Friend Arrow Pencil” See Appendix 8 Craft for material and instructions.

Recreation Activity: “Bible Trivia Parcheesi”

Divide the class into teams of two each. The team members are the pieces for the Parcheesi board game. Make the board by placing card stock sheets on the floor. Each sheet should be labeled with a category: Person, Place, Old Testament, New Testament, and Thing. Use the Bible category trivia questions and play the game using Parcheesi rules until both team members of a team are in the “home” area. See Appendix 6 Recreation, “Bible Trivia” for resources.

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Unit 1: Second Chances Lesson 6: Second Chances

The Cave of Wisdom

The Burning Bush: God Gives Second Chances

The Cave Opening:

Welcome back to the cave of “failure”. You may think that failure is a terrible thing. Only success counts. But if you never fail, you will never learn your limits. Low risk taking may not produce failures, but it also could mean missed opportunities.

The Circle of Fire: From failure to number one

Scripture: John 21: 15-19 “Feed my sheep” three times. Each response of love covered the failure of denial. Jesus reinstated Peter to the ministry.

Biblical Character: Peter

Jesus had been taken prisoner, was being questioned and tortured. If anyone ever needed a friend to stand beside them and encourage them, it was Jesus. Alone he faced the rulers and the mob. In the midst of all the fear and turmoil, Peter had three chances to be the friend needed. But all three times he failed the Lord. Surely such failure is never forgiven. Would you give another chance to someone who failed you three times? What about the saying: “fool me once, shame on you; fool me twice, shame on me; fool me thrice ... well I won’t give

you that chance!”. Peter was out of the flock, on his own, Jesus was dead, all hopes were gone, and worst of all, he did nothing to aid Jesus. There would be no second chance to prove his love for the master, or would there?

Show the video: I Am: Peter

Modern Character(s): Johnny Cash – From lost to found: “Cash used drugs heavily in his early career, claiming at one point to have tried every drug known. He quit using drugs in 1968, after a spiritual epiphany in the Nickajack Cave, when he attempted to commit suicide while under the heavy influence of drugs. He descended deeper into the cave, trying to lose himself, when he passed out on the floor. When he awoke, he had a change of heart and managed to struggle out of the cave by following a faint light and slight breeze” (from Wikipedia).

Show the video: Johnny Cash’s America

The Cave Dark Side Journey: Failure can eat the life out of you. Dwell on too much and you will stop trying.

The Tribe: God gives us second chances, and more to those who seek him.

Craft: “Second Chance Coin”. See Appendix 8 Craft for instructions and resources for this craft.

Recreation Activity: “I’ll get mine”

This game is a modification of “Musical Chairs” in which the last person to get a spot is the winner. But “Musical Chairs” teaches self preservation, winner takes all attitudes. Instead of teaching

winning at the cost to others, we want to teach winning by giving of ourselves to others. Reverse the rules for “Musical Chairs”, but don’t tell the class members. Play the game as normal until the last person is seated. Remove this person from the game and continue with another round. Do this until only two members are left to play a round. At the end of the final round, when the music stops, the person left with no seat wins (this will be a surprise). Tell the winner at this time and explain that life is not about getting for ourselves. (Note: A suggested song to use is “What a Friend We Have In Jesus”).

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Unit 1: Second Chances Lesson 7: Never Look Back

The Cave of Wisdom

The Burning Bush: Don't let the past destroy your second chance

The Cave Opening:

Welcome back to the cave of "The Past". Our past can lift us up or tear us down. The choice is ours. When we fail God, he is faithful to forgive us and give us another chance. But if we focus on the failure, the constant looking back will blind us to the direction we are going.

The Circle of Fire: Clinging to the past good life

Scripture: Genesis 19: 16-17; 26 and Isaiah 43: 18-19. The people of Sodom and Gomorrah were having a merry old time. They had defeated their enemies, celebrated wildly, and lived for the flesh of life. These people were so bad that God's wrath was poured out on them in the form of burning sulfur raining down on the cities. A second chance was offered to the people, but they desired more the "good times". In Isaiah 43: 18-19, God pleads with his people to "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?" If we keep our focus to the future and seek God's working, He will show us the way forward to the dream He has for us.

Biblical Character: Lot and his wife (Lldeth)

Let the good times roll! Lot chose the soft life of the fertile land of the plains with great cities. There would be no more living in a tent for Lot. No, he would make his soft bed in a nice house in the city of Sodom. Lot was so comfortable, that God had to send two angels to drag him out of the city to safety. Do you cling to the past this way? Can you “give it up and move on”? If not, you may already be turning into a pillar of salt! Have you noticed that salt easily disappears? A little water, a little wind, a passing animal; so many things can cause the salt to disappear. The world eats away at it until nothing is left. The dream is gone.

Show the video: “Sodoma y Gomorra” from Youtube.com

Modern Character(s): Britney Spear

Fame and fortune often turns people into “salt” which the world wears down. Look at the life, so far, of music artist Britney Spears. Fame came at a young age. Older and with two children, her life seemed to crumble ... like salt.

Show the video: “Britney Spears interview 1999 on Rosie” and “Britney Spears Crying in ABC Interview”. Note the change from a sweet 16 year old to a frustrated, world worn artist. Turning into “salt” is not a fun process.

The Cave Dark Side Journey: The Past haunts us or builds us up with confidence. Be careful of both parts for the haunting can lead to remorse and the confidence can cause pride.

The Tribe: If we cling to our past life, it will blind us to what God is providing for us in the future.

Craft: “Pillar of Salt Shaker” See Appendix 8 Craft for instructions on this craft. The members are to place this craft on their desk at home to remind them that “looking back” can turn one to salt.

Recreation Activity: “Walking Backwards” – Have students try to negotiate and obstacle course walking backwards. Put turns and objects in the path. At an obstacle, point out “oops! I didn’t see that!” Walking backwards is much like looking backwards while trying to go forward. You can hit a lot of obstacles.

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Unit 1: Second Chances

Lesson 8: Celebration – The Overflowing Cup

The Cave of Wisdom

The Cave Opening: The Burning Bush

Welcome back to The Cave of “Overcoming”. God gives each of us talents and spiritual gifts to help us obtain the Dream He has for each person. If we use them wisely, God gives us the joyful experience of the overflowing cup. You will learn what it is like to “drink from the saucer” as King David did often, but particularly in Psalm 23.

The Circle of Fire: Overcoming with Overflowing

Scripture: Ps. 23:5; Ps. 119:171; Rom 15:13

You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Ps. 23:5

May my lips overflow with praise, for you teach me your decrees. Ps 119:171

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Rom. 15:13

Biblical Character: The Roman Church

Show video: “Saint Paul the Apostle Rome Italy”. Paul wrote a very important letter to the church at Rome. In it he praised

them as “being full of goodness, knowledge, and competence” (Romans 15:14). This may seem like a difficult state to achieve, but Paul recognized its simplicity: remain in the Way.

Modern Character(s): David Crowder of New Song Cafe
Show the video: “Make A Joyful Noise (I Will Not Be Silent)”

Celebrate with the “Make a Joyful Noise” and “Snowmen Make a Joyful Noise” videos.

The Cave Dark Side Journey: The dark side will throw you a curve ball here called “Scarcity”. It will make you think you don’t have much to rejoice for.

The Tribe: When we obey God and through Him overcome adversity, and are given a second chance, we can experience the joy of the overflowing cup. Use the talents God has given you to obtain the Dream for yourself like David Crowder has done.

Craft: “The Drinking Saucer” See Appendix 8 Craft for instructions and resources.

Recreation Activity: Play the Concentration Review Game. See Appendix 6 Recreation for instructions and resources.

Now would be a good time to get out tambourines, drums, or anything to make noise ... even cans! Think how happy you would be if you were Paul and had another chance after Damascus or Peter and your life had another chance to serve the Messiah after 3 times denying Him. The noise level should reflect that joy. This class may be best done outside and not near adult classes!

Unit 2: Accountability



We can just drift through life doing as we please, but a day of accountability will come. That day came for the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. God gives us free choice, but not freedom from the earthly consequences of our behavior.

This is a difficult subject for 11 to 13 year old students. At this age, they place the blame elsewhere for mistakes they make. But if we are to achieve God's Dream for us, we must take accountability for our actions.

I AM - The Greatest Battle of Your Life

The Journey to Light

Unit 2: Accountability

Lesson 1: See It

The Cave of Wisdom

The Cave Opening: The Burning Bush

Welcome back to the cave of “Uncaring”. How many times have you said, “I don’t care!” A life that cannot care for others is a life that will miss the opportunities presented by God to create the “Singing Heart” within us. God continually “engineers” situations for us to grow spiritually ... or do you really believe that it’s all just coincidence? Besides, it’s easy to be uncaring if you believe situations are just a matter of luck and can be ignored. Just live each day blindly, unobservant of the needs around you. But the true spirit within us yearns for us to see the opportunities, to be focused on looking for them. It’s not good enough to say “Oh, I didn’t see that.” Our Lord demonstrated concern for others. We are to do likewise.

The Circle of Fire: Concern for Others.

Scripture: Luke 10: 36-37 – “Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?”, Jesus asked. The expert in the law replied, “The one who had mercy on him.” Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.”

Biblical Character: The Good Samaritan and the two.

You've probably heard the story of the Good Samaritan several times, but in this lesson, we want to consider the opportunity God "engineered" for each of the three travelers and how God does the same for us. Was it just coincidence the three travelers came upon the beaten man? If so, remember that Jesus uses the story to answer the expert's question, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" The answer surely would not be, "just wait for luck to give you an opportunity to inherit eternal life." God does not need luck or chance and He certainly cares more for you than to leave your life and dream to chance. No, God provides the opportunities for you to achieve your dream. But you must be alert to see the opportunities God puts in your path. We are to be alert for opportunities to serve, and not just go sleepily and uncaring through life.

Act the part of the injured man sitting in the inn and telling what happened to you. Tie a bandage around your head and make your face look beaten. Torn clothing would also add to the effect. Describe the three travelers from his view on the ground. **Be creative.**

The Bible does not provide us with the thoughts of the priest and the Levite. But note the role of each and the lifestyle they probably lived. For example, the ***priest*** would not want to touch an injured man and risk becoming "unclean", especially if the man was "half dead". Under the Levitical law, the office of the priesthood was limited to the tribe of Levi, and to only one

family of that tribe, the family of Aaron. They represented the people before God and offered the various sacrifices prescribed in the Law.

The **Levite** was a descendant of the tribe of Levi. This name is generally used as a title for a portion of the tribal members, who were set apart for the subordinate offices of the sanctuary service, as **assistants to the priests**. *Therefore the Levites shall be Mine, because all the firstborn are Mine. On the day that I struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, I sanctified to Myself all the firstborn in Israel, both man and beast. They shall be Mine: I am the LORD*" (Numbers 3:12-13). *"And I have given the Levites as a gift to Aaron and his sons from among the children of Israel, to do the work for the children of Israel in the tabernacle of meeting, and to make atonement for the children of Israel, that there be no plague among the children of Israel when the children of Israel come near the sanctuary"* (Numbers 8:19). Today, the Levite would be like a deacon to us ... someone set aside to serve the church body.

Now describe the **Samaritan** who helped. This was a person the Jews wanted nothing to do with and considered low level life. Explain the meaning of using a Samaritan to the Pharisees.

Show the video of The Good Samaritan. Note that the Parable Jesus uses deals with both physical and spiritual needs. The injured man needed physical help for his injuries, but Jesus is also the Good Samaritan who shows "mercy" to each of us by offering his life for our sins. Jesus is the "Good Neighbor" to all of us.

Modern Character(s): Billy Graham. Show the video Tribute to Billy Graham, a man who dedicated his life to God's service and led millions to the cross. What if he had said "no" to his opportunity and passed by on the other side of the road?

The Cave Dark Side Journey: Uncaring can turn a heart to cold stone.

The Tribe: Uncaring is not the road God wants us to travel to our dream. God wants us to be concerned for others and see the opportunities to serve Him.

Craft: "Holmes Lantern" See Appendix 8 Craft for instructions.



Recreation Activity: "Mystery Puzzle". See Appendix 6 Recreation for instructions and material.

I AM - The Greatest Battle of Your Life

The Journey to Light

Unit 2: Accountability

Lesson 2: Own It - Taking Responsibility for Our Actions

The Cave of Wisdom

The Cave Opening: The Burning Bush

Welcome back to the cave of “Disobedience”. “It’s not my fault!” Denying our actions and passing blame on to someone else is a failure to take responsibility for failing to do what God wants us to do. You may think you can hide from the truth and no one will find you out. Or you may think you can blame someone else, like your parents or others. But you will not be able to continue forever in denial. Sooner or later, God will place you in a situation that demands responsibility be taken.

And along with responsibility comes accountability for your actions. When we face the “Burning Bush”, we must remember that God knows everything about us. We cannot hide facts from Him. Our only true action is to take responsibility, ask forgiveness for failures, and seek God’s strength in the future to prevent another failure. Only then will we be able to achieve the dream in God’s mind for us. Failure to follow God’s directions separates us from him as we become disobedient. No one else can take the responsibility for our disobedience.

In our lesson today, we see that the disobedience of anyone in a family can cause disaster for the entire family and severe results for the one failing.

The Circle of Fire: Doing what God wants us to do.

Scripture: Joshua 6 & 7 - In Joshua chapter 6, the Israelites destroyed Jericho. Joshua issued God's command to the people on the seventh day of encirclement as recorded in Joshua 6:17-19, "The city and all that is in it are to be devoted to the Lord ... keep away from the devoted things, so that you will not bring about your own destruction by taking any of them." But something went terribly wrong. Jericho fell, but in the next battle against the city of Ai, Joshua sent three thousand men against the city and they were soundly routed. Joshua fell on his face and cried out, "Lord, why do you deliver us into the hands of the Amorites?" What had happened? Who was responsible?

In Joshua 7:10, 12 we see the key verse for us to achieve God's dream for us: The Lord said to Joshua, "Stand up! What are you doing on your face? ... I will not be with you anymore unless you destroy whatever among you is devoted to destruction." Notice that Joshua did not possess any of the devoted items, yet he was left to defeat in battle, and others had died. Who will take responsibility for this disaster? No one came forward, but Joshua had to find out. We are not told in the scripture how God selected the tribe, clan, family, and man to identify Achan as the disobedient person, but as they were brought forward, God revealed the source.

Note that Achan had several opportunities to confess, but chose to try to hide from the truth. After being identified, Achan confessed responsibility, but it was too late to avoid accountability. Confession without repentance is hollow. Achan, his family, and his possessions were stoned for his action. Then God delivered the city of Ai into Joshua's hands.

Biblical Character: Joshua – leaders are responsible for the actions of their followers. If you are going to take a leadership role in life, remember that failure by those under you is your failure as well. Joshua took action to correct the failure and prevent future ones by the people under his command. We should also remember that as a follower, our actions impact not only ourselves, but others. You are responsible for your actions, and will be held accountable by God!

Dress a student as Achan lying on the floor as if just stoned to death. Use ketchup as blood and wadded paper bags as stones. Act the part of Joshua when he receives word of the defeat at Ai. Joshua 7: 6-9 gives the details of his response. Give God's response to Joshua in verse 10 ... "Stand up! What are you doing down on you face?" This sounds like the words of God to Elijah in the cave where he hid from the queen of Israel. Elijah had given up hope and so has Joshua. Both men knew that their power came from God, but thought they no longer had God's power. Sometimes in our own caves, we need to be reminded that God is still with us, even when things go wrong. We only need to seek Him and remove that within us which is devoted to evil destruction.

Show the video “The Sin of Achan”. Those that are a part of the body are responsible for their actions and will be held accountable. Explain that Achan wanted the royal fabric and gold to enhance his standing in the tribe ... pride.

Modern Character(s): President Richard Nixon. Leaders are responsible for actions of others. Show the video “Nixon Resigns”. Show other videos depicting young people doing wrong and being punished.

The Cave Dark Side Journey: Disobedience is victory for the dark side. This bad guy gets you to do only what you want to do, regardless of others or God’s Dream.

The Tribe: Disobedience separates us from God.

Craft: “Dream Deed”. When we buy a car, a title is made to prove we own the property. For a house, there is a deed. But there is no piece of paper to prove our ownership in the Dream God has for us. To be accountable for one’s actions, one must take ownership. So this craft creates a “Dream Deed” for members to claim. See Appendix 8 Craft for “Dream Deed Print Sheet”.

Recreation Activity: “Truth or Consequences”. See Appendix 6 Recreation, for instructions.

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Unit 2: Accountability

Lesson 3: Solve It

The Cave of Wisdom

The Cave Opening - The Burning Bush: Deception or Solution.

Welcome back to the cave of “Deception”. When you look in the mirror each morning, do you really see yourself? Or do you just see what you want to see. And after you leave the house do you forget what you saw in the mirror? Do you see changes you need to make in your actions or attitude, but you forget about them quickly? It is easier to do nothing than to make the difficult choices to give up things which we like to do.

This was the problem which James addressed to the people of the church: hearing the Word and doing nothing about it. The Word tells us how to live, but what if we ignore the Word and do as we please. James tells us that this person is like someone who looks in a mirror, then forgets what he looks like. My father always said when departing, “If I don’t see you again, remember what I looked like the last time I saw you.” This was a constant reminder to remember my father’s face. And I still do today.

But what about our Lord Jesus? When we hear His Word, which shows us his face, do we remember what he looks like, and do we take action to correct what he tells us to do? It is

encouraging to note that those who do the Word are “blessed” in what they do. Are you being blessed today or are you deceiving yourself? What aren’t you seeing in the mirror each day and what are you forgetting?

The Circle of Fire: Do not deceive yourself.

Scripture: James 1: 22-25; Luke 16: 19-31.

James 1: ²² But he does of the word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. ²³ Because if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man looking at his own face in a mirror; ²⁴ for he looks at himself, goes away, and right away forgets what kind of man he was. ²⁵ But the one who looks intently into the perfect law of freedom and perseveres in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer who acts—this person will be blessed in what he does.

Show the video: “James” to explain looking in a mirror.

Biblical Character: The Rich Man

Dress as the rich man in agony of thirst in the fires of hell where you are tormented continually. Tell what you didn’t see each time you went through the gates and passed Lazarus in need. Actually the rich man did see Lazarus, but he ignored him and soon forgot what he saw. Use a hand held mirror to look at yourself and compliment how terrific your face, hair, clothes, etc. look.

Media: Show the video “The Rich Man and Lazarus”.

Modern Character(s): Brad Pitt. Show the video “Countdown – Brad Pitt and Katrina Relief”. This video shows how a rich man can do good things for the poor. Mr. Pitt saw the need, owned

the response, solved it, and took action. Are you willing to do the same? That is how you will achieve God's dream for yourself.

Show the video: "Colin Powell on Education". "Pull your pants up, apply yourself." The former Secretary of State has some tough comments about the responsibility of you to get an education. Discuss the video with the tribe.

Show the video: "Looking in the Mirror". What do you see when you look in the mirror each day?

The Cave Dark Side Journey: Deception is one of the dark side's strengths. If you use deception against others, you throw love out the window.

The Tribe: Deceiving ourselves keeps us from moving toward the dream.

Craft: "Mirror, mirror on the wall, am I God's dream for me at all!" See Appendix 8 Craft for instructions to make the "I am Mirror".

Recreation Activity: "Magic Lock Box". See Appendix 6 Recreation for instructions and resources.

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Unit 2: Accountability

Lesson 4: Do It

The Cave of Wisdom

The Cave Opening: The Burning Bush - Action to correct

Welcome back to the cave of “Hindrance”. There seems to always be something or someone in our way to keep us from doing God’s work and becoming his dream for our lives. Paul and Barnabas experienced the hindrances of life everywhere they went to preach the gospel. They were beaten and left for dead, thrown out of town, thrown into jail, and eventually martyred.

In today’s lesson we see one of these hindrances: Bar-Jesus or Elymas, the sorcerer. Elymas couldn’t stop Paul from sharing the Good News with the proconsul of Paphos, but he could try to persuade the proconsul against the faith. But Paul was determined to give the proconsul the chance to receive the Lord. He saw the hindrance, owned the removal of it, solved the issue and took action to eliminate it. Paul called Elymas what he was, “a child of the devil and an enemy of everything that is right!”

Stop right there, this is the trusted adviser to the proconsul, a man of power, and a sorcerer as well. Paul, you have a lot of

guts to talk to Elymas this way! Or are you just crazy! The Bible tells us what Paul is: “filled with the Holy Spirit”. When you looked in the mirror last lesson, did you see the Holy Spirit in you? If so, then remember and take actions as Paul did: call out wrong for what it is, evil, and through the Holy Spirit, remove it from your life. Help others to also see the evil and remove it from their lives.

The Circle of Fire: Remove any hindrances from your path

Scripture: Acts 13: 6-12 ⁸ But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn aside the proconsul from the faith. Then Paul, who was filled with the Holy Spirit, Looked straight at Elymas and said, “You are a child of the devil and an enemy of everything that is right! ... You are going to be blind for a time.”

Biblical Character: The Sorcerer named Elymas or Bar-Jesus.

The word sorcery as used in the Bible refers to the use of evil for power. In Paul’s letter to the Galatians, Paul lists “sorcery” in chapter 5: 19-21 as one of the “works of the flesh ... for which one will not inherit the kingdom of God.” **φαρμακεία**

(pharmakeia/Far. mak .i. ah) is the Greek word used by Paul in this scripture. From this word we get “pharmacy”, the use of or administering of drugs.

Sorcery goes far back in history. People who had knowledge of the use of plants gained much power in tribes, both from fear and trust. While natural remedies for disease is good, the use of them to gain power over people for evil desires was not a

proper use of God's creations. We also see "magic" considered sorcery in the response of the Egyptian priests to Aaron's rod turning into a snake before Pharaoh. The priests also turned rods into snakes which were eaten by God's snake.

Magic was powerful and used to influence rulers. In our lesson, Paul encountered such a person who was an attendant to the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, an intelligent man. Sergius sent for Paul and Barnabas to hear the new message they were preaching. But Elymas tried to prevent Paul from speaking to the proconsul. Why would Elymas care what Paul had to say? Because he knew the word of God would reduce his power over Sergius.

The stage was set for a classic battle between good and evil, and God wins again, just as in Egypt! The closing verse is great: "he believed". Sergius, a member of government, believed and was saved. But what if Paul had done nothing and given up? We are to take action to confront evil and share the gospel at each opportunity.

Have a student play the part of Elymas, the Sorcerer. Dress the part of Proconsul Sergius Paulus. See "Elymas and Sergius" skit in Appendix A. Perform the skit. Use jelly beans to fake pills. Talk about how great the pills will make you feel. Show a few magic tricks, like "fingers smoking", "ketchup packet diver", "water boiling without fire", "Scarf through neck". Explain the danger of being drawn in to magic and drugs ... "such a person will not inherit the kingdom of God."

Show the videos “Paul and Elymas” and “Twenty-First Century Sorcery” from Appendix 2, Unit 5.

Modern Character(s): “ABC News: Boy and His Train”: Taking action to help others in need does not require us to be over 21 years of age. Twelve-year-old John Thomas Robertson turned his love for trains into a mission to help those who could not share the ride because of disabilities. Remember the words of our Lord: “If you do unto others, you do also unto me”. John took action as he saw the opportunity. Can you see how he “saw it”, “owned it”, “solved it”, and “did it”? You too can be a doer of the word!

Other videos: “ABC News: SC School” and “Michelle Obama on Language” in Appendix 2, Unit 5.

The Cave Dark Side Journey: Hindrances to your journey will constantly be thrown up by the dark side. Be prepared to go over, through, or around them.

The Tribe Learning: We must take action to remove any hindrances to God’s dream for us. This includes the people with whom we associate. We are to remove the bad people from our lives and help those in need.

Craft: “Hindrane Buster Hammer”. See Appendix 8 Craft for instruction and material.

Recreation Activity: “Man Mines”. See Appendix 6 Recreation for instructions.

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Unit 2: Accountability

Lesson 5: Test It

The Cave of Wisdom

The Cave Opening: The Burning Bush - You get what you measure or test.

Welcome back to the cave of “Gangrene Actions”. Throughout this unit, we have seen various Bible and modern characters follow the steps of Accountability: See It, Own It, Solve It, and Do It. But how did they know the steps resulted in God’s Dream being done? So far our Accountability journey has been like getting on a treadmill to condition our bodies. But unless you measure your progress, you may be doing no good or even harm to your body.

That’s why it’s best to measure your heart rate and blood pressure while you are working out and use a cutoff devise for safety. These are good measures, but do they yield the result you want: weight loss or increased endurance. So you add measures, like time and speed of the workout. A slow walk for five minutes probably will not help you reduce weight, but you will not know for sure until you get on a scale!

The early Christians were much like this exercise. They had seen their spiritual condition, owned their sinful life, solved their lost condition by believing in Jesus as Lord, and were

trying to live a Christian lifestyle. But there were some leaders in the congregation who were teaching ideas which were not in alignment with the message of the Apostles. These teachings included that there was no resurrection of the dead or it had already occurred or that one could live any way they desired because they were saved by Christ's sacrifice.

Paul called these teachings "Gangrene Actions" because if not tested, they would lead to the destruction of the spirit. The Christians had to test teachings against the Word of Christ to find these infections and remove them from their life action plans. You must do the same, even now at your young age.

The Circle of Fire: Test teachings against a standard.

Scripture: Romans 12:2; 2 Timothy 2:16-18.

Romans 12:2 (New International Version)

²Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

2 Timothy 2:16-18 (New International Version)

¹⁶Avoid godless chatter, because those who indulge in it will become more and more ungodly. ¹⁷Their teaching will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, ¹⁸who have wandered away from the truth. They say that the resurrection has already taken place, and they destroy the faith of some.

Biblical Character: Hymenaeus and Philetus

How would you like to have your name written down and published to be seen for thousands of years as someone who is wrong? Paul generally did not name individuals who were

wrong, but in this instance the errors were critical to the faith. Without the resurrection to eternal life, the sacrifice of Jesus is a lost cause.

Why would anyone sacrifice their life to give others eternal life if there were no resurrection to eternal life! Paul wrote Timothy to call out these individuals and correct the error of their teachings. It was left to Timothy, however, to make the corrections. The errors were a “gangrene” faith condition of great destructive power. Paul held these teachings up against the teachings of Christ to test them and found them false. You must do the same in your life’s belief system. In our next unit, we will discuss belief systems in more detail. For now, let’s focus on the next Accountability process step: Test It.

Have a member act the part of a new Christian. As the teacher, you act the part of Hymenaeus. Teach the concept of past resurrection. See Appendix 4 Skits for a sample script. Although Hymenaeus and Philetus had claimed to be Christians; they did not depart from iniquity. They taught that we "spiritually" pass from death to life, but because the physical body is "evil" it will not be raised from the dead. Therefore, it did not matter how one behaved, the evil body could not be saved. They taught that the resurrection of Jesus was the only resurrection.

Show the video “The Shepherd is the Lamb”. This is a music video arrangement, but the words tell a story that is our test of our actions: Do my actions follow the example of Christ to become the lamb to others? To do this, you must give of

yourself to help others to do the Accountability process, beginning with “seeing” the need for Christ in their life.

Modern Character(s): The Duke staff. Show the video: “Doing Good in the Neighborhood”. This video shows ways that the staff at Duke helps to meet community needs. These are adults, but Middle School students can also participate in projects to better their community and open doors for the teaching of the Gospel. Time permitting; show the video “The Part Where You Let Go”. This video shows how little good deeds can lead to many more good deeds being done.

Show the video: “Maggot Cure”. This is a video from Animal Planet and is a little freaky, but this age group enjoys freaky stuff! This method is a cure for gangrene. Note that gangrene behavior can require some pretty freaky cures. The best cure is to avoid the gangrene from occurring. In 2 Timothy, Paul tells us to *“¹⁶Avoid godless chatter, because those who indulge in it will become more and more ungodly.”* The same is true of sin in our lives. It can be like gangrene to the spirit and must be removed.

To provide a little shock effect to this lesson, try cooking a small amount of rice and placing it inside a piece of gauze; then show a quick glimpse of the gauze and rice to a member and place it on their arm. In a dark cave, this was very impressive and brought forth a few screams!

The Cave Dark Side Journey: Gangrene actions can kill the flesh and the soul.

The Tribe: All actions are not automatically correct. We must test ideas against the life and word of Christ for results to meet God's Dream and not become gangrene spiritually.

Craft: "The Inspector": Things can look much different when seen under magnification. Use this magnifier as a reminder to check your actions closely to make sure you are doing what Christ would do. Place a Bible sticker on one side of the handle and a verse sticker on the other that reads: "Test actions versus God's Dream for your life." See Appendix 8 Craft for instructions and material.

Recreation Activity: Check and Double Check

See Attachment 6 Recreation for instructions and picture puzzles.

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Unit 2: Accountability

Lesson 6: Adjust It

The Cave of Wisdom

The Cave Opening: The Burning Bush: Results should be according to God's Dream.

Welcome back to the cave of "Not What I Wanted". What if the results of your actions are not what you expected or wanted? In this lesson we see how results that don't match our expectations can cause us to go against God's Dream. Our Bible character, Jonah, tried not to do the Dream of God for his life. He fled in the opposite direction of God's instructions and as you surely know, he was swallowed by a whale and returned to the beach.

In a sense, Jonah entered the cave of darkness, just as Elijah did. Jonah would have to face his shortcoming before the Lord: he showed no mercy to others. This is a story of mercy and forgiveness; but also how a lack of it can destroy us from the inside out, like the gangrene of Hymenaeus last week destroyed outside in.

Today we would call Jonah's behavior pouting. Surely you have never behaved in this manner to your parents when you were not allowed to do something or when someone hurt your feelings! This is a dark side of the cave that can only be

overcome by a changed life to one of forgiving and showing mercy.

The Circle of Fire: Adjust your attitudes to match God's Dream.

Scripture: Jonah 4 (key verse 4).

⁴ But the LORD replied, "Have you any right to be angry?"

Biblical Character: Jonah

God gave Jonah a second chance, but Jonah still didn't like the assignment. And why should he: the people of Nineveh were enemies of Israel. He went, but in his heart, Jonah hoped that Nineveh would ignore the message. Jonah did not want to succeed, he wanted the town destroyed. When the king of Nineveh decreed that the kingdom would repent, God forgave them, had compassion on them, and did not destroy the city. But note Jonah's response in chapter 4: he was greatly displeased and became angry.

Now we see how our actions can go astray when God doesn't do things they way we want him to do: Jonah began to do what may best be described as "pout". He even blamed God's actions for his failure to obey in the beginning: "is this not what I said when I was still at home? That is why I was so quick to flee to Tarshish."

Jonah may as well have said: "See God, I told you so, I knew what would happen. I know better than you what they need: they need to be destroyed!" But his actions to an even darker turn: Jonah wanted to die from his embarrassment. He had

proclaimed that God would destroy the city and now it wasn't going to happen! Oh my, what shall I do now! I will be seen as a liar and my prophesy is worthless. I am a failure! Life is not worth living if I can't have fame and glory.

So Jonah went away from the city to a hill where he could watch and wait for God to change his mind. Surely God will change his mind if what he has done upsets me! But God did not change his mind and Jonah began to "pout". His heart became darker with desire for killing of the people of Nineveh. Jonah was lost, for without forgiving others, we cannot be forgiven.

God tried to show Jonah the dark path he was upon by sending the vine, but Jonah was still "angry enough to die". We aren't given the outcome of this story, but Jonah is left on the hill. Not a good ending!

Act the part of the king of Nineveh and tell the story in Jonah 3:3-10. Or act out the part of Jonah on the hill "pouting".

Show the video: "Jonah Fails to Adjust (Testament – Jonah)" in Appendix 2, Unit 5. Jonah had to learn mercy. We need to do the same as part of the Dream.

Modern Character(s): Pope John Paul II

Would you forgive someone who shot you three times and almost took your life? Imagine the pain, the surgery, the recovery period: and still you must forgive. Pope John Paul II showed us the way to forgive those who seek our destruction.

He even went to the prison and talked to the man who shot him.

Show the video news report of Pope John Paul II being shot in Appendix 2, Unit 5.

Show the videos: “Famous Pouts” and “Little Baby Pout” in Appendix 2, Unit 5. These are on the lighter side, but show the attitude of pouting.

The Cave Dark Side Journey: Pouting closes the mind to finding alternative solutions. It says “I want my way, not your way!”, even if it is God’s way as in the example of Jonah.

The Tribe: “*Move On*”! Life’s results may not be what you expect, desire, or think you deserve; but, “get over it”. Do not sit on the hill top and sulk, waiting for life to change around you. Have mercy and show forgiveness.

Craft: Make a “No Pouting” sign to put on wall at home. Use yellow construction paper for the sign. Print a picture of Jonah under the vine “pouting” with a circle and mark over the picture to represent “no”. See Appendix 8 Craft for material.



Recreation Activity: “Battleship” – Use a divider or sheet to separate two teams so they cannot see each other. Have each team form a line on their side of the court. Rotate through players as they throw a wet sponge ball over the barrier at the other team. If a player is hit, they must yell “On target”. If the throw is a miss, yell “adjust your attitude!” Continue until one team has hit all of the players of the opposing team.

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The Journey to Light

Unit 2: Accountability

Lesson 7: Praise God

The Cave of Wisdom

The Cave Opening: The Burning Bush - Let your light shine!

Welcome back to the cave of “Open Mouth”. I could easily add “insert foot” to our cave topic. That describes well what God sees when we praise ourselves for the actions we take in life. God places opportunities in our path for us to develop the Dream he has for us. We should praise God for the opportunity to serve him. But many people choose to brag on themselves and lift themselves up for others to see. In our lesson today we see that God wants us to let our light shine before others so that they will praise God for the good things we do.

Said another way, we are to act in a manner that gets others to praise God because of what we have done. Jude gives us examples of how not to act: grumbling, faultfinding, boasting, flattering others for own advantage, and following our own bad desires.

Do you recognize any of these attitudes? Have you grumbled or complained to your parents recently because you had to do some work around the house? Have you bragged to a friend about winning a match or accomplishing something at school? Have you ever been nice to someone so they would do

something for you or hang out with you? When did you last pick on a sibling for doing something incorrectly? Have you ever been angry at someone and yelled at them? Have you ever spread gossip about someone, true or not? All of these are examples of “Open Mouth” darkness in the cave. They do not shine light for God before others.

The Circle of Fire: Praise God instead of Grumbling. A mouth that is busy praising cannot at the same time be grumbling!

Scripture: [Jude 1:16](#); John 12:1-6; Matthew 5:14-16; Psalm 34:1

Jude ¹⁶ Those people complain. They find fault with others. They follow their own evil longings. They brag about themselves. They praise others to help themselves.

John 12: ⁴But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray him, objected, ⁵"Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year's wages.

Matthew 5: ¹⁴"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. ¹⁶In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

Biblical Characters: Judas Iscariot and Jude

In our scripture from the book of John, we see the true character of Judas even before the betrayal. Judas grumbled and complained about the “waste” of expensive perfume used by Mary to wipe the feet of Jesus. Judas failed to see the opportunity Mary had seen and acted upon. The master was worth much more to her than the perfume. Mary took

accountability as we are to do and acted on her understanding of the opportunity placed before her.

Jude, a half brother of Jesus, did not open his letter to other believers as a brother of Jesus; rather he introduces himself as a brother of James and a servant of Jesus. This is our proper place in relationship to Jesus as well: to be his servant. If this is true, then we can complete the accountability steps we have learned by “Praising God”. Jesus pointed the way to our final action step in Matthew 5:16 “let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”

In each of our lessons in this unit, we have seen that the individuals did not praise themselves for the actions they undertook, but rather praised God for the opportunity to be his servant. Jude points out that we are not to be like those who “boast about themselves.” Instead, we are to “keep ourselves in God’s love”. How can we do this? Jude tells us to “Be merciful to those who doubt”. That is the reason we choose to take “accountability”. It is not our goal to praise ourselves, but to show mercy to others, just as Jesus showed mercy to us on the cross.

Act the part of Judas and complain about the frivolous waste of perfume on Jesus when it could have been given to the disciples for use with the poor (and his own use). This is a direct look at the dark side of the heart of Judas. He did not care for the poor, but rather for his own benefit. Purchase round candy and wrap in gold and silver foil. Put in a small sack and hang around your

neck. Pull out the “coins” during your act and talk about how much could have been bought for the disciples (and your) needs.

Expect the class members to recognize candy and grab for it. Use this moment to teach about the desire for material items, in this example candy, causing us to be distracted from God’s dream for us. Judas allowed material things to blind him to the truth of the Messiah.

Show the video: “Judas Iscariot”.

Act the part of Jude and talk about those who brag about themselves, grumble, and find fault. “I was eager to share with you our salvation stories, but instead I must warn you about those in your company who make the saving grace of our Lord Jesus a license to do anything they desire. I urge you to battle against their teachings!”

Modern Character(s): Praise to God is often expressed in song. King David wrote much of the book of Psalms as music. Today we have many musicians who sing and play praises to God, many based on Psalms. One selected for this praise lesson is Paul Balloche and his song “Rise Up and Praise Him”. Show the video of this song in Appendix 2, Unit 5.

Other videos of praise music include:

“Sing to the Lord a New Song” in Appendix 2, Unit 5, Praise God, Sing to the Lord.

The Cave Dark Side Journey: Mouth Open, insert foot. Before you speak, pause and think about what you are about to say.

Does it really need to be said? Will it cause injury? Does it show love?

The Tribe: God has ordained praise for him. Have members sing the Doxology and discuss the meaning. “Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him all creatures here below; Praise Him above, ye heavenly hosts; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.”

Show the video: “Doxology with Sign Language” in Appendix 2, Unit 5, Praise God, Sing to the Lord.

Show “The Grumblers” videos in Appendix 2, Unit 5, Praise God, The Grumblers. Have the group sing the song. Lyrics are included in Appendix 2.

Craft: “Praise Coasters” See Appendix 8 Craft for instructions and material.

Recreation Activity: “Open Mouth Toss” – Use a 4’x4’ sheet of plywood to construct an “Open Mouth” target. Cut out five circles or ovals and draw mouth around the openings. Divide the group into two teams. Have teams rotate tossing a bag at the “Open Mouths”. Points are scored when bag goes through a hole. Use bean bags, tennis balls or similar objects for bag toss. To really make this a wild celebration, give each team a dozen balls of different colors (i.e. one team yellow, the other team red) and have them all throw at once. Have them make noise with their gragger the number of times a ball went through a hole.

Open mouth clipart is provided in Appendix 6 Recreation.

Psalm 33

- ¹ Sing joyfully to the LORD, you righteous;
it is fitting for the upright to praise him.
- ² Praise the LORD with the harp;
make music to him on the ten-stringed lyre.
- ³ Sing to him a new song;
play skillfully, and shout for joy.
- ⁴ For the word of the LORD is right and true;
he is faithful in all he does.

I AM - The Greatest Battle of Your Life

The Journey to Light

Unit 2: Accountability

Lesson 8: Celebrate the Rewards of Accountability

The Cave of Wisdom

The Cave Opening: The Burning Bush

Celebrate the opportunities God places in our path.

Welcome back to the cave of “Celebration versus Self-esteem”. When we celebrate, it should be praising God for the opportunities He has placed in our path to enable us to grow toward the Dream He has for our lives. Wrong celebration can lead to self esteem and pride, one of the mighty weapons Satan has to use against us. One definition of self-esteem is a confidence and satisfaction in oneself. Synonyms include: ego, pride, arrogance, and self-regard. In Proverbs 16:18 we are told that “pride goes before destruction.” Would you really want people to describe you using the synonyms of self-esteem?

The Circle of Fire: Celebrate God’s grace to us.

Scripture: Romans 12:3 “For by the grace given me I say to you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.”

Biblical Character: The Magi

We are fortunate to have the recording in Matthew of the actions of the three Magi toward the birth of Jesus. They set an example of celebration for us to follow. These men were obviously very wealthy based on the cost of the gifts they brought. But they did not think so highly of themselves as to put their status above that of a child born to poor parents in a manger. They could easily have had pride in their accomplishments and not considered the birth of a king to be worth the effort of the long trip. But they came and they praised the child.

Act the part of a Magi and tell the story from Matthew 2: 1-12.

Show the video “The 4th Wiseman”. Explain that in each opportunity placed in his path, the 4th Magi did the Accountability process we have studied. As a result, at the end of his life, he received the thanks of Jesus.

The video will require most of the classroom time.

Modern Character(s): Tom Short Campus Ministries

Show the video: “God Reveals His Truth to the Humble” in Appendix 2, Unit 5 Celebration. In this video Tom Short makes it clear that God loves the humble, not the prideful.

The Cave Dark Side Journey: Self Esteem is another trait that can be good or bad. You should have some self-esteem because you are loved by God. But be careful that self esteem doesn’t turn into self love.

The Tribe: God places opportunities in our path for us to fulfill His dream for our lives. Celebrate the opportunities and don't become prideful.

Craft: Construct a "Gragger" noise maker used at the "Feast of Purim". Explain this was used by the Israelites after Esther to celebrate their salvation from the wrath of Haman.

<http://www.heritage.org.il/innernet/archives/gragger.htm>

Gragger information

Recreation Activity: Using the Gragger noise makers, praise the Lord by stamping out Haman pride. *"So you despise the evil Haman and want to see his name wiped out forever? Great! Just write Haman on a piece of masking tape, stick it to the bottom of your shoe and spend the day stamping out Haman."* by Rabbi Shimon Apisdorf. Have members write "Pride" on a piece of tape, place it on the bottom of their shoe and walk around shaking their gragger.

Unit 3: God's Dream for You



In Isaiah 55:9 the Lord said: *“As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.”* (New International Version)

Who can know the mind of God? He is indeed so far above us. But from Jeremiah, we do

know that God does have a plan or Dream for each of us. We are known by him. He wants to bless us. We are to seek the Dream for our life. This unit attempts to provide a “rudder” to help the students steer their journey of life toward the Dream. God’s Dream for each student is a personal journey and must be found by each individual. As teachers, the best we can hope for is to shine a light in the right direction of life’s journey and our hope is that God will make the path visible to them. He holds us in His hand.

I AM - The Greatest Battle of Your Life

The Journey to Light

Unit 3: God's Dream

Lesson 1: Believe

The Cave of Wisdom

The Cave Opening: The Burning Bush - Believe in the “Unknown God”.

Welcome back to the cave of “Stone Faces”, the worship of anything we can see that may bring a favorable result to our actions. The old saying “seeing is believing” still seems to apply today. Or how about “show me the money”, the now famous line from a movie.

Recently, on “Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?”, I saw a contestant wearing a trinket around his neck. It was his “good luck charm”. He had worn it continuously, except for cleaning the band, for over twenty years. Obviously this was what he placed his trust in for success.

We have numerous sport figures with special “routines” before a game or play. Do you have a superstition or “Stone Face” that you trust to help you? In our lesson today, we see Abram living in the land of Iran, or Ur of the Chaldeans, surrounded by people who worshiped many gods. One in particular, a fertility god, was worshiped or honored by his brother, Nahor, who had many children and credited the “stone face” idol for his offspring.

Abram was married to Sarah, whom he loved, but she had not given him a child. Why not ask the “fertility god” for help? If the god helped someone else, surely he would help Abram. But Abram was different. He didn’t believe in the superstition of many gods. He didn’t believe that the “Stone Faces” on idols had any power. But the “Unknown God”, the one with no face, had not as yet revealed himself to Abram. This is an amazing situation: Abram believed there was no value in clay idols that had a face made by men!

Abram was a true radical! He had not even seen the god he yearned to be in relationship with. But he was just the person the true God was looking for to make himself known to mankind again. God’s Dream for mankind has always been a dream of a special relationship, like a son or daughter. But that Dream had been smashed in the Garden of Eden upon the Tree of Knowledge. The journey of mankind back to that Dream was about to begin. Are you ready to grab the Dream for yourself? God has been waiting for you since you were first conceived in His mind, long before you were born.

The Circle of Fire: Believe in Him.

Scripture: Ge 12:1-4; 15:6; Jn 14:11;

¹ *The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you.*

² *"I will make you into a great nation
and I will bless you;
I will make your name great,
and you will be a blessing.*

³ *I will bless those who bless you,
and whoever curses you I will curse;
and all peoples on earth
will be blessed through you."*

⁴ *So Abram left, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Haran.*

Genesis 15:6 *Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness.*

John 14:11 *"Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves."*

Biblical Character: Abram

Act the part of Terah, father of Abram. Tell of leaving Ur of the Chaldeans and settling in Haran. Your clan is doing very well. You have many sheep and children. The king of Ur has taken note of your success and now demands a doubling of your tribute to him each year. This is a tremendous burden on the clan, so moving to Haran is a better option. Tell of the many gods served by the Chaldeans. Perhaps one god was responsible for the clan's success, but there was no way to be certain which one, so all gods were served. But your son, Abram, refused to serve any of the gods.

Nahor, another son, offered sacrifices to a fertility god, among many others. His wife gave him many children. Abram refused to give offerings to any "Stone Face" and he had no children. Nahor blamed Abram's lack of children on his refusal to make offerings to the fertility god. Abram claimed he was called by an "unknown god", one with no stone face, and told to leave

Haran and his father's house. Terah was too old to make the journey. He must watch his son leave Haran and go into the desert of the unknown future following a god that was also "unknown".

Show the video "Testament: Abraham"

Modern Character(s): Jackie Robinson Show the video of the Jackie Robinson story. Discuss the difficulty Robinson had to fulfill his dream.

Barack Obama – Show video "The Obama Dream"

Show the video "First Put Your Mask On". Explain that we are to be about helping others.

Show "Martin Luther King speech to Obama speech: A dream realized?"

or show "Commemorative Video: Barack Obama & America: A Dream Realized"

or show "Field of dreams - Doc Graham steps forward"

or show "Field of Dreams Ray asks Doc his dream"

Discuss whichever of the videos you select to show. Barack Obama's dream is reality fulfilled as President of the USA. While the "Field of Dreams" is a fictional movie, some of the characters were real and so were their dreams. Note that sometimes what we desire is not the Dream God intends for our life. Still we should be just as happy and content with our role as if we had what we wanted and even more: we should be fulfilled.

The Cave Dark Side Journey: A “Stone Face” lacks sensitivity to others. Show the love in your heart to others.

The Tribe: In what do you place your trust? What you believe is the source of your Dream. The first step in knowing God’s Dream for you is to believe in Him and trust Him to keep his word.

Craft: “Stone Faces” - Use stone tiles approximately 4” square and have members paint faces on them. On the opposite side paint the international symbol for “no” (a circle with a slash).

Recreation Activity: “What is this?”

“I believe this is a ____”

Have everyone sit in a circle. Identify two teams within the circle (every other person or girls versus boys will do). Pick up a representative object and tell the person next to you what it is only not really. For example: use a tennis ball and say, “I believe this is a marble.” The individual receiving the item is to ask, “A what?” “A marble,” you answer. “A what?” he asks again. “A marble,” you say. “Oh, a marble,” he says. The pattern is now established. He then takes the marble and turns to the next person and starts the pattern. As the tennis ball “marble” goes around, you start on the next object and the next object.

Eventually there will be a lot of these conversations going on at once. The goal is to see how many objects you can pass around the circle and the team identify by the wrong identity at the end.

I AM - The Greatest Battle of Your Life

The Journey to Light

Unit 3: God's Dream

Lesson 2: Accepting the Dream

The Cave of Wisdom

The Cave Opening: The Burning Bush - The next step is yours

Welcome back to the cave of “Drowning”. How long and how far can you swim? Many people believe Jesus is the Son of God, but still believe they can make life on their own, without his help. Do you know someone who was baptized and then disappeared from the church? Excuses include: “I just don’t have the time”; “Sunday is the only day I have to sleep”; “I don’t get anything from the pastor’s sermon”; “It’s a waste of my time”; “I play sports on Sunday”; or “I just don’t like the people there.” These people are “drowning” and don’t know it.

What will it take for them to call out to Jesus, “Only you can save me, Lord”? In this lesson we see what it took for Peter to cry out to Jesus. He was physically drowning and accepted his condition of needing help. But he was also spiritually drowning and didn’t know it.

The dream that the Father had for Peter was drowning as well and would lead to the three time denial of Jesus. Why didn’t he just turn around and swim back to the boat on his own power? He saw the wind and the huge waves and was afraid. When

you take your eyes off the master, you open yourself to the world of wind, fear, and drowning. You break the relationship of believing in Him. Believing was the first step in knowing God's Dream for you, but the next step of "Accepting" him as the master of your life must also be taken or you begin to sink. Believing requires you to "get out of the boat" and accept Jesus as your "only hope" for your life. His Dream for you is your hope.

The Circle of Fire: Accept His Word.

Scripture: Matthew 14: 22-32

²²Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd. ²³After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, ²⁴but the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it.

²⁵During the fourth watch of the night Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. ²⁶When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear.

²⁷But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid."

²⁸"Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water."

²⁹"Come," he said.

Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus.

³⁰But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!"

³¹Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?"

³²And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. ³³Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

Biblical Character: Peter

Act the part of a disciple in the boat on the stormy water when Jesus appears, walking on the water, as described in verse 25.

Also describe Peter walking on the water and then sinking. Use a large fan to create “wind” and toss some small cups of water at the members to represent the waves coming into the boat. Make this a very dramatic and startling scene.

Show the video *“Jesus invites you to get out of the boat”*

Modern Character(s): Susan Boyle A tale of two dreams: 1) from the heart 2) from the world.

1) Susan Boyle – Britain’s Got Talent 2009

Show the video: “I Dreamed a Dream “

2) Marilyn Manson of the Eurythmics

Show the video: “Sweet Dreams (Are Made Of This)”

Which dream do you have for your life? Susan had the courage, despite physical problems, to get out of the boat and follow the dream using the gift God had given to her. The opposite is the dream of the world as depicted in the Marilyn Manson video where “everyone is looking for something” but don’t know what. They are drowning. But you know what you are looking for ... the dream of God.

The Cave Dark Side Journey: Do you ever feel like you are “Drowning” in work and just can’t do one more thing. That one more thing could be what God wants you to do. Step out in faith and trust God to keep you from drowning.

The Tribe: God's Dream is for you to reach out and take His hand, like Peter took the hand of Jesus when sinking into the water, and follow Him in your life's purpose He has for you.

Craft: Add to the "Stone Faces" tile from last week a drawing of a hand reaching upward to God.

Recreation Activity: "Water Balloon Volleyball"

This activity should be conducted outdoors. Construct a volleyball net using a sheet and poles. Team members should not be able to see the other side of the court. Fill a dozen balloons with water. Have the teams play volleyball using a water balloon instead of volleyball. One team member begins the game by tossing the "ball" over the net. A member of the opposite team must catch the "ball" and throw it back over the net. Play continues until the catch is missed or the "ball" breaks. In both situations, the team that threw the "ball" gets the point.

I AM - The Greatest Battle of Your Life

The Journey to Light

Unit 3: God's Dream

Lesson 3: Unbelief of the Dream

The Cave of Wisdom

The Cave Opening: The Burning Bush - Is this for me?

Welcome back to the cave of “Unbelief”. Do you believe everything that you hear or see? Even at your young age, you probably have encountered situations which now cause you to doubt the truth of things. As you grow older, there will be even more situations encountered. Some incidents may even cause you to doubt God’s Dream for you. “Maybe I misunderstood. Maybe what I want is not from God, but myself.”

How can you know for sure the Dream is real for you? In this lesson, Thomas, a disciple of Jesus also known as “The Twin”, encounters those same doubts. How would you feel if someone you followed was to disappear, then reappear to others, but not to you? Maybe you would feel ignored or forgotten. Or maybe you would think you were no longer a part of the group. Maybe your calling to follow God’s Dream for you was not understood properly. Could it have been meant for others and not for you?

The Circle of Fire: Stop Unbelieving His Word

Scripture: Mark 9:23-24; John 20: 24-29; James 1:5-8

²³"If you can'?" said Jesus. "Everything is possible for him who believes."

²⁴Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!"

John 20:24-29

²⁴Now Thomas (called Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. ²⁵So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!"

But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it."

²⁶A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" ²⁷Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."

²⁸Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"

²⁹Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

James 1:5-8

⁵If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. ⁶But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. ⁷That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; ⁸he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does.

Biblical Character: Thomas the "Twin"

Thomas could have deserted the disciples, gone away with anger in his heart for three wasted years. In our scripture, Jesus is asked by a boy's father to heal his son ... "if you can". Surely the man had heard of the many miracles Jesus had already performed, yet, he wasn't sure that Jesus could help his son.

When Jesus confirmed he could heal the boy if his father believed, the man asked Jesus not to heal his son, but to help him overcome his unbelief.

Perhaps this is what Thomas meant when he declared that he would not believe the disciples unless he saw Jesus for himself and touched the wounds. The resurrection of Jesus was not just spirit, but physical. Thomas wanted to believe that there would be a life after death with a new body. Jesus proved this to be true by allowing Thomas to touch the wounds from the nails and spear. Jesus helped Thomas's unbelief. He can help yours as well. Ask Jesus to help you to believe in God's Dream for your life. Remember: "Everything is possible for him who believes."

Act the part of Thomas and tell how you felt when the other disciples told you that they had seen Jesus alive and you were not present. I'd want Jesus to appear to me also, after all, did I not devote years to his service as well. Emphasize that you did declare Jesus to be Lord. John does not tell us what Thomas did after seeing Jesus, but you can imagine that he went about proclaiming the risen Lord.

Show the video *"Doubting Thomas"*. This video tells the story of Thomas.

Modern Character(s): "Around the Block with Neal Fazzio", a fictional radio broadcast with a host who doubts the existence of Jesus. Show the three part mini movie. (30 minutes) This is one of the best skits I have seen on the subject of Doubt. I encourage you to show it.

The Cave Dark Side Journey: Unbelief is where the dark side wants to place you. If you do not believe the light, how can you walk in the darkness of the world? Be confident in the light God places on your path.

The Tribe: What we see with our eyes can deceive us. What we believe with our heart is true.

Craft: Due to time required for the Stranger Series video, no Craft is recommended.

Recreation Activity: Play the card game “I Don’t Believe It”
(See Appendix 6 Recreation)

I AM - The Greatest Battle of Your Life

The Journey to Light

Unit 3: God's Dream

Lesson 4: Desiring the Dream

The Cave of Wisdom

The Cave Opening: The Burning Bush - I really want this!

Welcome back to the cave of “Desire”. I can still hear my father telling me, “You’re not too old for your wants to hurt you!” Of course, during my teenage years, I was not thinking of pain, except for the discipline of the rod yielded by my mother. If the saying “spare the rod and spoil the child” is true, then I certainly was never spoiled! This discipline helped to shape the desire of my life: being in charge of my life.

While college was an escape from home for me, it was more in that was the door to taking control of my life. I wanted this deeply. Control of my life increased through college, military service, employment opportunities and my own family. I became “self-sufficient” with an “I can do anything” attitude. Until one day an accident put me in a hospital with a broken femur and pelvis. For six weeks I would endure the pain of being restrained to a bed in traction followed by six more weeks in a body cast. I was no longer in control. All body functions required the help of someone else. I learned patience and humility quickly! But most important of all, I learned to love the care givers and supporters.

These were wonderful, selfless people who actually cared for a stubborn, young, over-confident man. They re-directed my passion and the desire of my life toward helping others achieve their dream. And I've learned that what we desire with all of our heart does truly increase. I re-discovered the love of Jesus who had first come into my life at the age of 11. He was with me in the hospital and had been with me all the time ... I just didn't have the desire for him that he had for me.

While in the hospital, a fellow church member gave me the 23rd Psalm and suggested that I read it 4 times a day for a week and it would provide comfort to me. It didn't take a week to be comforted! How could I miss "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me to ***lie down*** in green pastures". These few words tell countless stories of the desire of the Father for us and his care and comfort available to us. Yes, sometimes we must be made to lie down in order to be reminded to look up and see him. The mountaintops of success are thrilling, but the valleys of comfort are the more desirable.

Begin now in your early years of life to cultivate your desire for the "valleys" where you meet God, receive his love and comfort, and love him in return ... because he first loved you! This is the true wisdom that is "more precious than rubies." Follow the instructions of Paul to the young Timothy: "Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart." Eagerly desire wisdom and it will become "a tree of life" to you.

The Circle of Fire: Desire Wisdom

Scripture: Proverbs 3:13-18; 1 Cor 12:31; 2 Timothy 2:22-23

Proverbs 3:13-18 (New International Version)

- ¹³ *Blessed is the man who finds wisdom,
the man who gains understanding,*
¹⁴ *for wisdom is more profitable than silver
and yields better returns than gold.*
¹⁵ *Wisdom is more precious than rubies;
nothing you desire can compare with it.*
¹⁶ *Long life is in wisdom's right hand;
in its left hand are riches and honor.*
¹⁷ *Wisdom's ways are pleasant ways,
and all its paths are peace.*
¹⁸ *Wisdom is a tree of life to those who embrace it;
those who lay hold of it will be blessed.*

1 Corinthians 12:31 (New International Version)

- ³¹ *But eagerly desire the greater gifts. And now I will show you the most excellent way.*

2 Timothy 2:22-23 (New International Version)

- ²² *Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace,
along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. ²³Don't have anything to do
with foolish and stupid arguments, because you know they produce quarrels.*

Biblical Character(s): Solomon versus Absalom

Act the part of Absalom, the son of David, who desired more than anything else to be the King of Israel. Tell your story from the point of view of evil desire versus the desire for wisdom which Solomon placed first. Absalom expected to become king after his father. He loved to play the role of the judge in his father's place. But power can quickly corrupt the young mind. When rumor spread that David would name the child of another woman as his heir, Absalom saw it as his rightful inheritance, being stolen by his father. He was easily persuaded by enemies of the king to lead an opposing army against David's

forces. When his forces were defeated in battle, he fled the scene in fear and was caught in a tree limb to be slain.

Show the video *“King David Part 13 of 15”* which shows the rebellion of Absalom against David and his death in Appendix 2, Unit 6, Desiring the Dream.

Show the video *“Wise King Solomon: 2 women and the baby scene”*. The love of a real mother for her child made her willing to give up the child to save it.

Modern Character(s): Various people comment on Wisdom: show the Youtube video *“Wisdom Trailer - Wisdom Book by Andrew Zuckerman”* found in Appendix 2, Unit 6, Desiring the Dream. Discuss the meaning of wisdom.

The Cave Dark Side Journey: Desire can also be good or bad. Desire the things of God first.

The Tribe: What you desire with all of your heart will increase ... even if it is bad for you! Love is to be our greatest desire. What do you desire with all of your heart? Is it God’s dream for you?

Craft: Add a heart shape for love to the stone plaque.

Recreation Activity: *“Knowledge of the Word”* team feud. Divide the class into two teams. Give the answer to a question about the Bible and have teams try to answer. If a team misses the question, go to the other team. Award one point per correct answer. After ten minutes, the team with the most points wins.

I AM - The Greatest Battle of Your Life

The Journey to Light

Unit 3: God's Dream

Lesson 5: Hindrances

The Cave of Wisdom

The Cave Opening: The Burning Bush – Obstacles in your path

Welcome back to the cave of “Obstacles”. Are you prepared for things to go wrong in your life? If you know and understand the things that can happen in your life, you can prepare yourself to overcome the bad times. No matter how right you are in your actions, something will go wrong sometime to derail you from God's Dream. There are many kinds of obstacles we can encounter, but most are the same for all of us. Learn the obstacles and how to handle them when they appear.

Circle of Fire: Overcoming the Hindrances in your life

Scripture: Acts 26:19; 24

19 So then, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the vision from heaven.

24 At this point Festus interrupted Paul's defense. "You are out of your mind, Paul!" he shouted. "Your great learning is driving you insane."

Biblical Character(s): Festus

Act the part of Festus. Paul was giving an inspired account of his conversion and his mission. King Agrippa could have been close to believing in Christ. He didn't stop Paul from speaking. But no matter the rightness of Paul's speech, it was interrupted and

called insane. But King Agrippa recognized that Paul was not insane. He said in verse 31-32, "This man is not doing anything that deserves death or imprisonment. This man could have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar."

Paul encountered a big obstacle in Festus. But he did not let the outburst distract him from his course. Paul was prepared to face adversaries like Festus. He had done it often and it came as no surprise.

But had he handled his arrest correctly when he was taken by a Roman soldier commander in response to an angry crowd: he claimed to be a Roman citizen. The choice was made and Paul would have to live with the results, which soon put him on a ship bound for Rome as a prisoner. And the ship would encounter a great storm and sink.

Obstacles, hindrances in your journey, can lead to unexpected places. Trust God and learn the responses needed. "History has demonstrated that the most notable winners usually encountered heartbreaking obstacles before they triumphed. They won because they refused to become discouraged by their defeats." ~ B. C. Forbes

Show the video "*I Know You Do*" of Paul facing King Agrippa in Appendix 2, Unit 6.

Modern Character(s): Maria Gonzalez discusses the five hindrances to your success in video. See Attachment 2 under this lesson.

Show the two “Distractions” videos, and “Too many hindrances”. Discuss with members.

The Tribe: Distractions and hindrances can cause you to miss the opportunities God places in your path to achieve His Dream for you.

Craft: “No Noise Zone”. See Attachment 8 Craft for instructions to make the “No Noise Zone” door hanger.

Recreation Activity: “Peg Game”. Go online or visit a Cracker Barrel store and purchase the “Peg Game” for each member of the tribe. Or alternately see Attachment 8 Craft for plans to make the “Peg Game” as the craft for this lesson.

<http://shop.crackerbarrel.com/online/shopping/Product.asp?cat%5Fid=4&sku=606154&mscssid=P6WCD73GP2VH9PAVGVPA412CQW8LCPKC>

Have the members’ begin at the same time and first to complete the game is winner. Do several times with the winner dropping out each time.

I AM - The Greatest Battle of Your Life

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Unit 3: God's Dream

Lesson 6: The Dream Line

The Cave of Wisdom

The Cave Opening: The Burning Bush: Last night I had a dream.

Welcome back to the cave of “Nightmares”. A nightmare or a vision from God; Dark side or Light side, which will it be? Are you ready to believe that God can speak to you in your dreams? There are many examples in the Bible of God speaking to people in a dream or vision. Perhaps this is because the distractions of the world and your conscious mind are “asleep” and the subconscious mind is more open to the voice of your soul. You know, “that little small voice in the back of your head.”

No, I’m not talking about an insurance policy. The voice that will speak to you will come from your heart and into your consciousness. Remember, God knows your heart, He made you and He can speak to you through it. It is your own private phone line with God. Are you ready to answer the call?

The Circle of Fire: A communications line with you.

Scripture: Acts 9: 10-20 Ananias has a dream

¹⁰In Damascus there was a disciple named Ananias. The Lord called to him in a vision, "Ananias!"

"Yes, Lord," he answered.

¹¹The Lord told him, "Go to the house of Judas on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying. ¹²In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias come and place his hands on him to restore his sight."

¹³"Lord," Ananias answered, "I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done to your saints in Jerusalem. ¹⁴And he has come here with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name."

¹⁵But the Lord said to Ananias, "Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel. ¹⁶I will show him how much he must suffer for my name."

¹⁷Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord—Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here—has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit." ¹⁸Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized, ¹⁹and after taking some food, he regained his strength. Saul spent several days with the disciples in Damascus. ²⁰At once he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God.

Biblical Character: Ananias

Act the part of Ananias, a disciple of Jesus, and tell the story of the Lord coming to him in a dream to get him to go to Paul, a known hater of disciples with authority to arrest them.

Show the video in Appendix 2, *"The Bible Story of Paul pt 1"* which shows Ananias laying hands on Paul to restore his sight.

Modern Character(s): Tom Brown Ministries and Annie Herring

See the following link for article by Pastor Tom Brown on Dreams from God:

<http://www.tbm.org/dreams.htm>

For God does speak—now one way, now another—though man may not perceive it. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falls on men as they slumber in their beds, (Job 33:14-15)

Show the video: "Annie Herring's advice to young people on dreams from God." See Appendix 2 for this lesson.

Show the video: “Nightmares Trailer”. Point out to the members that some dreams could come from bad sources.

The Cave Dark Side Journey: Nightmares bring fear into the subconscious mind and there they eat away at your courage.

The Tribe: Dreams are often God’s way to talk to us. Peter preached:

“In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams” (Acts 2:17).

These words were spoken by the prophet Joel (Joel 2:28) telling of the things to come which were fulfilled on the day of Pentecost with the disciples.

Craft: “Sweet Dreams” Blindfold. See Appendix 8 Craft for instructions and resources to make this craft. If the purchased option is used for the craft, the members will be able to use the blindfold when travelling as a reminder that wherever they may be, God has is in touch with them.

Recreation Activity: "Blindfold Nightmare Game". See Appendix 6 Recreation for instructions and material for this activity. Remind members that dreams may also come from the dark side and they must be on guard.

I AM - The Greatest Battle of Your Life

The Journey to Light

Unit 3: God's Dream

Lesson 7: Filling Voids

The Cave of Wisdom

The Cave Opening: The Burning Bush: Idle Hands Equals Poor Defense

Welcome back to the cave of “Idleness”. While we all need rest from our work occasionally, too much open time can and usually does leave open trouble. Rest is one thing, but idleness opens the door to laziness, boredom, and often sinful nature. Paul warned the new Christians about this poor defense from Satan in his letters to the Thessalonians: “If a man will not work, he shall not eat.”

The Circle of Fire: Never tire of doing what is right.

Scripture: 2 Samuel 11 and 12: 1-25; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15

Biblical Character: David and Nathan

Have David appear in front of the Tree of Darkness. Act the part of David standing on his palace rooftop and seeing Bathsheba on her rooftop.

David: “I don’t know why I wasn’t with my men at war. I should have been. Joab, my general of the armies of Israel, had

destroyed the Ammonites and laid siege to Rabbah. But I stayed in Jerusalem in my new palace. It was a lovely place built with cedar logs given to me by Hiram, king of Tyre. Hiram sent carpenters and stonemasons and they built my palace. It was big and needed to be as I had many concubines and wives to live there.

Life was good in Jerusalem and the palace, perhaps too good. I was a warrior, had defeated the Philistines and slain Goliath, the giant. Peace was too boring for me and I became restless. One night during the siege of Rabbah, I went for a walk on the rooftop of the palace. It was a lovely night, but loneliness came over me that conquered my self-control. Idleness was a weakness in my defense and sin was able to enter into my mind.

As I was walking on the rooftop, as looked out over the beauty of Jerusalem and saw on another rooftop a beautiful woman. The moonlight made her especially beautiful. I swallowed the lump in my throat and summoned my servants to send them to find out who this beautiful creature might be. She could be a great addition to my household and maybe even queen. My idleness had gone from loneliness to desire.

But this beautiful woman was not free to be mine. My servants told me she was Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah, one of my best soldiers, engaged in the siege of Rabbah. My desire quickly grew to envy of Uriah. Why should he have a wife more beautiful than the king's wives? I became so jealous of Uriah

that I couldn't allow him to keep the woman. I sent my servants to bring her to me.

Bathsheba was even lovelier in the daylight than the moonlight. Whatever it took, I would have her as my wife!

Idleness had opened me to loneliness, desire, envy, jealousy, and now one of the evil darkness to covet my neighbor's possession. It was then that I took action to obtain that which was not mine to have: I took Bathsheba to bed with me. It was a wonderful night, but the dawn brought problems.

What happened in darkness would be seen in the light. Bathsheba became pregnant. Unless Uriah thought he was the father, he could legally have Bathsheba stoned, and I would have to give the command. I couldn't bring myself to do such a thing! What was I to do now? You understand my dilemma, don't you? I am the King of all Israel. I should have the best. I've earned the best. I brought Uriah back from the battle and told him to go home and be with his wife. But he refused to go home while the other men were in the field. He sure made it hard on me to save Bathsheba.

Uriah was just a soldier, not even a leader of troops. I lose men in every war. Why should Uriah not be one of them? All that was needed was a bloody battle for Uriah to be lost, and Bathsheba would not be stoned. And besides, we needed to capture Rabbah and end the siege. Seemed like a reasonable decision to make: have Joab launch a major attack on the gates of Rabbah with Uriah in the front as a great warrior.

I wrote a command letter for Joab concerning the attack and the placement of Uriah in front and sent it to Joab with Uriah on his return to the field. Uriah didn't know he was carrying his death sentence! Joab did as commanded and Uriah was killed in battle, an honorable way to die. Problem solved. I took Bathsheba into the palace and made her my wife.

But life doesn't always work out as we plan. Idleness had now taken me to murder. No, I didn't actually kill Uriah with my own sword. The enemy killed Uriah. I had nothing to feel guilty about. Besides, if Uriah had gone home to be with his wife as I told him to do, the battle would not have been needed. It was his fault! I am innocent, or so I thought."

Have Nathan appear in front of the Burning Bush dressed as a priest.

Nathan: "You were not innocent. God sent me to your palace to confront you with the evil you had done. You killed Uriah with the sword of the Ammonites. The Lord declared that one very close to you would take up the sword against you and embarrass you before all of Israel."

David: "I have sinned against the Lord!"

Nathan: "The Lord loves you so much He has forgiven you, taken away your sin, and spared your life. But the child will die!"

David: "I pleaded with God to spare the child. But the child died after seven days. But God is truly merciful. Bathsheba bore a

second son named Solomon. He would take my place as king and do even greater things than I had done.”

Show the video “*Tribute to King David*” in Appendix 2.

Modern Character(s): Dr. Jane Goodall

Jane Goodall spent over fifty years living and working with apes. Her life was not one with voids. Living in a jungle had few comforts of modern life. But Jane knew the dream for her life and she filled it to overflowing. In *2 Thessalonians 3:6-15*, Paul tells the church to work and warns to beware of idleness.

Warning Against Idleness

⁶ *In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers and sisters, to keep away from every believer who is idle and disruptive and does not live according to the teaching^[a] you received from us. ⁷ For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you, ⁸ nor did we eat anyone’s food without paying for it. On the contrary, we worked night and day, laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you. ⁹ We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to offer ourselves as a model for you to imitate. ¹⁰ For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: “The one who is unwilling to work shall not eat.”*

¹¹ *We hear that some among you are idle and disruptive. They are not busy; they are busybodies. ¹² Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the food they eat. ¹³ And as for you, brothers and sisters, never tire of doing what is good.*

¹⁴ *Take special note of anyone who does not obey our instruction in this letter. Do not associate with them, in order that they may feel ashamed. ¹⁵ Yet do not regard them as an enemy, but warn them as you would a fellow believer.*

Show the video: “Jane Goodall”

Tom Hodgkinson: Show the video on the Idler in Appendix 2, for this lesson.

The Cave Dark Side Journey: Idleness cause you to feel bored and open to the dark side “suggestions” that can hurt someone else.

The Tribe: Avoid idleness which can lead to the dark side of life.

Craft: “Helping Hands Bookends”

See Appendix 8 Craft for instructions and material for this craft. Tell members to use these bookends on their desk or in their room as a reminder to keep busy.

Recreation Activity: Teach the Idler Song and have the tribe sing along with Jack Pedlow video. Words may be found in Appendix 6 Recreation.

Show the video: “The Idler's Song by Jack Pedlow”.

I AM - The Greatest Battle of Your Life

The Journey to Light

Unit 3: God's Dream

Lesson 8: Worthy Work for My Life

The Cave of Wisdom

The Cave Opening: The Burning Bush - Worthy Work

Welcome back to the cave of “Worthless”. “It’s just not worth my time!” “I have better things to do!” “I’d rather play ball!” “Sport is more important to me!” Have you ever said any of these statements? Perhaps they were true, but that depends on what activities you are comparing. Life is full of perspectives, comparisons, viewpoints, and choices. How you decide an issue depends largely on your viewpoint of the situation.

To a scorpion, humans are very tall and dangerous. But to a human, the scorpion is even more feared! The same is true for the value you place on opportunities in your life. To you as an 11 to 13 year old, a job, college, driving, marriage, children, and countless other “future” decisions you must make are too far away to even think about now. There are more immediate things to block your vision of the future and the dream that God is preparing you to act upon.

What is so valuable to you that it is worth your very life? Have you even thought about that question yet? As long as your

perspective is only for the fun to be had today, you will not see your life from the perspective God has of you.

The Circle of Fire: God's dream is worthy of your life.

Scripture: 1 Kings 19: 9-11; Matthew 10:10-12; 25:31-38

1 Kings 19: 9-11 Elijah sees no worth to his life.

⁹ *There he went into a cave and spent the night. And the word of the LORD came to him: "What are you doing here, Elijah?"*

¹⁰ *He replied, "I have been very zealous for the LORD God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, broken down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too."*

¹¹ *The LORD said, "Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the LORD, for the LORD is about to pass by."*

Matthew 10:10-12 Stay with a worthy person.

¹⁰ *Take no bag for the journey, or extra tunic, or sandals or a staff; for the worker is worth his keep.* ¹¹ *"Whatever town or village you enter, search for some worthy person there and stay at his house until you leave.* ¹² *As you enter the home, give it your greeting.*

Matthew 25:31-38 the Sheep and the Goats

³¹ *"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. ³²All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.*

³⁴ *"Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. ³⁵For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, ³⁶I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'*

³⁷ *"Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? ³⁸When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you?*

Biblical Character: Elijah

Elijah went to the cave entrance. He thought could avoid all of the dangers outside the cave by hiding in it. But his perspective was entirely wrong. As you have seen during this course, the cave contains much darkness. The things that we fear in the light are even worse in the dark! You must decide what is worth your life.

As Elijah's perspective changed at the cave opening; so did his whole value system. Up until the cave, Elijah had predicted famine in Israel, been fed by Ravens, raised a widow's son, defeated the prophets of Baal at Carmel, prophesied the death of a king, and fled from Jezebel to the darkness of the cave. But God spoke to Elijah and told him what was truly worthy of his life: the presence of God.

In our scripture we see that Elijah's value system had gone astray. In 1 Kings 19:10, Elijah basically says: "I have given all that I have for you, Lord, and it has not been worth it! Nothing in Israel has changed!" First, this is a distortion of truth, for God did everything, not Elijah who was only God's tool. Secondly, when you give your all to something, be sure that it is the dream of God for you. Otherwise you may be disappointed when the outcome is not what you expected. Thirdly, when you give your all to God, the outcome is in His hands, not your hands. It will always be "worth" your time and you may never know the final outcome.

Elijah, like us sometimes, needed to be reminded by God that his perspective was all wrong. "Go out and stand on the

mountain in the presence of the Lord”. Pay attention here: God did not come into the cave to meet Elijah. Of course God could have done this, but the perspective of the cave was wrong. Come out into the light of God’s presence. Change your perspective of life. Wake up, God called to Elijah! Elijah did as he was instructed by God.

And we know the rest of the story. Elijah served the Lord. God took Elijah to heaven in a whirlwind. He did not die! And he appeared with Moses in the transfiguration of Jesus! Now, Elijah, aren’t you glad that you came out of the cave! Are you ready to hear God’s “Wake-up call” to you and come out of the cave?

Act the part of Elijah on your knees at the entrance to the cave. Tell your feelings of a wasted life. No one listens to you. You may as well die! You are the only one left who worships God.

Show video “Elijah – Part 3”. Explain that Elijah thought he was alone and his life had been a waste of time. But God knew differently; had saved 7,000 people from Baal; and had more work for Elijah to do. The video is in Appendix 2 for this lesson. This is a time for rejoicing as we move out of the cave and into the light of God’s Dream for each of us.

Modern Character(s): Franklin Graham – Show the video of Franklin Graham giving his testimony at a motorcycle rally. Then show the results of Dr. Graham’s decision to follow Christ: Samaritan’s Purse Overview. The videos are in Appendix 2 for this lesson.

Show the video of Maytown, Ky mission trip, by First Capital Christian Church. Mission trips are for teens as well as youth and adults. There are people in the world that need Jesus as well as life help. But we must “come out of the cave and into the presence of God” to be a participant. Are you ready to come out of your cave? The videos are in Appendix 2 for this lesson.

Show the video: “End of the Spear”. These four missionaries were willing to give all for the Dream of God.

In the last lesson, you learned that what you desire with all of your heart will increase, even if it is bad for you! Elijah desired with all of his heart to change the people of Israel back to the followers of God. But his perspective was wrong. He could not do the changing. Only God could change the people of Israel. Elijah was to be satisfied with being the instrument of God to accomplish God’s dream for Israel. We must have the right perspective toward the worthiness of God’s dream for us. Whatever he has planned for your life is worthy of the desire of your heart and your best efforts.

Jesus told his disciples to find a worthy person to stay with during their missions. You too should seek worthy friends for your life. God will place them in your pathway. This is what Jesus tells you in Matthew 10:10-12. Know what to look for in their character to be “worthy” of your time. Beware that there are both sheep and goats in this world. You should seek to be with the sheep.

The Cave Dark Side Journey: Worthlessness is a lie. Believe the lie and you are vulnerable to the dark side.

The Tribe: You are more valuable to God than gold.

Craft: To your “Stone Face” dream tile, add a diamond shape and the symbol for gold, AU. You are more precious than diamonds or gold to God. Take the tile home and place it on your bathroom sink, where you will see it first thing each day. This will remind you that the choices you make today are to be based on God’s Dream for your life.

Recreation Activity: “Worth More or Less”

See Appendix 6 Recreation for the game “Worth More or Less”. At the completion of the game ask the members:

“What are you worth to God?”

“What is God worth to you?”

The value placed on something usually depends on the viewpoint. What’s worth much to you may have little value to someone else. Try to see what you value from the point of view of God’s Dream for you.

I AM - The Greatest Battle of Your Life

The Journey to Light

Unit 3: God's Dream

Lesson 9: Celebrate – Communicating with God

The Cave of Wisdom

Cave Opening: The Burning Bush: Celebrate God having a relationship with you.

Welcome back to the cave of “Celebration”. Elijah had quite a relationship with God. He lived in a very tough time of history for a prophet. Most of the Yahweh prophets had been killed by Jezebel. But there is truly “No God like Jehovah!” Elijah proved this against the priests of Baal and a very wicked king and queen. Today we celebrate the relationship that God wants with each of us, the dream of God for you.

The Circle of Fire: Rejoice for the Lord knows us and loves us.

Scripture: 1 Kings 19: 15-19; John 16:12-15 (New International Version, ©2010)

1 Kings 19:15-19 (New International Version, ©2010)

¹⁵ The LORD said to him, "Go back the way you came, and go to the Desert of Damascus. When you get there, anoint Hazael king over Aram. ¹⁶ Also, anoint Jehu son of Nimshi king over Israel, and anoint Elisha son of Shaphat from Abel Meholah to succeed you as prophet. ¹⁷ Jehu will put to death any who escape the sword of Hazael, and Elisha will put to death any who escape the sword of Jehu. ¹⁸ Yet I reserve seven thousand in Israel—all whose knees have not bowed down to Baal and whose mouths have not kissed him."

The Call of Elisha

¹⁹ So Elijah went from there and found Elisha son of Shaphat. He was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen, and he himself was driving the twelfth pair. Elijah went up to him and threw his cloak around him.

John 16:12-15 (New International Version, ©2010)

¹² "I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. ¹³ But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. ¹⁴ He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. ¹⁵ All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you."

1 Kings 19: 15-19 "Go back the way you came ..." It is time for Elijah to move on to the next level of his relationship with God, to complete the dream.

Biblical Character: Elijah and the Holy Spirit

Act the part of Elijah and tell the story of God instructing you to "Go back" and face King Ahab and Queen Jezebel. Explain how difficult this command is to do, but you trust God to be with you. You are also anointing your replacement, Elisha. Your ministry is almost complete. Leave the cave to obey God's instructions.

Your class members will almost panic when they are left alone in the cave without Elijah to guide them. But this action sets the stage for the next unit: "In Search of Elijah". Tell the class that the next lesson will be taught in the palace of King Ahab. They will become time travelers; meet King Ahab and begin the

search for Elijah. And if they are very lucky, they will avoid Queen Jezebel. She can be very bad!

Show the video: “Elijah – Go back the way you came.”

Explain that today we have the Holy Spirit to speak to us and help guide us on our journey to the Dream of God for us.

Show the videos related to the Holy Spirit in Appendix 2 for this lesson.

Modern Character(s): Michael Vick

The story of Michael Vick is not complete, but the turnaround he has made in his life is very encouraging. Michael has gone from serving time in prison for dog fighting to his best season so far in the NFL with the Eagles, and trying to prevent animal abuse. It certainly appears that Michael has “come out of the cave”.

Show the video: “Michael Vick talks to New Haven students” in Appendix 2 for this lesson.

The Cave Dark Side Journey: “Too Busy” is the opposite dark side of “Idleness”. Both can derail your journey to God’s Dream.

The Tribe: God communicates with us through the Holy Spirit, but are we listening.

Craft: “Turn around Time Machine”. See Appendix 8 Craft for instructions and material. This craft is needed for the next unit. When the members depart the cave at the end of this lesson, they will not be returning to the cave. They must “Go back the way you came.” The “Turn around Time Machine” will be the transportation used to seek Elijah and the way home. Beginning with the next lesson, the cave will become the Palace of King Ahab and Queen Jezebel. They have reached this location using the time machine from the cave exit. When the time machines are complete, place them outside of the cave for the next lesson.

Recreation Activity: Sing and dance to “No God like Jehovah”. See Appendix 2 for the “No God like Jehovah” video selections.

Postlude

The Journey to Light

I watched as Elijah walked out of the cave. He had taught “The I am” Tribe a great deal about the dark and light battle that was going on in the life of each tribe member. Dudley, my dog, was very glad to see the light of the afternoon sun as it made its way across the desert land. He had stayed close to my side through our time spent in the cave following Nimbah, the Spirit Woman. But now he sat at the exit to the cave and stared off into the distant rolling land. From first sight, the land appeared like the area we were walking in New Mexico that morning when Dudley uncovered the entrance to the cave and fell through to begin our journey.

Something felt strange about the land we were watching. I turned around and saw Nimbah and the tribe was still with us. “So, the journey has not ended yet”, I said to Dudley. He looked up at me, whined, and gave me that pitiful look that could mean either feed me or hold me. I gave him a treat from my pouch to ease his anxiety and he lay quietly on the ground. I turned and looked at Nimbah questioningly, “Now what. Why are you still here and where is here?” I asked her. The rest of the tribe seemed just as confused as I was. We thought we had made it through all of the caverns in the cave and were now ready to go home.

As if reading our thoughts, Nimbah responded: “Home? Yes, you would like to go home, I suppose. But there is more to your journey. This is not your home. The last cavern brought you to an exit to the cave, not the entrance to the cave you first encountered. Home, no, this is not your home. Far from it, this is not your time in history either. You have entered the world and time of Elijah, King Ahab, and the wicked Queen Jezebel. This is a dangerous place for someone who worships Jehovah. Many priests of Jehovah have already been killed by Queen Jezebel.

Elijah has gone to face the Dream God has for his life. You must do the same. Follow Elijah to learn the way back home.”

“But where has Elijah gone?” I asked. He had disappeared into the bright sunlight as we were talking. This was all very strange. I didn’t know this land or time. What if we were mistaken as priests and killed? Would we ever see our homes again? Dudley sensed my fear and began to pace. Suddenly he bolted into the sunlight and disappeared behind a pile of rocks.

“You must go to the palace of King Ahab in Samaria. That is where you will find Elijah. Use the travel machines provided for you.” I looked and strange Police Phone Booths stood around us. A phone booth! How could a phone booth do us any good in a time when phones did not exist? I turned to ask Nimbah, but she was gone as suddenly as Elijah. I called for Dudley to come, but he was already out of sight and gone. I had no choice. If I was to find Dudley and the way home, I would have to trust Nimbah and get into the booth!

To continue Dudley’s Journey and the Circle of Fire: In Search of Elijah, order student book from Lulu.com.

Book Two

Dudley's Cave and the Circle of Fire: The Journey to Light

Appendix 2 Videos

All videos are located on [Youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) or link to video on dudleyscave.com under Appendix 2 Youtube Videos.

Videos for “Second Chances” are:

1. Jeremiah Receives the Dream
2. Legion
3. Secret to Helping Others
4. Anorexic
5. Bullying
6. Helping Others
7. Teenage Afluenca
8. Saul to Paul
9. Randy Pausch
10. Ruth
11. Ruth Graham
12. King Nebuchadnezzar
13. Mother Teresa
14. David and Jonathan
15. Christian the Lion
16. Saint Peter Movie
17. Johnny Cash's America
18. Sodom and Gomorrah
19. “Britney Spears interview 1999 on Rosie”
20. “Britney Spears Crying in ABC Interview”
21. Saint Paul the Apostle Rome Italy
22. New Song - David Crowder
23. Make a Joyful Noise (2)

Videos for “Accountability” are:

1. The Good Samaritan
2. Billy Graham
3. Sin of Achan
4. Nixon Resigns
5. Lazarus
6. Brad Pitt in New Orleans
7. Colin Powell on Education

8. Looking in the Mirror
9. Paul & Elymas
10. SC School
11. Michelle Obama
12. Boy and his train
13. "The Shepherd is the Lamb"
14. Doing Good
15. "Jonah Fails to Adjust (Testament – Jonah)"
16. Pope John Paul II
17. "Famous Pouts" and "Little Baby Pout"
18. "Judas Iscariot"
19. The Grumbling Song
20. "Rise Up and Praise Him"
21. "Sing to the Lord a New Song"
22. "Doxology with Sign Language"
23. Movie: The 4th Wiseman
24. "God Reveals His Truth to the Humble"

Videos for God's Dream for Me are:

1. "Testament: Abraham"
2. "First Put Your Mask On"
3. Barack Obama Dream
4. Doc Graham
5. Jesus Invites You to get out of the boat
6. Susan Boyle sings I Had A Dream
7. These Dreams Are Made Of This
8. "Doubting Thomas"
9. Stranger Series - Thomas - "Around the Block with Neal Fazzio"
10. "King David Part 13 of 15"
11. "Wise King Solomon"
12. "Wisdom Trailer - Wisdom Book by Andrew Zuckerman"
13. "I know you do"
14. 5 Hindrances
15. two "Distractions" videos
16. "Too many hindrances"
17. St Paul - part 9
18. Annie Herring on Dreams
19. Pastor Tom Brown on Dreams from God
20. Nightmares Trailer
21. "Tribute to King David"
22. "Jane Goodall"
23. "The Idler"
24. "The Idler's Song by Jack Pedlow"
25. Elijah part 3

26. Franklin Graham
27. Mission Trip
28. End of the Spear
29. Elijah Go Back the way you came"
30. No God Like Jehovah
31. Movie on "Blessed"
32. "What is the Holy Spirit"
33. "Prayer to the Holy Spirit"
34. "I Don't Understand"

Appendix 6 Recreation

All Recreation instructions and resources are located on dudleyscave.com under Appendix 6 Recreation.

- [Bag Toss Board Holes](#)
- [Bible Concentration](#)
- [Bible Trivia Activity](#)
- [Blindfold Nightmare Game](#)
- [Check and Double Check](#)
- [Concentration Review Game](#)
- [Fun Games](#)
- [In Search of the Holy Grail](#)
- [Magic Lock Box](#)
- [Man Mines](#)
- [Mystery Puzzle](#)
- [Open Mouth Board Game](#)
- [Purim Dance from Romania](#)
- [Ten Plagues Activity](#)
- [The Idler Song](#)

Book Two

Dudley's Cave and the Circle of Fire: The Journey to Light

All Craft instructions and resources are located on dudleyscave.com under Appendix 8 Craft.

Appendix 8 Craft

1. [Devotion Plaque](#)
2. [Dream Deed](#)
3. [Drinking Saucer](#)
4. [Free to be ME](#)
5. [Friend Arrow Pencil](#)
6. [Helping Hand Bookends](#)
7. [Hindrance Buster Hammer](#)
8. [Holmes Lantern](#)
9. [Humbleness Cup](#)
10. [I am Mirror](#)
11. [No Noise Door Hanger](#)
12. [No Pouting Fan](#)
13. [Passion Plant](#)
14. [Peg Game](#)
15. [Pillar of Salt Shaker](#)
16. [Praise Coasters](#)
17. [Second Chance Coins](#)
18. [Sweet Dreams Blindfold](#)
19. [T-Shirt Logo Transfer](#)
20. [The Inspector](#)
21. [Turn around Time Machine](#)