

# Yesterday. Today. Forever.

## Module: Knowing the Story

### Lesson 1: Knowing the Gospel Story

#### Objectives:

Students will...

- be able to state important facts about Jesus
- be able to explain why Jesus came to earth, and why he had to die, according the Scriptures

#### Materials Needed:

- paper and pens/pencils for the Minds On activity
- whiteboard / chart paper / chalkboard or other way to record answers
- craft paper about six feet long or three pieces of chart paper taped end to end
- masking tape
- Appendix A: Jesus Questions (1 copy for every 4 students)
- paper and pens / pencils for Debrief/Consolidate

#### Pre-lesson preparation:

- Prepare copies or have Bibles available for groups to look up verses
- write the 'Jesus Fact Verses' on a whiteboard, or PowerPoint slide
- Prepare copies, or have Bibles available, of Philippians 2:5-11 for group work

## **Minds On**

Approximately 15-20 minutes

**Prompt:** To begin this lesson we are going to play a game to see how well we really know each other.

Play a game of '2 truths and a fib'. In this game have each student write out 2 things about themselves that are true and 1 fib on a piece of paper. The fib is to be something they wish were true, or something they have almost accomplished. The more realistic this fib is, the more challenging this game will be. As a leader prepare one sheet for yourself and use it as an example so the students get the idea. Collect all of the sheets. Have one person act as the reader for the game. They will then read the sheets one at a time. With each sheet the group must first identify the person. Secondly, they must identify the wish. Go through all of the sheets until everyone has been guessed. If you have more than ten kids consider making groups of 10 and playing this game in smaller circles to ensure you have time to allow everyone to participate.

**Prompt:** It is amazing to think how little we actually know about the people around us. We may not even know our own friends as well as we think we do. How about celebrities? How much do we really know about them?

Use the following as a guide for a quiz covering some celebrities. You are free to add to this list or not use particular clues. The object of this quiz is to help your students recognize that they often do not know famous people as well as they think they do.

- His mother's name is Pattie and his father's name is Jeremy – Justin Bieber
- Her first name is Stefani – Lady Gaga
- He began acting with the Great Lakes Shakespeare Festival in 1977 – Tom Hanks
- He graduated from Kickapoo High School in Springfield, Missouri – Brad Pitt
- She received the Citizen of the World Award from the UN – Angelina Jolie
- He got engaged to Savannah Brinson on New Year's Eve 2011 – LeBron James

**Prompt:** These are some of the biggest stars on the planet right now. Yet, we know virtually nothing about them. The same is true of one of history's most notable people, Jesus. It has been said that some of us spend our entire lives stalking Jesus just like we stalk celebrities. We know everything there is to know about him, but we do not actually know him. We will begin this lesson by looking at some basic facts about Jesus.

## **Action**

Approximately 30-45 minutes

Ideally, you will have your students use the scriptures below to discover as much about Jesus' background as possible. In some instances, students will be able to 'infer' information about Jesus, for example, Jesus was independent from a young age can be inferred from his visit to Jerusalem (Luke 2:42-52). If you are short on time, you can simply read over the list of 'Jesus Facts' below.

Divide the students into groups of four using numbered heads. Before dismissing them to their groups, tell them when they arrive in their groups they will make an outline of one of their group members on the chart paper, using a marker. They will place the craft paper or taped-together chart paper on the floor, and have a volunteer lay on top of the paper. Have another student use a marker to trace the outline of the student on the paper, and then tape the outline on the wall. Check for understanding. Ask 'What will you do with the chart paper?' etc. Tell them where you would like each group to meet, and then tell them to 'go'.

Once the teams have taped their outlines to the wall, give the next instruction. Draw your students' attention to the verses on the whiteboard or PowerPoint.

**Prompt:** Here are some passages about Jesus from the bible. Your group will go on a fact finding mission to identify some basic information about Jesus' life, family, and occupation. For example, what did Jesus do for a living? Who were the members of his

family? You can also 'read between the lines' to learn more about Jesus character. When you find a 'Jesus Fact' use words or picture drawings on your outline of Jesus to help 'flesh out' who Jesus was.

While many students will already know these facts the purpose of this exercise is to ensure that all of your students have the same basic knowledge of who Jesus was.

#### Jesus Fact Verses

- Luke 1:26-27
- Luke 2:1-7
- Matthew 2:13-15
- Mark 1:9-13
- Luke 2:42-52
- Luke 4:1-2
- Mark 6:1-6

Give the groups about 10 minutes to examine these passages. This outline will serve as Jesus for this exercise. As groups discover information about Jesus instruct them to send a scribe up to the picture and write the info somewhere on the paper. For an in-depth description of this exercise head to <http://dramaresource.com/strategies/role-on-the-wall>.

#### Jesus Facts

- Jesus was a carpenter
- His mom's name was Mary
- He was a descendant of King David
- He was born in Bethlehem
- He had a brother named James
- His dad's name was Joseph
- Joseph and Mary took Jesus to Egypt for 2 years after he was born to save his life
- He was baptized by John the Baptist

- When Jesus was 12 he stayed in a temple and wasn't found by his parents for 3 days
- He fasted for 40 days
- He was tempted by Satan
- Jesus could not do miracles in his home town because the people didn't believe in him

**Instructional Note: Side Coaching**

While students are talking, just float from group to group. Listen briefly, and if appropriate, add a small bit of information to help clarify a fact, or answer questions the students might have. Rather than directly answering questions, try to lead the student to answer their own questions, often by asking a simpler or clearer version of their question. Use this time to get a feel for the mood of the group, the degree to which they understand the facts, and how engaged they are.

Once the groups are done, have everyone come back together into a large group and take a moment to have students consider the picture they've created. Ask if anyone learned something new about Jesus tonight. Give students a couple of minutes to highlight something they may not have known about Jesus.

**Prompt:** Some of you may have already known these facts about Jesus. For some this will all be new information. The Bible gives a lot of detail about Jesus' life on earth. But, more importantly it also gives a lot of detail about why Jesus came to earth in the first place. Our goal today is to ensure that you all leave here with a clear understanding of why Jesus came to earth and why he died on the cross.

Ask a student to read (or have students take turns reading) Philippians 2:5-11. When they have finished reading ask the following questions (note that these questions are asked to arrive at fairly specific answers which are included here. Allow students to discuss the question. If they struggle to arrive at the answer then simply tell them):

- What does it mean that Jesus did not consider being equal with God something to be exploited?
  - He didn't use his power to avoid having to come to earth.
- Who was Jesus being obedient to when he died on the cross?
  - He was being obedient to God the father.
- Why did God highly honor him?
  - Because he was obedient even though it cost him his own life.

**Instructional Note: Wait Time and Questions**

Kids need time to consider your questions. The amount of time is dependent on two things: The amount of academic engaged time (did they read for thirty seconds or thirty minutes?); the complexity of thinking (is this a knowledge level question, or one that requires evaluation?); and the movement from cover to overt (did you have them write their answer down first, share it with a friend first, or will they share it with the group right away). The more the academic engaged time, the higher the level of thinking, and the more overt the answer, the longer the amount of wait time required. In part, this has to do with grappling with bigger ideas, and in part it has to do with risk. Sharing with a partner before sharing in the whole group can be an effective way to overcome this

Tell the students to go back with their groups from the previous exercise and read together Philippians 2:5-11, then to read and answer the questions from Appendix A. After you have given students enough time to read and answer the questions (about 10 minutes), bring the whole group back together and take some answers from the different groups for each question.

**Consolidate/Debrief:**

Approximately 20 minutes

**Prompt:** Tonight we have wrestled with some big questions. It is important that you take some time to ask yourself “So What?” Does this really matter to you? What will it mean

to you tomorrow when you get to school and you see someone making fun of a kid?  
What does it mean to you when you are at home and no one is around while you surf the web?

Give your students 10 minutes to sit and write out/draw/express what it means to them that Jesus became obedient to the point of death on a cross for them.

Ask students to pair up and consider the questions:

- What does it look like at school tomorrow to adopt the attitude that was in Christ Jesus?
- What does it sound like at home to humble yourself by being obedient to what God asks?
- How would you explain to a friend who Jesus was?

Close your evening with group prayer. Give students time to present prayer requests. Consider asking students to volunteer to pray for various requests. End with a prayer that God will help students understand what it means to adopt the attitude that was in Jesus.

## **Appendix A: Jesus Questions**

1. What do you suppose the author means when he says that we should adopt the attitude that was in Christ Jesus? To adopt means to take on the attitude.
2. What does it even mean that Jesus emptied himself? What did Jesus empty himself of? Why do you suppose Jesus was willing to empty himself?
3. What does it mean to humble oneself and why is it humbling to be obedient to someone?
4. What does it mean to you that everyone will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father?

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## Module: Knowing the Story

### Lesson 2: Knowing the Faith Story

#### Objectives

Students will

- Understand what it means to have faith in something unseen.
- Be able to articulate the key parts of the Christian faith. This includes what it means to have faith in something, key people from the Bible and why they had faith in God.

#### Materials Needed:

- 9 large sheets of paper and markers/pens/pencils for the reporting activity
- Appendix A: Handout (one copy for each student)

#### Pre-lesson preparation:

- Consider making signs for the opening activity. If you choose to do this, print one “Yes” sign and one “No” sign. Post them at either side of your room prior to starting the lesson. If you don’t make signs then simply point to either side as you make each statement.
- Tape the 9 pieces of chart paper to the wall, or have them on flat surfaces and tape them to the wall after. Do not crowd the pieces together, so that students will have room to work.

- ❑ Count your students and decide how you would like to divide them for the Action section. Below, the Hebrews passage is divided into 9 shorter sections. Divide your group so that all 9 sections are covered, assigning passages to each group. Ideally groups will have at from 2-5 members to encourage discussion. For example, with ten students, you might choose to have two groups of three students and one group of four, and give three sections to each group.

## **Minds On**

Approximately 15 minutes

### **Thinking About: Faith**

The purpose of this opening exercise is to help students recognize that they put their faith in numerous things every day, some that they can see, some they cannot see. The idea of faith itself should not be a difficult concept for them to understand. From this foundation we will move towards an understanding of what it means to put their faith in God.

**Prompt:** Tonight we are going to talk about faith. What does it mean to have faith in something? What does it mean to have faith in God? To start, let's talk about things we have faith in.

**Yes/No Line:** This structure allows the teacher to get a quick read on student attitudes, and allows students who are shy about talking to still have their 'say'. Have the students stand in a line. If there is an actual line on the floor, such as in a gym, or a seam in the carpet, you can have students stand on that line. You could also apply a line of masking tape to the floor. Designate one side of the room as the "Yes" side and the opposite side as the "No" side. Tell the students you are going to ask them yes/no questions, and depending on their answer they will step to one side or the other. As a tester, you can ask them "Are you a girl?" After each question have the students return to the line in the middle. Ideally, the teacher stands on a chair at one end of the line so that the students can see them, and they are not on either side to influence student choices.

Do you have faith that:

- There is air in this room?
- Your sibling will leave you alone?
- Your chair will hold you up?
- You will pass your next math test?
- The sun will come up tomorrow?
- Your cell phone will send your texts to the right number?

- Gravity will keep you on the ground?
- Your shoes will not burst into flames?

**Prompt:** At its core, faith means to put your trust in something. Sometimes those things are seen and sometimes they are not. Every day we put our trust in the people and things around us without question. For example, how do you know your shoes will not burst into flame while you are sitting here? (Allow for students to respond.) What do you base that belief on? (Again, allow students to respond). Yet, when it comes to putting our trust in God, we often won't do this. Why do you suppose people have trouble putting their faith in God? What kinds of reasons might you, your friends or family have for not putting faith in God?

Take time to allow students to think about this complex question, then take a few answers.

## **Action**

Approximately 45 minutes

**Prompt:** The Bible records over 4,000 years of human history. It is a story of faith. The faith people put in God prior to the arrival of Jesus, and the faith of those who followed after Jesus. To get a sense of the story of faith we are now going to look at a passage from the Bible that tracks this history.

Begin this exercise by having a student read Hebrews 11:1-2 aloud to the group.

**Prompt:** This passage is referring to those who lived and died before Jesus died on the cross. In a moment you will divide into groups, and I would like you to discuss the two following questions:

1) The author wrote that faith is the confidence in what we hope for. **What do Christians hope for?**

## 2) What is it that we ‘do not see’?

Tell the students how many students you want in each group (see the pre-lesson preparation, above) and allow them to self-select their groups so long as groups are the right size when you say ‘go’. Remind the students of your two questions, and then say ‘go’.

When the groups are formed, walk from group to group to make sure they are answering the first two questions. At the same time assign the appropriate passages to each group. Have one group member write down their passages so they do not forget.

### Hebrews 11

- Verse 3
- Verse 4-6
- Verse 7
- Verse 8-19
- Verse 20-22
- Verse 23-30
- Verse 31
- Verse 32-35
- Verse 36-40

Once groups have had about 5 minutes to discuss these questions, have a spokesperson from each group share their thoughts.

**Prompt:** The author goes on to say that it was through the way they showed their faith they were commended (Common English Bible). We are going to take a few minutes in our groups to look at several people who showed their faith. I want you to pay attention to who they were, and what they did to show their faith. You will look at your passages and decide as a group who and what was involved. There is a piece of chart paper for each passage (indicate where the paper is). At the top of the sheet write what verses you

are writing about. Have one scribe write the name or names of the person or people involved on the left side of the page. On the right side of the page, have another scribe write down in their own words a very brief summary of the way that person showed their faith in God.

Have students read over their section. When the groups are done you will have an overview of this passage.

**Instructional Note: Side Coaching**

While students are talking, just float from group to group. Listen briefly, and if appropriate, add a small bit of information to help clarify an idea, or answer questions the students might have. Rather than directly answering questions, try to lead the student to answer their own questions, often by asking a simpler or clearer version of their question. Use this time to get a feel for the mood of the group, the degree to which they understand the material, and how engaged they are.

When the scribes are done ask the students if they can see common themes among the different people: is there any way in which different people showed faith in similar ways? Students might need to get up to look at what is written on the various sheets. Take a few answers, or provide hints that might help the students to see connections among the people in the passage.

**Prompt:** Looking at these common themes we can see how each of these people is connected to the story of faith. But, what do we do with this? What does it mean for us today that these people showed their faith in God? We are going to take a few minutes so you can reflect on your personal experience of faith. In a moment I will give you a handout with some questions to help you think. Take time to quietly write down your answers.

## **Consolidate/Debrief**

Approximately 15 minutes

This final exercise should be done with students on their own. Give out copies of Appendix A. Have students spend time responding to the questions in the handout.

When students have had enough time to work through the handout bring them back together and close in prayer. Take time to have students give prayer requests and ask students to pray for each other as requests are made.



3. If you are a Christian, do you ever feel ashamed of your faith? This does not have to be based on anything you are doing. Sometimes it is hard to let people know about our faith when they are making fun of Christians. If you are not a Christian, is this a step you would be willing to take or would you be embarrassed to tell people you believe in God? Why?

4. If you were to 'run the race marked out for us' what are two things you would have to do differently at school tomorrow?

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## Module: Knowing the Story

### Lesson 3: To Be Continued...

#### Objectives

Students will

- Be able to give a brief outline of the beginnings of the church
- Sum up in a couple of points the purpose of the church in its local community
- Recognize that they are part of a movement across the entire globe (i.e., see beyond the walls of their local church)

#### Materials Needed

- YouTube Video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d8d9nFbesTk>. If you own the Quest series then show the second segment of Episode #2.
- large piece of paper or other recording method
- Knowing the Story Lesson 3 Handout 1 per student
- pens or pencils for writing

#### Pre-lesson preparation:

- Cue the YouTube Video/ DVD to prevent delays or advertisements in playing the segment. We advise you to watch all videos ahead of time to ensure all content is appropriate for your group.

## **Minds On**

Approximately 15 minutes

Begin by showing the video clip. There is a question asked near the middle of the segment. Once the video is finished take 5 minutes to have the group answer two questions:

- What is the image that the world has of the church?
- What is your image of church? In other words, when you think about 'the church', what words come to mind?

Write down student answers to the second question on a large piece of paper or other medium. It is important to allow students to share whatever comes to mind. Allow them the freedom to express themselves without challenging or criticizing their responses. The purpose of this exercise is to get them thinking about church as a way of opening the dialogue.

Once you have built the list, the students will use a tool called Whole Body Voting. With the list in a place where all students can see it, tell the students you are going to read off the list items, and they will vote on whether or not they feel the same way when they think about 'the church'. To vote students will use their bodies. If they feel completely the same way, they will stand with their arms reaching up towards the ceiling. If they completely disagree they will lay flat on the ground. They can then adjust their position based on how much they agree or disagree.

With students in their voting position you can then choose to point at a student and ask them why they voted that way. Be sensitive to the students as not all youth will want to be singled out or speak in front of the group.

**Prompt:** Tonight we are going to look at this thing we call the church. A few questions we will ask are: What is the church? Why are there so many different types of churches? What does this all mean to me sitting here today?

## **Action**

Approximately 45 minutes

For the next exercise, have each student complete the Lesson 3 Handout (Appendix A). This is an exercise based on Frayer's Foursquare model, which helps students to build vocabulary, context and understanding of words or concepts. Explain to the student that they will complete the handout, beginning by defining the word 'Church' in their own words. (Point to the place on the handout where they will do that, and each place after) Then they will write out some characteristics of church: what is essential or descriptive of the church (these words should be adjectives or adverbs). Third, have them list some examples of church from their own lives (situations, things, events, activities that they feel provide an example of 'church': these words will be nouns) and last, examples that are not church (situations, things, events, activities that they feel provide an example of what is NOT the 'church': these words will be nouns).

Give students 5 minutes to fill out their sheets. When time is up, tell the students they will have two minutes to share their sheet with an elbow partner (someone right nearby). The student with the shorter hair will share first. Keep time. When 2 minutes is up instruct the partners to switch, and signal at the end of the next two minutes. Then, have the students come together in a large group and have the partners share one idea from each of the four areas of their partner's page.

**Prompt:** There seem to be as many ideas of what church is as there are different types of churches. As we continue this journey let's pause for a few minutes and look at what church really is. First, where did the idea of church come from?

Have a student read Matthew 16:18-19.

**Prompt:** This is the first reference to what we now call the Church. Jesus promised that he would build the Church through Peter. In this passage the word Church is the Greek word ekklesia. This word literally means ‘a calling out of people’. The early Church was simply a group of people who Jesus had ‘called out’ from the world to follow Him.

**Say something like,** “The next step in understanding the church is to take a look at why it was established. Jesus gives us a clear view of the purpose of the church in a story he told of what it will be like when he comes again.”

This final exercise is designed to help students understand the role of the church in today’s society. Begin by having volunteers read Matthew 25:31-46. This is a lengthy passage so it is suggested that you have several students read the passage.

Once students have finished reading the passage keep them in the larger group and have them answer the following questions based on a teaching strategy called Summing It Up: Ask the students these questions one at a time, giving time to think after each question, then taking a few answers. Tell the students you want everyone to be prepared to answer, and you will select a few students, no hands please. This questioning strategy ensures that all students are ready to answer: even so, some students may balk, or need extra time. Offer to come back to them later if that is the case.

- What is the topic of this passage?
- What are the three most important details?
- What is this passage mostly about?

**Prompt:** This passage reflects the true heart of the church. Jesus established the Church to be active in meeting the needs of those around us.

## **Consolidate/Debrief**

Approximately 15 minutes

To help students consolidate all of this information give them 5 to 10 minutes to reconsider their concept of church. Have them start by returning to their Four Square Diagram.

Then, get them to consider the following questions:

- How does the actual definition of church change your answers?
- Would you add or take away any of your words from the characteristics?
- Would you add or take away any of your examples base on the actual definition?

Give the students some time to make changes to their sheets. Be sensitive to the group when it comes to exactly how much time you give to this exercise. Some kids will finish quickly while others will need more time. If you have time, you may want to take some answers from students about what they changed on their sheets.

Close with a time of prayer. First, pray that students would be able to be good examples of the church in their homes and schools. Invite students to share prayer requests and ask for student volunteers to pray for requests as they are brought forward.

Appendix A

**Lesson 3: Defining Church**

**Begin by defining the word Church in your own words. Second, write out some characteristics of church, what you think it is, and how you think it functions. Third, list some examples of church (i.e. weddings, Sunday Morning, preaching) and examples that are not church (McDonald's, a parking lot).**

<b>Definition of Church</b>	<b>Characteristics of Church</b>
<b>Examples of Church</b>	<b>Examples of Non-Church</b>

**Church**

# Knowing the Story

The story of God's people is rich and complex, and is told in God's book... the Bible.

In this module we will be looking at the story of the Bible. As a starting point we will look at the story of faith. What is faith? How did the people who lived in the Bible live out that faith? These questions will give a foundation for understanding this story.

**Lesson 1: Knowing the Gospel Story** - What do we know about Jesus? What does the Bible say about why he came to earth and died?

**Lesson 2: Knowing The Faith Story** - Faith involves belief in something unseen, something we do every day. What does it mean to have faith in God? Who are key people from the Bible who had faith in God and how was that faith shown?

**Lesson 3: To Be Continued...** - The church has a long history but we may not really know what it is or why it is here. What is the point of the church and where did it come from?

**Lesson 4: Knowing My Story** - Knowing the story means knowing where our lives intersect with God's story, and recognizing the importance of helping others to see that connection. Where have we come from? How do we share our stories with those around us? The story of the Bible is not finished yet. We are part of that story!

**Lesson 3 Handout**

**Defining Church**

**Begin by defining the word Church in your own words. Second, write out some characteristics of church, what you think it is, and how you think it functions. Third, list some examples of church (i.e. weddings, Sunday Morning, preaching) and examples that are not church (McDonald's, a parking lot).**

<b>Definition of Church</b>	<b>Characteristics of Church</b>
<b>Examples of Church</b>	<b>Examples of Non-Church</b>

**Church**

# **Yesterday. Today. Forever.**

## **Module: Knowing the Story**

### **Lesson 4: Knowing My Story**

#### **Objectives:**

Students will

- Understand their own story and how they have been shaped
- Be able to verbally articulate their own faith story
- Recognize that sharing their faith does not have to be a scary event by practicing during this lesson.

#### **Materials Needed:**

- Paper, pen/pencils for students for the Minds On Activity
- Copies of Lesson 4 Handout, one for each student

#### **Lesson Notes:**

- Parts of this lesson are based on a Youth For Christ strategy called 3 Story Evangelism

## **Minds On**

Approximately 15 minutes

The purpose of this opening exercise is to help students get to know each other a little better. Hand out a piece of paper and pen/pencil to each student.

**Prompt:** To start off, we are going to find out a little bit more about each other. So, you have 60 seconds to write down your 'bucket list'! A bucket list is things you want to do before you kick the bucket. Write down the first 3 things that come to mind, but make sure these are things you are willing to share with others.

At the end of 60 seconds instruct the students they will move about the room looking for people with similar items on their lists until you say "Freeze". Encourage them to talk with only one person at a time. Give the students 2 minutes to mingle. At the end of two minutes, say "Freeze!" Tell them you want them to work briefly with the partner they are frozen with. Quickly resolve any instances of missing or shared partners. If it is not obvious, ask "Does anyone NOT have a partner? Does anyone have TOO MANY partners?" With their 'frozen' partner, tell them they have 5 minutes to find the most similar item on their list, and to talk about their reasons for the things they chose, both the ones they have in common and the ones that differ.

Once these larger groups are done, have students share common themes from amongst the lists.

Close this exercise by asking the following questions to allow students to consolidate this information, giving time for answers and taking a few raised hands:

- Were you surprised by any of the list items or by people who chose them?
- What did many of the items have in common?
- Why do you think people would like to do these things before they die?
- What do you think that says about humans (at least at your age)?

**Prompt:** The purpose of this exercise was to get you thinking about who you are and what you want to do while you are on this earth. During this lesson we are going to look at what it is that God wants us to do with our time.

## **Action**

Approximately 45 minutes

**Prompt:** We all have a story. It's who we are, where we came from, what we like to do with our spare time. Today we will look at how that story fits in with God's story. What does God want us to do with our time? Last, we will take a few minutes to consider how we would share our story with our friends. So, let's begin with asking the question "what do you think God want us to do?"

Before taking answers, tell the entire group that there are no wrong answers for this exercise. Inform students that they are not to judge or react to any idea that is presented. This is a time for students to begin to wrestle with the concept of their purpose on earth. Give students a couple of minutes to share with the group their ideas of what it is that God wants us to do with our lives.

Have a student read Micah 6:8.

This passage mentions three things that God requires us to do. Have students break into groups (preferably three groups but you can adjust this depending on attendance. Aim to have groups of no more than 5 people each). Assign each group one of the three requirements (act justly, love mercy, walk humbly) and have them answer the following questions in their groups, in relationship to that group's requirement:

- Give an example of how you've seen someone live this way.
- Can you think of an example or imagine a situation where someone fulfills this requirement? What would that person do?

- Do you think you are very successful?

Give students about 10 minutes to work through the questions. When time is almost up, tell the students you will need one spokesperson to summarize the responses of each group. Give the students another few minutes to find a spokesperson. As each spokesperson summarizes, use a large piece of paper, chalkboard or similar method to record answers. The written words will reinforce the message of living as God asks us to.

**Instructional Note:** Writing Down Answers

As students respond it is important that, in writing down their answers, you capture the main points. While short answers will be easy to record it may be necessary to shorten long answers. Ask clarification questions of the students to ensure you capture their thoughts appropriately.

**Prompt:** If you were to try and tell someone about your story, what would you say? Part of understanding what you would say is recognizing that there are three parts to every conversation. There is the story of you – where you are in your life and your victories and struggles; there is God’s story – what he is up to and what he wants us to do; and then there is the story of the person you are talking to – where that person is in their life and their victories and struggles;. Understanding this will help you to share your story with another person.

Tell the students in a moment you will give them a handout, and they will have 10-15 minutes to work through this sheet on their own. Tell them you would like the room to remain quiet so that students can focus on the sheet and let them know the purpose of this handout is to get them thinking about their own story as it relates to God’s story. Tell them this sheet will form the basis of a ‘testimony’ to help them learn to share their story with others.

Give each student a copy of Appendix A (Lesson 4 Handout). If you have students who do not know God at all have them work through this handout anyway. Encourage them to

think about their own story and where they have been in life. Have them think about God's story in terms of how they understand it. Respond individually to students' questions as needed but minimize talking throughout this time.

Give adequate time for students to complete this task before moving on to the Consolidation. As the students are wrapping up take a moment to ask students to raise their hand if they need more time. This will encourage students who are already finished to keep the noise level down.

**Instructional Note:** Music vs. silence.

It can be very tempting to turn on music every time students work. Sometimes, music can be a great add-on when students are working, other times it is a powerful distraction. Music strongly influences mood, and competes for attention with other cognitive processes. Further, what is helpful for one student can be very distracting for another. Additionally, there are very few remaining spaces where people have the opportunity to think quietly without an interruption of sound. If 'thinking' is the most important thing, it is better to skip the music. If 'doing' is the most important thing, music can be enjoyable, but should still be used thoughtfully.

**Prompt:** It is important that you recognize that it does not have to be scary to share your faith with others. A big part of that is understanding that it is not your job to make people follow Jesus. For example, there is a great story in the Bible of a man who Jesus healed of blindness. He goes off and shares with people about what Jesus did for him. His response to people is not aimed at trying to convince them that Jesus is God. He simply says that he was blind and now he can see. He leaves it up to them to decide whether they want to believe in Jesus. Also remember that you don't have to tell every single part of your story every time, just the part that matters at that moment for the person you are sharing with.

## **Consolidate/Debrief**

Approximately 15 minutes

To help students learn to share their story, have them pair up with someone they don't know very well (to help them begin to recognize that sharing your faith does not have to be scary). If there are an odd number of students, have one student share with a leader. Give students time to share their stories with one another, and encourage them to use their sheets as a guide. This is great practice and an important part of learning how to share their testimony with someone.

Once groups are done sharing, take 5 minutes to ask the questions below. Ask the questions one at a time, allowing time to think and taking a few answers for each question. Try to call on the more quiet students in your group since they often will have deep insight.

- What did you like about this exercise?
- What did you not like about this exercise?
- What was hard for you?
- What was easy?

Close with a time of prayer. Invite students to share prayer requests and ask for student volunteers to pray for requests as they are brought forward. Have students think of a friend that they would like to have the opportunity to share their story with. Then, give students a minute to silently pray for that friend that God will give them the opportunity to share.

Appendix A

**Lesson 4 Handout**

**Knowing My Story**

The purpose of this page is to get you thinking about your story. Who are you? What impact has God had on your life? How have you chosen to live because of this? Work through each section and write out your own thoughts.

**Who Are You?**

List 5 things that you think are key parts of who you are:

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 \_\_\_\_\_

**What Impact Has God Had On Your Life?**

Do you believe in God?

What does that mean to you?

If you are a Christian, when did you make that decision?

What caused you to make that decision?

How have you been different since you made that decision?

**How Have You Chosen to Live Because of That Decision?**

List some ways you have chosen to live because of your decision to become a Christian.

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**If time allows, start to think about how you would share this with someone else.**

You can write out a statement, draw a picture, doodle or stare at the wall. Whatever helps you think about what you would actually say is good!