

Breathe

Module: Basic Training

Lesson 1: Spiritual Training Program

Objectives:

Students will

- explore the idea of training for something
- understand that spiritual training is part of a healthy relationship with God
- identify specific areas of spiritual training that will help them to become more like Jesus
- begin to formulate a plan to engage in spiritual training

Materials Needed:

- at least 1 Small Jigsaw Puzzle i.e. 24 pieces or less
- Stopwatch
- Computer and/or Projector
- YouTube Video
 - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VOXM-rg5sgM>
- Bibles
- Chart paper and/or Whiteboard
- Markers
- Pencils or Pens
- Small Pieces of Paper
- Container (e.g. hat) for the small pieces of paper
- Optional: Cue Cards

- ❑ Optional: Small Treats for winning group in “Minds On”
- ❑ Spiritual Training Activity handout. The handout has one page for each group (2 pages). Make one copy of the entire handout for every 2 students.

Pre-lesson Preparation:

- Be sure to check puzzles to make sure that all pieces are present. If new, remove all packaging and check to make sure that pieces are separated.
- Set up computer/projector and make sure that videos are downloaded and working properly. Be sure to preview videos for content.
- Set up the Spiritual Training PowerPoint or prepare one piece of chart paper with the two scriptures and one piece with the three questions from the Action section.

Minds On (15 minutes):

Think/Pair/Share:

Allow students to think individually about the following question: “Practice makes perfect. Do you think it’s true?” After 30 seconds, have students choose a partner to share their answer. Afterwards, gather the large group and ask for 2-3 volunteers to offer their partner’s answer.

Team Puzzle Challenge:

Divide students into groups of 3-4. Each group will be timed in how fast they put the puzzle together. (If you have more than 5 groups, you can choose to have another puzzle with stopwatch time half of the groups). Make sure to record all the times. Have each group repeat the task, and record the time again. If you have prizes you can award them for fastest time, most creative solution, etc.

Online Alternative:

If you have access to the internet and computers, www.jigzone.com has jigsaw puzzles with an integrated timer that starts when the first puzzle piece is touched. Select a puzzle before the students arrive (there are some good ones in the “animals” section). The default is 48 piece “classic” cut. On the left of the screen there is an option to “Change cut” You can choose “20 piece classic” for a faster solution. Have the students do the puzzle as a relay team, with each student placing two pieces, then the next student placing two pieces, and so on. Teammates can help to find pieces or guide placement. With more than one computer, you could have more than one team solving puzzles at a time. Make sure to record the times as above. Tell the students to use the “Start Over” button for the second attempt. Watch that students do not accidentally or deliberately use the “Auto Solve” button.

Prompt:

Earlier, we asked if the statement “practice makes perfect” is true. It seems that based on our experiment, overall it is true, although it might be more accurate to say “Practice

makes permanent”. If you practice the wrong thing, or practice something the wrong way, that will also become permanent, but not “perfect”. That is why it is important to practice the right things.

Action (30 minutes):

Watching and Discussing a Video in Pairs

Video (5 minutes) <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VOXM-rg5sgM>

Have the students watch the video. Instruct them to write down all the factors the video suggests make a great athlete. After watching the video, have students regroup with their partner and take 2 minutes to come up with a 1-sentence piece of advice they think this video is telling athletes. Take answers from a few pairs.

Prompt:

The video we just watched focused a lot on the importance of hard work and repetitive training. The same goes for learning to follow Jesus. A lot of Christians get discouraged because they try really, really hard to be like Jesus but don't succeed. Maybe that's because instead of trying really hard we need to train really well. I could wake up tomorrow morning and decide that I'm going to play football in the NFL. In fact, I could even try really hard to be a great football player but because I've spent little to no time training myself to play football, I have no chance whatsoever of actually becoming a professional football player. Becoming a great athlete takes hours and hours of training. In a similar way, becoming like Jesus requires training as well.

Working in Groups:

Within each pair, have students number off “1” and “2”. Have the 1s gather on the left side of the room and the 2s on the right side. Assign 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 to the 1s and 1 Timothy 4:7-8, 11, 15-16 to the 2s. (If each group has more than 5 people, you can separate those into smaller groups.) Ask the students to read the verse on the sheet you

will provide, and answer the questions. Provide each group with the appropriate handout. Give the groups about 10 minutes to work through the sheets. At that time, ask if any students need more time. Gauge how much time to allow based on student responses. Ask the students to finish up what they are doing, and to make sure they have the answers written on their sheets, since they will be sharing that information with their partner from before. Tell them they will go through their answers, one partner then the other, comparing between the two scriptures. Ask the students to thank their group members and then return to their partner.

Encourage them to compare between the two partners. After a couple of minutes, ask if the students have any observations they would like to share with the whole group about differences or similarities between the answers for the two passages. Take a few answers.

Note: Side Coaching

While students are talking, float from group to group. Listen briefly, and if appropriate, add a small bit of information to help clarify an idea. Rather than answering questions directly, try to lead students 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.

Consolidate/Debrief (15 minutes):

Prompt:

The famous philosopher Aristotle once said: “We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.” What do you think he meant by that? How would you rephrase it in your own words?

This is a complex question, so allow at least a minute for “think time” Ask if any students would volunteer their answers.

Prompt:

The goal is to become as much like Jesus as possible. The way to do that is by practicing the things that Jesus did - training ourselves to become more and more like him.

Brainstorming Together:

Take three minutes to brainstorm with students some of the many godly character traits Christ demonstrated through his life and teaching (honesty, compassion, generosity, prayer, Scripture memorization, humility, etc.). Invite students to share ideas out loud. You may want to chart the responses so that everyone can see the list you create. Be prepared to suggest a few godly character traits if students are having trouble, or to prompt the students to remember stories about Jesus, recalling how he acted.

Breathe In

Ask students to thoughtfully choose one of the traits suggested (or they can come up with their own) they would like to focus on this coming week.

Breathe Out

Have students write that one trait on a small piece of paper and put it into the container. Draw pieces of paper one at a time, inviting ideas from the group about how a person might train themselves for success in that particular area of spiritual growth/Christ-likeness. Encourage students to take note of suggestions that might be helpful for them in their training in the coming week.

Some questions that could help to formulate a successful training:

When would be the best times to do this type of training?

Who might someone ask to help them in this type of training?

How would you know if you've trained well?

What changes/results would you see?

Encourage students to share this plan with a friend, accountability partner, leader or mentor and invite that person to check back with them on their progress after five days.

Close in Prayer

Close in a prayer that acknowledges the Holy Spirit's role in transforming us, through our spiritual training, to become more like Christ. Pray for students that the Holy Spirit will help them as they attempt to implement a spiritual training program that will help them to become more like Jesus.

Group 1 Handout

1 Corinthians 9:24-27

1. Based on the Bible passage you read, how is spiritual training (becoming more and more like Jesus) similar to the training required to become a great athlete?
2. How is it different?
3. What is the goal of spiritual training according to the passage you read?

Group 2 Handout

1 Timothy 4:7-8

1. Based on the Bible passage you read, how is spiritual training (becoming more and more like Jesus) similar to the training required to become a great athlete?
2. How is it different?
3. What is the goal of spiritual training according to the passage you read?