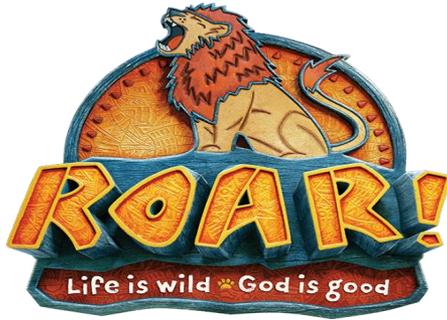


Youth Camp
Books 2019



Day 1: Life is Wild

Ice Breaker:

- Get the group into a circle. Then start out by saying your name and an animal that begins with the same letter. "Penguin Paul"
- Then the next person says their animal & name, plus the animal & name of everyone who has previously gone.
- It then moves on down the line, so that the last person has to do everyone's in the group.

Introduction

The theme of this week is "Life is wild; God is good."

Wild /wɪld/

adjective

1. (of an animal or plant) living or growing in the natural environment; not domesticated or cultivated.
2. (of a place or region) uninhabited, uncultivated, or inhospitable.
3. (of sea or the weather) rough and stormy.
4. (of people) not civilized; primitive.
5. (of a look, appearance, etc.) indicating distraction or strong emotion.
6. lacking discipline or restraint.
7. not based on sound reasoning or probability.
"a wild guess"
5. (of a playing card) deemed to have any value, suit, color, or other property in a game at the discretion of the player holding it.

noun: 1. a natural state or uncultivated or uninhabited region.

verb: 1. treat (a person or animal) harshly, so that they become untrusting or nervous.

After examining the definition and use of the word wild, we can all agree that life truly is wild! This world is not civilized. It is rough and stormy; it lacks discipline and restraint; it does not function on sound reasoning; it is full of distractions, breeding strong emotions with no outlet for them; the value of its inhabitants is declared at the will of the player, Man, and not the Creator. The world remains in a sinful state; harsh and uninhabitable for its occupants. Life is full of struggle, pain, suffering, turmoil, hatred, strife, sickness, and death- all because of sin. However, God is good and is greater than the wilderness of this life. This first lesson will focus on WHY life is wild. To understand this we must go back to the beginning of its decline when Man fell from a state of life in the will of God, without sin, to living in the wilderness separated from God.

Study Passage: Genesis 3

Most likely we all have heard the creation story. All things were created by God that are in heaven and on the earth. He made Man in His image and His likeness to have dominion over all the living creatures on the earth. The Lord formed Man out of the dust of the ground and breathed the Breath of life into his nostrils bringing forth a living being. He put Man in the beautiful Garden of Eden to tend and keep it. The Lord allowed Adam to eat of every tree in the garden, except from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. He was warned that if he ate of it, he shall surely die. God also formed a companion from and for the Man in Eve, and instituted marriage.

Mankind was created by God and for God. God had put Man in a beautiful garden to live and walk in fellowship with their Creator in joy, peace, and harmony. It's hard to imagine, but there was once a time in the history of Mankind in which there was no sorrow, pain, sickness, turmoil or death, when life was not wild. At that time, the world was in a right relationship with God. The passage we will read is when Man was tempted and fell from glorious fellowship with God into a sinful and separated state of being.

- ***Read: Genesis 3:1-6 (NKJV) Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, “Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?’” 2 And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; 3 but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.’ ” 4 Then the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. 5 For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” 6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.***

Discussion Section:

Question: Who is the serpent?

- ***Revelation 12:9 So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.***

Question: What happened here?

Adam and Eve sinned.

Question: Was it a sin to eat fruit?

Certainly not! But it was a sin to eat THAT fruit because God had told them not to. They disobeyed God! Their disobedience was the sin. Satan deceived Adam and Eve into eating from the tree of knowledge of good and evil when they had been commanded by God not to eat from it.

- ***Genesis 2:16-17 And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; 17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good***

and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”

Satan beguiled Eve by questioning, and twisting the goodness and truth of God and His word.

Question: What happened after Adam and Eve ate the fruit?

- ***Read: Genesis 3:7-13 (NKJV) Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings. 8 And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. 9 Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, “Where are you?” 10 So he said, “I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself.” 11 And He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?” 12 Then the man said, “The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.” 13 And the Lord God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”***

Sin was evident in the actions of Adam and Eve. They were now aware of their nakedness and attempted to cover up their sin & hide from God. When confronted by God, they blamed others instead of taking responsibility for their own actions. They had known the goodness of God and now had come to know the evil of sin.

Question: Have you ever done something wrong that you tried to cover up, hide, or blame on someone else?

Don't bother... God knows us to our very core. He knows our every spoken word, secret sin and even our deepest thoughts.

- **Read: Genesis 3:14-19 (NKJV) So the Lord God said to the serpent: “Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; On your belly you shall go, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life. 15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.” 16 To the woman He said: “I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; In pain you shall bring forth children; Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.” 17 Then to Adam He said, “Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, ‘You shall not eat of it’: “Cursed is the ground for your sake; In toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. 18 Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field. 19 In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for dust you are, and to dust you shall return.”**

Question: What does this mean for us?

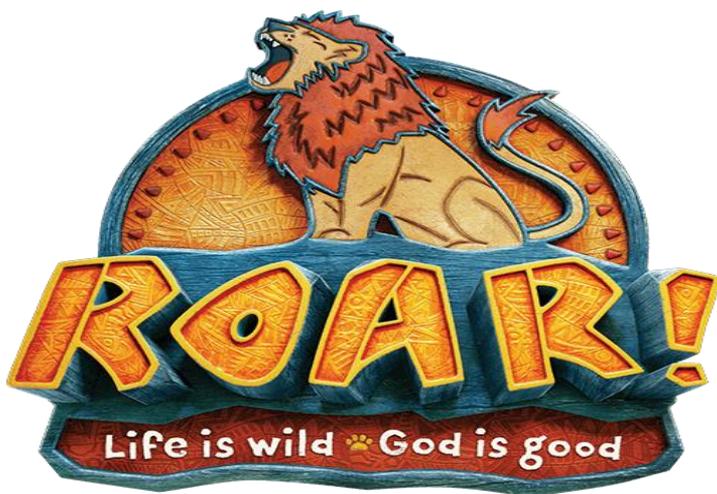
What we have just read was the making of our wild world. The consequences of sin in this Scripture is the beginning of a life of toil and strife for humanity. It was not God’s good & perfect will for creation. Man brought this upon himself through disobedience to God. It is easy to look at the stories of the Bible and think how clear the right choice was and how we would probably have done it differently. Each of us today personally struggle with the effects of the decisions made that day so long ago. We are all born sinners by nature because of Adam and Eve’s decision, but we the sins we have committed are the result of our choices.

Romans 3:23 says **“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.”**

There is not one of us here today that can stand before God righteous by their own actions. Even our very thoughts would condemn us. Just a few verses earlier in **Romans 3:10-12; 19** it says **“... there is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one...Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.”** God gave to man the Law so that He could see himself the way God sees him. If you want any kind of peace or calm in this wild and evil world, you first have to get on the same page as God. You have to see yourself the way God sees you... a life apart from God is the very definition of wild. That is a state in which we are all born into & must repent from. Within the tragedy of sin for all humanity in these verses of Genesis, we also find the promise of salvation? Look again at verse 15:

“And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.”

This is an amazing statement. Her seed is referring to Christ and His virgin birth into humanity for the work He set forth to accomplish which is the salvation of humanity. This verse is declaring the struggle between good and evil that would ensue from the curse of sin unto the completed salvation and sanctification of Man. It is the first picture of God's goodness demonstrated through a plan of redemption. In other words God made a way to return Man to that place of glorious, sinless relationship with Him through Jesus. Although Man made his choice to become wild, God made a way for Man to return to His good will. If you find yourself consumed in the wilderness of life and you are looking for a way out, know that God has provided the Way through the person of His Son, the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Today we have discusses WHY life is wild. Tomorrow we will focus more on HOW God is good in His plan to save us from our destructive choices of sin.



Day 2: What Makes God Good

Icebreaker: Funny Answers Game

The students are placed in pairs & each one is given a question on a note card to ask the person they are paired with. They answer the question they are asked & then they circle up with the whole group. The teacher has each student ask their question to another person in group, but that person's only answer can be the answer to the first question.

Introduction

Good /ˈɡʊd/

adjective: **good**

1. to be desired or approved of.
2. pleasing & welcome.
 - expressing approval.
3. having the qualities required for a particular role.
4. skilled at doing or dealing with a specified thing.
 - useful, advantageous, or beneficial in effect.
 - appropriate to a particular purpose.
 - (of language) with correct grammar & pronunciation.
 - strictly adhering to or fulfilling all the principles of a particular cause, religion, or party.
5. possessing or displaying moral virtue.
6. showing kindness.
 - commanding respect.
 - belonging or relating to a high social class.
7. giving pleasure; enjoyable or satisfying.
 8. pleasant to look at; attractive.
 - (of clothes) smart & suitable for formal wear.
 9. thorough.
 - used to emphasize that a number is at least as great as one claims.(of a ticket) valid.
 - reliably providing.
 - sufficient to pay for.

noun: that which is morally right; righteousness.

1. benefit or advantage to someone or something.

adverb: well.

Why is life so wild? Is God really good? What makes Him good? Can we have peace & joy in this wild world?

Today we are going to look at what makes God good.

Now, keep in mind that Man's definition of the word good is not the same as God's. The way Man sees himself & others is based on a view of a fallen state of existence. We sympathize with each other's sinful nature. We excuse or pardon sin because we understand how hard it can be to do what is right. Many times we judge one another unfairly, excusing some sins because we think they are not as bad as other sins.

Can someone describe a sin that is often excused like it's not really a big deal? Lying, immorality, cursing?

God does not & cannot excuse sin because He is perfect goodness. He is the true definition of the word good. With this in mind it is interesting to see how some of Man's ideas of the word "good", actually do fit into who God is. I feel like we know what good should look like, yet none of us are able to attain it continually in our own abilities. We often compromise & settle for the best we can do, but good is simply who God is at all times.

Looking at the various definitions of the word "good", how does God exhibit all that is good?

He is kind, desirable, pleasing, welcoming & brings pleasure & joy to this life. He is able to fulfill His role, perfectly skilled at what He does in a love that displays perfect goodness. He is artful in the construction & fulfillment of His plan for humanity in this fallen world. He intervenes at just the right time to give Man the opportunity know Him in His goodness & be saved from a certain wrath that will bring an end to all things that are not good in this world. Jesus is the personification of all that is truly good. His desire for Man is to remove our filthy sin & clothe us with robes of His perfect righteousness, He is thorough & valid, reliable & sufficient to pay the wages of our sin. He is righteous & a priceless benefit to anyone that would believe on Him. GOD is so good! Remember the final Scripture we discussed yesterday. It closed with punishment of Man that began our downfall into a wild & sinful world. However, it also provided the very first hint of the redemption of man & his deliverance from this fallen state of failure. This is the revelation of God's goodness to us through His Son, Jesus Christ.

From before the world began, God knew that man would ultimately fail to obey Him & need to be saved from the consequences of our sin.

Because of His love for mankind, God sent His Son to be born as a Man. His Son lived a life without sin to be the perfect sacrifice needed to pay the debt of sin we all owed & make us new creatures in His perfect righteousness. He lived & died as a Man to make us holy & acceptable to God. He brought humanity the opportunity to be free from sin & its destruction.

Because God is good-He is also just. This means He cannot just excuse our sin. He would not be good if He did. Our sin has to be dealt with. Jesus is the only way we can deal with our sin issue & be delivered from the eternal punishment we deserve. Only someone truly good could make a way to satisfy the consequences of sin without compromising the payment owed for sin. The goodness of the grace of God has been made available to us through Jesus.

Yesterday, we saw the temptation & fall of man into a sinful state. In our reading today we are going to look at the temptation that Jesus endured to bring us salvation. It is only through His righteousness that we can be considered righteous.

Today we come on the scene in Matthew 4. This event occurred just before Jesus began His earthly ministry preaching & demonstrating the good news of salvation through repentance & surrender of one's life to God. Jesus had just been baptized here in an act of obedience to God, identifying Himself with the fallen state of Man even though He was without sin. Do we truly realize that Jesus (God in the flesh) fully identified Himself with sinful Man, yet was without sin himself?

Read Matthew 4:1: Then was Jesus led up of the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

Question: Was Jesus God or a man?

Discussion: It's actually a trick question. One thing to keep in mind as we study this portion of scripture is that Jesus was God in the flesh & while He was 100% God, He was also 100% Man. Scripture says He was **"led up of the spirit"** meaning He was following the guidance of Holy Spirit in obedience to the will of the Father. Now, why would the Holy Spirit lead Jesus into the wilderness so that

He could be tempted of the devil? This is a fantastic question... I'm glad you asked :) Hang on to it because we are going to talk about it in detail a little later ;)

Read Matthew 4 ²And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry. ³Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." ⁴But He answered and said, "It is written, '*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.*' "

Let's call this a temptation of the lust of the flesh. I don't know about y'all, but my tummy lusts for food every few hours. Jesus was in a state where the flesh of His humanity was as weak as it possibly could have been.

Question: What was Jesus' response to this first temptation?

Discussion: **"It is written"** He quoted scripture from Deuteronomy 8:3. He was truly reliant on the Spirit & the written word of God to withstand these temptations.

Read Matthew 4 ⁵Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, ⁶and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written: '*He shall give His angels charge over you,*' and, '*In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.*' " ⁷Jesus said to him, "It is written again, '*You shall not tempt the Lord your God.*' "

Let's call this the temptation of the pride of life. Satan is tempting Jesus to misuse His power over the physical laws of earthly life.

Question: What was the temptation Satan was using here to tempt Jesus in this second attempt to get Him to sin?

Discussion: It may surprise many of you to know that Satan knows Scripture. He knows exactly how to twist it to deceive those who are not living it. How scary is that to consider?

Just as Satan had the gall to tempt the Son of God, he constantly tries to change & corrupt the Word of God in our hearts as well. He will twist the Word as demonstrated here in an attempt to deceive us to misuse the Word of God as a means to get what we want out of life, instead of seeking God's Word to discover what He wants for our lives. We see it in churches today that compromise with sin on topics such as fornication, homosexuality & abortion. We see it in a watered down message that says we are all okay just the way we are & everyone is capable of finding their own way to heaven. We see it in the teaching of God's love in a way where He is perceived as so loving that He is incapable of sending anyone to Hell. These teachings are dangerous & can only be combated by following the example that Jesus revealed to us. We have to know what God says in His Word. We can't take one or two verses out of a passage & make them mean whatever you want so we can have life the way our lustful & prideful flesh wants it. That's just not how this works. That's how life becomes wild & hostile. Jesus directly quotes Scripture from Deuteronomy 6:16 to battle the enemy's temptation. Let's look at the third & final temptation.

Read Matthew 4:8-10 ⁸Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. ⁹ And he said to Him, "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me." ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, '*You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.*' "

Satan "showed Him all the kingdoms of the world, & the glory of them". This is the temptation of the lust of the eyes. How often does desire consume us when we see someone else with something our flesh wants?

Discussion Question

What is worship?

Worship means to demonstrate acts of reverence. Did you know that there are many ways to demonstrate worship? What are some common things people desire from this world? Is it money, popularity, fame, academic or athletic success? Does it require so much of time your time & attention that it becomes what you revere, esteem, worship?

We all face the temptation to lust after & even worship other things besides the one true God.

How did Jesus resist Satan's temptation in this passage?
He quoted the Scripture Deuteronomy 6:13.

Imagine Jesus here, weakened in His flesh beyond what any of us have probably ever experienced. Through complete reliance on the strength of the Holy Spirit He was empowered in His humanity to succeed in Satan's assault of temptations.

Remember yesterday's lesson: **Genesis 3:6** *"So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, & a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit & ate."*

"...good for food..." - The lust of the flesh

"...pleasant to the eyes..." - the lust of the eyes

"...desirable to make one wise..." - the pride of life

"She also gave to her husband with her, & he ate."

These are the same three temptations that Jesus faced & overcame.

Hebrews 4:15 ¹⁵**For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all *points* tempted as we are, yet without sin.**

Not only did He demonstrate to us how to overcome temptation, but He righted Adam's wrong in doing so. Jesus' actions allow us to reap the benefits from His goodness.

Romans 5:12-21 **"12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, & death through sin, & thus death spread to all men, because all sinned— 13 ...death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come. 15 But the free gift is not like the offense. For if by the one man's offense many died, much more the grace of God & the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many. 16 And the gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned. For the judgment which came from one offense resulted in condemnation, but the free gift which came from many offenses resulted in justification. 17 For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace**

& of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.)

18 Therefore, as through one man's offense *judgment came* to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act *the free gift came* to all men, resulting in justification of life. 19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous. 20 Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more, 21 so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Do you see your life the way God sees it? If so then you have to know that God is so good to love us.

In His great love for us, He made a way for us to be freed from that destruction we deserve.

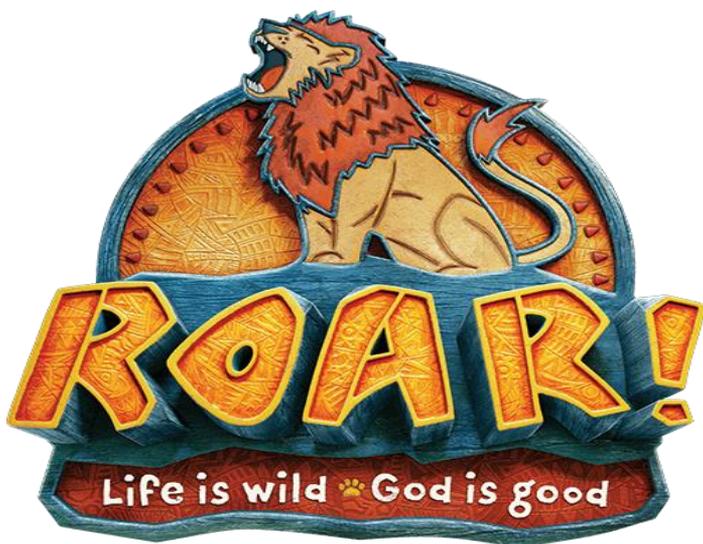
Just because Jesus came & died to save the world does not mean that everyone in the world is going to be saved.

Jesus says in **John 14:6** **"I am the way the truth & the life, no man comes to father except through me."**

Salvation is available to everyone, but not everyone will choose it.

Most people will choose the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes or the pride of life instead?

What will you choose?



Day 3: Where To Go From Here

Ice Breaker: Sit Down If

Have everyone stand up. Then proceed by saying the prepared statements that start with “Sit down if. . .” The last person standing is the champion!

Introduction

Unfortunately we do not live in an everlasting state of church camp throughout the years of our lives. Today we are going to talk about when life is wild, God remains good. Our focus is where we go from here as camp 2019 speedily comes to a finish. The simple answer is home. Back to the same place you came from, but our pray is that you are not returning the same person that left your home a few days ago. I hope that everyone here today has come to the realization or has been reminded that we desperately need the goodness of God in this wild life.

Yesterday we looked at just one of the ways God is good to us. What an amazing goodness HE has shown us in the free gift of salvation through His son Jesus Christ. Although this is probably the biggest and most important demonstration of God's goodness toward us, it is far from the only one. God restored our lives eternally and desires to continue to pour out HIS goodness on us on this side of Heaven. That fact does not mean that you will never face hard times in your life, because Scripture is clear that you will. Do you realize that there is a "best" life that God has planned for each of you? It is a perfect plan filled with God's blessings even in the difficult times you will face. This God-life is so much better than anything this world has to offer you.

1 Peter 3:17 "For *it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.*"

It is so important to realize that in every situation in life, the devil has an agenda and God has an agenda. Which one are you going to listen to? **John 10:10 says "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."** Satan's goal is to destroy us, while God's agenda is to save us. I pray that you are seeking and continue to seek God throughout the rest of your life. Rest assured if you do that, **Jeremiah 29:13 says "And you shall seek Me, and find Me, when you shall search for me with all your heart."** God is faithful to those that desire to know Him.

Question for thought: Do you desire God? Do you want to study His Word? Do you want to speak to Him or hear what He has to say? Do you desire His will for your life? Do you desire to obey His commands, or do HIS commands seem burdensome when trying to fit them into your lives?

Discussion: As a teenager in 2019 it is hard to live in this world and walk with God. Today we will look at some ways that Scripture gives to improve your walk with God. Whether you are a brand new Christian or a seasoned follower of many years, the following principles are so important in remaining in the will of God-HIS perfect plan for you.

Prayer

The first thing I want to talk about is prayer. Many people treat prayer as a wish list for God or a last resort cry for help. We act like it is the least we can do for the ones we love when we are out of other options. But I am here to tell you, when done right, prayer is a game changer.

1 John 5:14-15 (NKJV)

¹⁴ Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. ¹⁵ And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.

We can have this confidence, not because of who is praying, but because of Who is listening. When we pray we are talking to God. God already knows our thoughts, fears and struggles and yet still wants us to reach out to Him. **1 Timothy 2:8 says “I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.” 1 Thessalonians 5:17 says “Pray without ceasing.”**

Question: Why do you think that God wants us to tell Him things He already knows?

Discussion: **Psalms 145:18 (NKJV)** ¹⁸ **The Lord is near to all who call upon Him, To all who call upon Him in truth.**

The amazing thing about prayer is that it is so much more than just talking to God. Vernon McGee, a well-known Bible commentator, once said that prayer is not eliciting earth's will in heaven but enabling heaven's will on earth. When we pray (biblically) we are not only telling God what we want, instead we are ultimately submitting ourselves to what the Lord's will is for the situation. When you do that, whether the situation changes or not, you change by coming into line with God's Word. Your focus shifts from the situation (something temporary) and onto God (Who is eternal). Getting real with God is so important in remaining in His will for your life. Think about your earthly relationships...family, friends, classmates.

Question: How close of a relationship would you have with someone if they never spoke to you? How would you feel if they only reached out to you when they wanted or needed something?

Discussion: That is how many of us treat our relationship with God. And while He will always be there, you may not always be where He wants you to be. We have to set our minds on Him and His desires for us. One of the best ways to do this is giving Him your full attention on a daily basis. This has never been more difficult than it is in the world we live in today. We have so many distractions pulling at our attention. Think about all the directions you feel pulled in just a single day: school, work, friends, relationships, television, social media, beauty/hygiene, sports, extracurricular activities, ect... The list is endless, but the truth remains unchanged. **Proverbs 3:6 tells us to "Acknowledge Him(God) in all your ways and He will direct your paths."** Do you desire the Lord's direction in your life? Do you wish to be cleansed & set apart from sin from the sin of this world?

If you don't you will never be in His perfect will for your life. You will remain wandering in the wilderness of this life. If you do desire God's will, then you need to communicate this desire through prayer continually to God.

Bible Study

The next essential in living out God's good & perfect will is abiding in the Word of God. I cannot stress enough how important it is to study the Bible and live it. As prayer is our means of speaking to God, the Bible is God speaking to us. Scripture is God's revelation of Himself to mankind. The first verse of the book of John tells us ***"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."*** Verse 14 says ***"The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."***

1 John 5:7 (NKJV)

7 For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one.

Revelation 19:13 (NKJV)

13 He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God.

Are you getting this? Jesus Christ is the living breathing Word of God. Everything that is given to us in Scripture is given for the purpose of revealing God to us through the person of His son Jesus Christ so that we might know Him and through Him be made right with God. God's perfect will for us is to follow Him the rest of our lives, allowing HIS Word and Spirit to work together in revealing God to the rest of the world.

Question: Is that what you want out of life... to love and serve God?

Discussion: If this is not the desire of your heart then you are holding on to something you desire to worship above God. Is it the temporary things of this world that you are chasing: money, popularity, intelligence, beauty, approval, relationships or any other thing that is more important to your heart than God? The perfect life you're so consumed with getting is all going to pass away one day and all you will be left with is the decisions you made pertaining to eternity. **1 Peter 1:24-25 (NKJV)**

***"All flesh is as grass, And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, And its flower falls away,
25 But the word of the Lord endures forever."***

God cares about every aspect of your life, including those hopes and dreams that you're chasing, but He cares first and foremost about your eternity and the souls of those that you could potentially reach if you were to submit your life to Him.

Matthew 6:33 says "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." I don't know about you but I have yet to physically touch

my Lord or hear the voice of God. And yet in a way, through Scripture, I can. **Romans 10:17 says "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God."** If only we could really grasp the significance of having access to Scripture. It would change our lives!

Love

The last thing we need to talk about now that we have established these two primary needs that are fundamental in our ability to walk in the will of God is how to KEEP walking in the will of God. The easy answer is to KEEP doing those things that we have been talking about, but the problem is that as humans we tend to fluctuate in our focus and emotions. Our perspective changes from day to day and is often dependent on our experiences.

People leave church camp with an excitement and perspective that fades as time goes on. It is part of being a fickle and feeble human being in a wild world. But thank God He is not fickle or feeble. Thank God He is unchanging and steadfast.

Thank God that His mercies are new each morning and He will not stop until He has saved everyone that willing to truly turn to Him. We have already established that this life is WILD and that we have a real enemy who is out to destroy us. A week of church camp's emotional highs once a year, as amazing as they are, are not enough to battle the temptations and lures of this world for the rest of your life. You have got to leave this week prepared with something more than fun memories and worship songs stuck in your head. Every single adult leader that has come down here to be with you this week didn't do so just so you can have a good time, although we hope that you have. We want more for you, because God wants more for you. All that has taken place to give you the opportunity to experience God's goodness at camp is so you can come to know and LOVE our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. **Ephesians 3** ¹⁴ **For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,** ¹⁵ **from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,** ¹⁶ **that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man,** ¹⁷ **that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love,** ¹⁸ **may be able to comprehend with all the saints what *is* the width and length and depth and height-**¹⁹ **to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.**

Ephesians 5 ¹ **Therefore be imitators of God as dear children.** ² **And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us**

We are to walk in the light and love of God. Being a Christian is not about a list of dos and don'ts. It is about a love relationship with God. Everything we do should be out of love for God. Our service to Him, our resistance to temptation & our desire for success in life should be about loving God with all our hearts & bringing glory to Him.

When people don't do this it is usually because they love the pleasures of this world more than they love God. A person can't serve two masters, they either love God or the world.

1 John 2 ¹⁵Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶For all that *is* in the world--the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life--is not of the Father but is of the world. ¹⁷And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

Question: Do any of those lusts sound familiar?

Discussion: These are the same temptations Scripture records Adam/Eve and Jesus facing. It is clear that Scripture is teaching us the way to overcome the temptations of the world, the way to grow in faith through prayer and Bible study. Our love for God is our inspiration to live like Jesus-walking in love.

Question: Do you love God today?

Discussion: What does the evidence in your life reveal? If not, why. The only reason people don't love God is unbelief. If you truly believe God is who He says He is, and did what He said He did, you would have no choice but to love Him for who He is, what He has done and wants to continue to do in you. If you do proclaim to love Him, are you walking in that love? Does love compel you to pray and read His Word? Does it motivate you to seek Him? May you all be filled with God's love, today and forever!

Notes:

Become a Christian: Step through the Gospel

Looking for the right thing to satisfy your desire for purpose and meaning in life? In reference to God one wise man once wrote, “You have made us for Yourself and our souls are restless until they find their rest in You”. Only Jesus can fill the void in your life. Finding “rest for your soul” is not that difficult.

First, understand that God already loves you unconditionally and desires to have a personal relationship with you.

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life”

(John 3:16).

Second, you need to admit your sinful nature to God, because this is what separates all of us from Him.

“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”

(Romans 3:23).

Third, stop trying to please God through your own efforts, and realize that salvation through the blood of Jesus Christ is a gift that none of us deserves.

“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8).

Finally, repent (turn away from your sins) and truly accept God’s free gift – salvation through His Son, Jesus Christ.

“But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name” (John 1:12).

Now you know the basic steps to become a Christian. As a result, if you desire God’s gift of eternal life, you are as close as a sincere act of faith.

Jesus says, *“I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me”* (John 14:6).

Jesus also says, *“Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me”* (Revelation 3:20).

Receiving Jesus is a matter of truly asking Him to come into your life, to forgive your sins, and acknowledging Him as your Lord forever. Remember, It’s not merely an intellectual undertaking, but rather, an act of sincere faith and heart-felt will.

Adapted from www.allaboutgod.com/become-a-christian.htm & other