

Program#1

▶ Leader's notes

Introduction to the four-week series

There will be a mixer activity and Spotlight each week. There will also be a memory verse and a time for a leader to give his/her testimony.

Step-by-step guidelines for running each activity are given on the Running Sheets.

You will need

A whiteboard or something on which to write

A Bible for each person

Quiet Time sheets ready to be handed out (small group Bible study sheets ready to hand out)

Welcome

Read Hebrews 10:23-25. Tell the group that we meet each week to remind each other to keep trusting Jesus and to help each other to follow him.

Pray that God will bless your time together as you seek to encourage each other and learn more about him. (You can ask a leader or member of the group to do this instead of yourself.)

Sharing question to begin

This question encourages the people in the group to chat with the person next to them. After they have exchanged answers you can ask for someone to share their answers with the whole group—in this way the group begins to get to know each other on a deeper level.

Possible sharing questions

What was the best thing you did during the holidays? (Use this only if the group has just had a break from school.)

What was the best part of the weekend so far (Or, what are you looking forward to about this weekend)?

Is there a more appropriate question for your group?

(You will find more questions in Creative Christian Ideas , pp115-117.)

Mixer activity: Find your twin

The group stands up. If needed, they go to a part of the hall where there is more room. You will ask a series of questions designed to form pairs. ('Find someone who is the same height as yourself.') The person who best matches this description is their 'twin'. Having found their twin, they introduce themselves and then answer a question that you have given them. ('What is your favourite TV show?'). They will do this a number of times. 'Find your twin' questions and 'Get to know you' questions are included on the Running Sheet.

Spotlight

This is a chance to get to know one member of the group a little better. Choose someone beforehand that you would like to introduce to the group (don't tell them!). Have everyone stand up. Ask people to sit down as you go through a list of elimination questions, (for instance, 'sit down everyone wearing a cap', 'sit down everyone who is 14 years old', 'sit down if you are male', etc. until the person you want to interview is the last one left standing).

Please note: Prepare your elimination questions. Do not make them up on the spot.

Ask the person who remains standing to come to the front. Ask a series of questions that are informative and fun. If you know that he or she is a Christian you can finish by asking, 'what is the best thing about following Jesus and when/why did they become a Christian?' You need only ask about 6 questions. You can finish by asking if there is anything that you can pray for in their life. Spotlight questions are on your Running Sheet.

Memory Verse: Fill in the Blanks

(Similar to TV show 'Wheel of Fortune', see Creative Christian Ideas p.27).

Your memory verse:

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! 2 Corinthians 5:17

Understanding Fill in the Blanks

This game is similar to the TV show Wheel of Fortune. You will write up the memory verse with only blanks under where the letters would be leaving gaps between the words. For example, if the verse was John 11:35 'Jesus wept'. You would write _____ . Make sure you leave a nice big gap between each word. The goal is for the group to guess the memory verse.

How to Play Fill in the Blanks

Divide the group in two and ask one side a question from the Bible. If they get the answer correct they choose a letter or two (if you want to speed things up let them choose three). Fill in the blank(s) where that letter appears. If it isn't in the verse then let them choose another letter. The verse will slowly fill out. The team that correctly says the verse wins.

It will be helpful for you to have an assistant with the verse in front of them to write it up on the board as the groups choose letters. (Be prepared, writing the verse is trickier than you think). It will help you to have the blanks already written on the board before you introduce the game. If you have a whiteboard that is mobile you can keep it hidden or covered up. When you introduce the game, uncover the board (the reason for hiding the blanks is that the group will no doubt try to guess the verse during the mixer activity and Spotlight.)

When it is a team's turn they must have their hand in the air to answer a question. Don't let them shout out answers (and no leaders are allowed to answer). If a team gets the answer wrong the question goes to the other team as a bonus. It is then this team's question (in other words they can answer two in a row). Also, for a team to win it must be their turn, they must answer a question and they must suggest a letter. Do this just in case they get it wrong.

Questions for Fill in the Blanks are on your Running Sheet. You may want to briefly look over the questions. If they are too easy there is a list at the back of Creative Christian Ideas. You may also want to add review questions or general knowledge questions. (Is the memory verse printed on a small business card for the group? If not, ask for a volunteer to do it during the week.)

Sharing time: Leader's testimony

Over the next two weeks various leaders will speak about how they became followers of Jesus. The goal is to set an example for the young people in the youth group and give them a chance to share later on. Keep it brief (3-5 minutes) and make sure Jesus is clearly mentioned! If you do not have any leaders who can do this, you can invite another member of the church to come in or ask a trustworthy young person. If all else fails replace it with another sharing time (see chapters 7-13 in Creative Christian Ideas), or just skip it.

Prayer Time: Thanks/Prayer (or, 'Please' and 'Help')

This prayer time is simply a time of thanks and requests. On the whiteboard (overhead/video projector/large sheet of paper) make two headings 'Thanks' and 'Prayer'. Ask the group what they are thankful for. Write these up in the 'thanks' column. Follow this by asking the group what they would like to pray for. This goes in the 'pray' column. Ask someone to open the prayer time and someone to close the prayer time. Pray.

Notices/Announcements

Announce any upcoming events.

Bible study/talk

Move into discussion groups or the talk from the Bible.

Close

End your time together with a prayer in your small groups (or, come back together for a final prayer).

Hand out the weekly Quiet Time sheets.

| Don't forget to photocopy

- the discussion group and quiet time sheets

Program#1

▶ Running sheet

You will need

- White board or paper for the memory verse
- A Bible for each person
- Quiet Time sheets ready to be handed out
- (Small group Bible study sheets ready to hand out)

Welcome

1. Welcome people to youth group.
2. Read Hebrews 10:23-25.
3. Tell the group that we meet each week to remind each other to keep trusting Jesus and to help each other to follow him.
4. Pray that God will bless your time together as you seek to encourage each other and learn more about him.

Sharing question to begin

Choose one question

What was the best thing you did over the holidays?
(Use this only if the group just had a break from school.)

What was the best part of the weekend?
(Or, what are you looking forward to about this weekend?)

Is there a more appropriate question for your group?

Mixer: Find your twin

1. Ask the group to stand up and move to the place where you will run this mixer.
2. Explain the mixer. You will ask a question that will pair each person up with someone who qualifies as 'their twin' (for example, 'find someone who has the same colored hair'—see the 'find your twin' questions and 'sharing' questions below). They find their 'twin' and introduce themselves. You will then ask a sharing question for the pair to answer.
3. Set the first 'find your twin' guideline.
4. Match up people without partners before asking the sharing question.
5. Ask the sharing question for that round.
6. After a minute or two ask for volunteers to give their answers.
7. Begin another round. Make sure that people match with a different person each time.
8. Do this at least three times.
9. Have the group return to their seats.

'Find your twin' questions

- Find someone with similar colored hair.
- Find someone who has the same shoe size as you.
- Find someone who has a birthday in the same month (or close).

More questions if you want to extend the mixer activity:

- Find someone who is of similar height.
- Find someone who goes to a different school.
- Find someone who has the similar number of brothers and sisters to you

Sharing questions

(to be asked once pairs have been formed):

- If you could visit anywhere for one year where would it be?
- What would you like to have done by age 50?
- Which is better the beach or the bush? Why?
- What is the best gift you have ever received?
- What is your favorite cartoon (or TV show)?
- What is your favorite/least favorite subject at school?

Spotlight

(It's time for us to get to know someone in this group.)

1. Secretly choose someone that you will spotlight (don't tell them).
2. Ask the group to stand.
3. Tell the group, 'It's time for us to get to know someone in this group. This is called Spotlight!'
4. Slowly eliminate members of the group until the person you have chosen is the only one standing ('Sit down if you are wearing...').
5. Ask the person to come to the front and stand next to you (or, better yet, stand on a chair).
6. Ask the Spotlight questions.
7. You may wish to pray for them at the end.

Spotlight questions:

'What is your full name and age and what school do you attend?'

'What is your favorite Pizza?'

'What is your favorite current CD or band/singer?'

'If you could join the circus, what act would you do?'

'If you could live at any time in history, when would you live and why?'

'What is the best thing about being a Christian or about coming to this group?'

Memory Verse: Fill in the Blanks

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! 2 Corinthians 5:17

1. Tell the group that you have a new memory verse and that you are going to learn it by playing 'Fill in the Blanks'. Tell the group this game is similar to the TV show 'Wheel of Fortune'.
2. Write the blanks on the whiteboard where each letter of the verse will go. Leave a gap between each word. (If you have done this prior to the meeting, unveil the board now). It should look like this:

-----, -----, -----; -----
---, -----! ----- (-:-)

3. Split the group in two (for example, boys v girls; older teens v. younger; right side v. left side).
4. Explain the rules. (Ask one side a question from the Bible. If they answer correctly they choose a letter or two. Where that letter appears you will write it. If it isn't in the verse they will choose another letter. The verse will slowly fill out. The team that correctly states the verse wins. They do not need to guess where the verse comes from. If a team gets the answer wrong it goes to the other team as a bonus. They must have their hands in the air and not shout out answers. Nor can they change their answer once it is given.)
5. Decide who will go first (flip a coin).
6. Ask one side a question from the Bible. If they get the answer correct they choose a letter or two (if you need to speed up the game, let them choose three letters.)
7. Fill in the blanks. Ask the other side a question.
8. Repeat this procedure. The team that correctly states the verse wins.
9. In order for a team to win it must be their turn and they must answer a question and choose a letter. They do not need to guess the reference.
10. Do you have this verse printed on a small business card to give to the group? If not, ask for a volunteer to do it this week.

Quiz questions

1. Name three of Jesus' parables.
2. Name three miracles that Jesus did.
3. In what town was Jesus born? (Bethlehem, Luke 2:1-6)
4. Which disciple betrayed Jesus? (Judas, Luke 22:1-6)
5. Which disciple was a tax collector before following Jesus? (Matthew, Matt 9:9-13)

6. How much money was Judas given to betray Jesus? (30 silver coins, Matt 26:15)
7. Who was the first King of Israel? (Saul)
8. Who was the man that was swallowed by a big fish? (Jonah)
9. Which book is the longest book in the Bible? (Psalms)
10. Name the 4 gospels. (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John)

You will find more questions on page 18 of Creative Christian Ideas .

Sharing time: Leader's testimony

1. Explain what a testimony is.
2. Introduce the person giving the testimony.
3. He or she gives the testimony.
4. Pray for this person.

Prayer Time: Thanks/Pray (or, Thanks and Help)

1. On the whiteboard make 2 headings. 'Thanks' and 'Pray'.
2. Ask the group what they are thankful for. Write these up in the 'thanks' column.
3. Follow this by asking the group what they would like to pray for. This goes in the 'pray' column.
4. Ask someone to open the prayer time.
5. Ask someone to close the prayer time.
6. Pray!

Notices/Announcements

Announce any upcoming events

Bible Study/Talk

Move into discussion groups or the talk from the Bible.

Close

End your time together with a prayer in your small groups (or, come back together for a final prayer).

Hand out the weekly Quiet Time sheets.

Discussion groups

Meeting Jesus & getting to know him better
Matthew 8:5-13: The Roman soldier's faith

To begin

Have you ever seen or met someone famous?
Who was it? How did you feel?

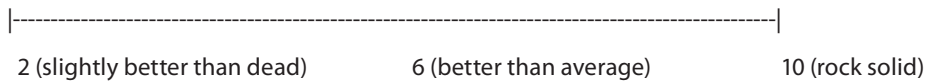
Read Matthew 8:5-13

Lets get the facts straight

Why does the centurion tell Jesus that it is not necessary for him to come to his home? (verses 8-9)
Why was Jesus so amazed at this soldier's faith? (verse 10)
What does Jesus say about judgment in response to this man's faith? (verses 11-12)
What was the result of this encounter with Jesus? (verse 13)

Bring it home

How would you rate your faith in Jesus right now? Place a cross on the line below to show where you are.



How could you improve on this?
What things could you work on this week?
How could this group help each other with their faith in Jesus?
Pray for each other that you will put into practice what you have learned in this study.
Read Matthew 15:21-28 if there is time remaining.

Meeting Jesus & getting to know him better
Matthew 8:5-13: The Roman soldier's faith

To begin

Have you ever seen or met someone famous?
Who was it? How did you feel?

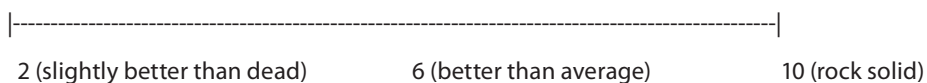
Read Matthew 8:5-13

Lets get the facts straight

Why does the centurion tell Jesus that it is not necessary for him to come to his home? (verses 8-9)
Why was Jesus so amazed at this soldier's faith? (verse 10)
What does Jesus say about judgment in response to this man's faith? (verses 11-12)
What was the result of this encounter with Jesus? (verse 13)

Bring it home

How would you rate your faith in Jesus right now? Place a cross on the line below to show where you are.



How could you improve on this?
What things could you work on this week?
How could this group help each other with their faith in Jesus?
Pray for each other that you will put into practice what you have learned in this study.
Read Matthew 15:21-28 if there is time remaining.

Quiet time

1 Peter

A 'quiet time' is a time for you to have alone with God, when you pray and read the Bible. Find a time that best suits you. Many people have them in the morning before they go to work or school. Others have them just before bedtime. You may find that when you get home from work or school before dinner is a good time. See if you can have four quiet times this week!

Peter, who was a disciple of Jesus, wrote the New Testament book 1 Peter. It is a great book to read. It is written to a group of Christians who were suffering because of their faith in Jesus. It has a lot to say about who Jesus is and what it means to follow him in a world that may not like the fact that you are one of his followers.

Before you begin each quiet time, pray that God will help you to understand what you read.

QT#1

Read 1 Peter 1

Things to think about

What does this tell you about the hope that you have? (1:3-12)

In what way are you challenged by 1:13-25?

What else challenges you or helps you in this part of the Bible?

Pray

Spend a moment thanking God for the good things in your life.

Choose one thing you can work on in your Christian life this week (things like love, patience, being more prayerful, etc.).

Pray for this.

Make a list of any other things that you can pray for (school, home, etc.) and pray for these things.

QT#2

Read 1 Peter 2

Things to think about

How does being a Christian make you different/special? (2:1-12)

Think about the people in authority you relate to and how God wants you to respond to them (2:13-25)

What else challenges you or helps you in this part of the Bible?

Pray

Spend a moment thanking God for the good things in your life.

Pray that God will help you to live as a Christian in a way that stands out among the crowd.

Pray for your youth group, that everyone will be godly in what they do and say.

Make a list of any other things that you can pray for (school, home, etc.) and pray for these things.

QT#3

Read 1 Peter 3

Things to think about

What kinds of relationships does God want us to have? (3:1-7)

In what ways should we be different and how should we live as a result? (3:8-22)

What else challenges you or helps you in this part of the Bible?

Pray

For courage to be a keen Christian at school.

Pray specifically for your friends today.

Make a list of other things that you can pray for (school, home, etc.) and pray for them.

Spend a moment thanking God for the good things in your life.

QT#4

Read 1 Peter 4

Things to think about

Make a list of how a Christian thinks and acts and how that is different from a non-Christian.

Christian

nonChristian

Put a tick next to the words that describe you

What does it say about suffering as a Christian? (4:12-19)

What else challenges you or helps you in this part of the Bible?

Pray

Spend a moment thanking God for the good things in your life.

Pray for your family.

Make a list of any other things that you can pray for (school, home, etc.) and pray for these things.

If you would like more Quiet Times read 1 Peter chapter 5.