

Large Group



I Wonder...

LESSON 2: LARGE-GROUP

Where is God and why doesn't he fix the world's problems?

MAIN IDEA

Even though we can't see him, God is everywhere. When we trust Jesus as our Savior, God comes to live inside us by his Holy Spirit. Because God loves us, he allows us to make choices about whether to follow him or not. Because we often choose poorly, there are many problems in the world.

BIBLE PASSAGES

- Romans 8:38-39
- Psalm 139:7
- John 14:6-7
- John 16:33

BIBLE VERSE

The heavens proclaim the glory of God. The skies display his craftsmanship. Day after day they continue to speak; night after night they make him known.

Psalm 19:1-2, NLT



Prepare your heart to teach.
Plan for the lesson.



Introduce the story of the Gospel.
(10 – 15 minutes)



Play large-group games.
(25 minutes)

Prepare



Prepare your heart to teach.
Plan for the lesson.

QUESTIONS

- How can you be praying for the students this week? Are there any specific students or requests you can pray for?
- Are there any changes and additions needed for the Large-Group Lesson?
- Is there anything specific you need to communicate to the small-group leaders?

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- ☐ Latex balloons, 2 per child

Large Group



Introduce the story of the Gospel.
(10 – 15 minutes)

REVIEW

Quickly review last week's lesson and Bible verses.

- God has shown us what he is like from his creation.
- God is the source of all wisdom and knowledge.
- Review Psalm 19:1.
- Consider doing "Who is Jesus?" Call and Response.

INTRODUCTION

Ask, **Where Is God?** (Listen for the answers the children give.) **Can you see him?**

Read Psalm 139:7–10 aloud together, and discuss these verses.

Remind children, **The Bible is the best source for our knowledge of God. The Bible says that God is everywhere.**

OBJECT LESSON: AIR IN A BALLOON

Show the students a deflated balloon. Ask them if there is air around it. (Yes!) Move the balloon to different locations in the room (e.g., put it on the floor, hold it up high, hand it to someone else). Each time ask the same question: **Is there air around this balloon?**

Say, **The Bible says that God is everywhere. It also says that he lives inside each person who has believed in Jesus as their Savior and the forgiver of their sins. Let's read about that in John 14:16–17.** Read these verses aloud, and explain that the Holy Spirit is God. Jesus is promising his followers that the Holy Spirit—God—will live inside each of his followers. **So, if God is all around us, how can he be inside us at the same time?**

- **Let's think about our balloon again.** Give each student a balloon; tell them not to blow it up yet.
- **Is there air around each balloon?** (Yes!)
- **How did the air get there?** (It is always there. We are surrounded by air.)
- **How did it get there?** (It was there all along.)
- **Now, blow up your balloons. Is there air around your balloon?** (Yes!)
- **Is there air inside your balloon?** (Yes!)
- **How do you know?** (It has changed.)
- **How did the air get inside your balloon?** (You made a choice to put the air inside the balloon.)

Have the students throw away the used balloons, and let them know that you will give them another balloon to take home at the end so that they can explain this illustration to their parents and others. This way the balloons will not be a distraction.

WRAP IT UP

GOD WANTS TO LIVE IN US

How are the air and the balloon similar to God and us?

God is everywhere. He is around all people all over the world—even those who do not believe in him. He loves each person, and he wants to change each one's life for the better. He gives us the opportunity to invite him into our lives—to be our Savior and our leader. When we do that, he fills us with his Holy Spirit. He changes the shape of our life for the better.

Read Revelation 3:20:

"Look! I stand at the door and knock. If you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in, and we will share a meal together as friends."

In this verse Jesus is talking. He wants to come into our lives, but just like with the air we have to make the choice to allow him in.

Explain to the children how they can respond personally to Jesus' invitation.

We can respond to Jesus' invitation by believing in Him; that he died on the cross to take the punishment for our sins, and then rose again from the dead.

Pray with the students and dismiss them into small groups.

Games



Play large-group games.
(25 minutes)

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Inflated balloons, 1 per child
- Paper plates, 1 per child
- 40 sheets of newspaper
- 4 rolls of masking tape
- 8 garbage bags
- Paper, 1 sheet per child

LARGE-GROUP GAME: BALLOON BUSTER

Materials: One inflated balloon and one paper plate per student

Object of game: To be the last one with an unpopped balloon

How to play: Each player receives an inflated balloon and a paper plate.

Choose two students to be the “busters.” The busters do not receive a balloon or plate.

Their job is to pop any balloons that hit the floor. Everyone else will try to keep his balloon in the air using only the paper plate. If a balloon hits the floor, a player may put it back in the air with the plate as long as a buster doesn’t grab and pop it first. Any student whose balloon gets popped now becomes another buster.

LARGE-GROUP GAME: KING AND QUEEN OF GARBAGE

Materials: 40 sheets of newspaper and four rolls of masking tape (or dodge balls), eight garbage bags

Object of game: To be the first team to have your king and queen reach the middle line of the room.

How to play: Before the game begins, divide the group into just two teams, and give each team 20 sheets of newspaper (or any thin paper available) and two rolls of masking tape. They need to crumple up the newspaper and tape it to make a ball (If the materials aren’t available, just use dodgeballs). Each team must stay on its designated side of the room (like in dodgeball). Each team must choose one king and one queen. The king and queen stand at the back wall on one of the garbage bags. The queen has her own bag, and the king has his own bag. The object of the game is for the king and queen to make it to the middle line. In order to move forward, the other players on the team must put one of the extra garbage bags down in front of the king and queen. The king and queen must walk only on the garbage bags and may not touch the floor or the bags (except with the bottoms of their feet, of course) as they make their way to the middle line. The other students on the team are warriors who must defend their king and queen by deflecting any “garbage” (the wads of newspaper) that is thrown at them. At the same time, they are trying to hit the opposing team’s king and queen with “garbage.” If a king or queen is hit, then he or she chooses a replacement, but the replacement king or queen must start over at the back wall.

LARGE-GROUP GAME: LEAPFROG LILY PAD

Materials: One sheet of paper per student

Object of game: To be the last person on a lily pad

How to play: Spread pieces of newspaper around the room. (Put out one piece less than the number of players.) Tell the students that these newspapers represent lily pads. The students are all frogs. When the game's leader says, "Swim," all the frogs will have to walk around the room but may not touch the lily pads. When the game's leader says, "Leap frog lily pad," all the frogs need to find a lily pad (one frog per pad). Any frog that cannot find a lily pad is out and must return to his or her team line. After each round, the game's leader should pick up one or two of the lily pads so that the frogs will be eliminated one or two at a time. The last frog to be eliminated is the winner, and his or her team will receive points for this game.



I Wonder...

LESSON 2: PRIMARY SMALL GROUP

Where is God and why doesn't he fix the world's problems?

MAIN IDEA

Even though we can't see him, God is everywhere. When we trust Jesus as our Savior, God comes to live inside us by his Holy Spirit. Because God loves us, he allows us to make choices about whether to follow him or not. Because we often choose poorly, there are many problems in the world.

BIBLE PASSAGES

- Romans 8:38-39
- Psalm 139:7
- John 14:6-7
- John 16:33

BIBLE VERSE

The heavens proclaim the glory of God. The skies display his craftsmanship. Day after day they continue to speak; night after night they make him known.

Psalm 19:1-2, NLT



Prepare your heart to teach.
Plan for the lesson.



Connect with the kids, and help them feel heard and cared for. (15 minutes)



Facilitate activity and study to help kids know and love Jesus. (20 - 25 minutes)



Lead kids to live out the mission of the Gospel. (5 - 10 minutes)

Prepare



Prepare your heart to teach.
Plan for the lesson.

QUESTIONS:

- How can you be praying for the students this week?
- Are there any specific students or requests you can pray for?
- Are there any adaptations that you can make to the lesson this week to better serve the kids in your small group or make your small group more effective?

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Television remote control
- Printout 1, 1 per small group
- Printout 2, 1 per small group
- Bible Verse Cards, 1 per child

Connect



Connect with the kids,
and show them that
they are heard and cared for.
(15 minutes)

Small Group

ICEBREAKER

Distribute name tags and snacks. Choose one of the following icebreaker activities to do together while children eat their snack:

- Option 1: Ask the children to share their highs and lows (the best and worst things that happened to them either today or from the past week).
- Option 2: Ask the children to take turns sharing how they're feeling today using the "How Are You Feeling?" chart (from the CKC Games Bag).

PRAY TOGETHER

Collect prayer requests from the students. The leader or a student can pray for the entire group, or a leader can pair up students and invite them to pray for one another.

GAME: CONSEQUENCE MATCH

Material: Printout 2

Cut out the printout, and allow kids to match up problems and consequences.

Ask, **What are some of the problems you see in the world? How about in your school? In your family?**

Have children match up bad behavior and the possible consequences.

- Hitting someone else
- Stealing
- Name calling
- Bullying
- Littering
- Leaving trash (not taking it out of the house)
- Taking toys out but never putting them away
- Lying
- Never brushing your teeth
- Cheating when playing games
- Disrespecting others
- Not obeying teachers

Say something like this, **So many problems and bad things happen every day all around us. If God is everywhere, and if he is as powerful as we talked about last week, then why do you think he doesn't just fix all these problems?** Allow students to answer.

Let them know that this is a common question many people ask. **It's an important question to know the answer to. That is why we will be discussing it today.**

Heart



Facilitate activity and study to help kids know and love Jesus.
(20 – 25 minutes)

Small Group Session 2

LIFE APPLICATION

(Optional) Review the large-group lesson, and share how you personally came to know Jesus and how he has changed (and is changing) your life.

OBJECT LESSON A TELEVISION REMOTE CONTROL

Material: TV remote

Show the students a TV remote control, and ask them what it is and what it does.

Say, **The person who is holding this remote control is the person who controls what channel the TV is on, how loud it is, and much more, right? Sometimes the person holding this remote control might choose not to use it. Why do you think they might do that?** (They are letting another person in the room watch what they want.)

God does not like all the bad things that happen. They make him very sad and very mad. God has the power to stop them. He is holding the remote control, but because he loves us, he chooses to give us free will. He allows us to choose how we will live our lives.

BAD THINGS HAPPEN BECAUSE OF SIN

Sadly, everyday people choose to live in ways that harm themselves, people around them, and God's creation. When they do this, there are negative (or bad) results. Sin leads to three things: suffering, isolation and nastiness.

Show kids the graphic representation of S-I-N (printout 1) and explain each of these three results from sin.

Say something like, **We often suffer when we choose to do things that are against God's will. God's will is what He wants and desires. Sin separates us from God because he is perfect and sin makes us imperfect. This makes us isolated. Sin also leads to nastiness and mess in our lives because it means we are not following God's plan for us.**

(Optional) Using some balloons from the earlier activity, try to have the kids play volleyball with an un-inflated balloon. They will not be able to do so very easily. Then have them try to play balloon volleyball with a full balloon.

Explain, **As people, we work best when we are functioning as God designed — full of his Holy Spirit. Working against God’s plan is not a good thing and leads to suffering, isolation, and nastiness** (as shown in the graphic).

Say, **God does not push the buttons on the remote control of our lives because he wants us to choose to follow him and choose not to sin—to invite him into our lives because we love him and want to follow him, not because we are forced to. But because God gives us this choice and because many people reject God, there are many problems in the world.**

What would be different in the world if tomorrow everyone chose to live God’s way? (no fighting, no lying, or stealing)

Do you think that people who have accepted Jesus as their Savior still experience problems? (Yes. Everyone is a sinner)

Hands



Lead kids to live out the mission of the Gospel.
(5 – 10 minutes)

Small Group Session 2

HOPE IN A BROKEN WORLD

Show the children John 16:33. Read the verse aloud and explain that Jesus' followers do have trouble just like everyone else, but we will have peace because we know that God is with us and in us.

Read and discuss Romans 8:38–39. Explain how these verses give you, personally, hope and comfort.

Explain, **All of us are sinners, and our sin separates us from God. Jesus came to deliver us from sin and connect us to God. Then he sends us out to bring hope and healing to the broken world. He changes us from the inside out just as the balloon was changed when the air went into it. But he doesn't force us with a remote control. We have to invite him into our lives.**

WRAP IT UP

Ask if any of the students want to invite Jesus to be their Savior, and then pray with them to receive him as their Savior. Ask the students for any additional prayer requests and pray with them. If time permits, review the Bible verse with the students.



I Wonder...

LESSON 2: INTERMEDIATE SMALL GROUP

Where is God and why doesn't he fix the world's problems?

MAIN IDEA

Even though we can't see him, God is everywhere. When we trust Jesus as our Savior, God comes to live inside us by his Holy Spirit. Because God loves us, he allows us to make choices about whether to follow him or not. Because we often choose poorly, there are many problems in the world.

BIBLE PASSAGES

- Romans 8:38-39
- Psalm 139:7
- John 14:6-7
- John 16:33

BIBLE VERSE

The heavens proclaim the glory of God. The skies display his craftsmanship. Day after day they continue to speak; night after night they make him known.

Psalm 19:1-2, NLT



Prepare your heart to teach.
Plan for the lesson.



Connect with the kids, and help them feel heard and cared for. (15 minutes)



Facilitate activity and study to help kids know and love Jesus. (20 - 25 minutes)



Lead kids to live out the mission of the Gospel. (5 - 10 minutes)

Prepare



Prepare your heart to teach.
Plan for the lesson.

QUESTIONS:

- How can you be praying for the students this week?
- Are there any specific students or requests you can pray for?
- Are there any adaptations that you can make to the lesson this week to better serve the kids in your small group or make your small group more effective?

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Television remote control
- Printout 1, 1 per small group
- Sheets of paper, 1 per child
- Pens or pencils, 1 per child
- Box of toothpicks, 1 per small group
- Bag of marshmallows, 1 per small group
- Bible Verse Cards, one per child

Connect



Connect with the kids, and help them feel heard and cared for.
(15 minutes)

Small Group Session 1

ICEBREAKER

Distribute name tags and snacks. Choose one of the following icebreaker activities to do together while children eat their snack:

- Option 1: Ask the children to share their highs and lows (the best and worst things that happened to them either today or from the past week).
- Option 2: Ask the children to take turns sharing how they're feeling today using the "How Are You Feeling?" chart (from the CKC Games Bag).

PRAY TOGETHER

Collect prayer requests from the students. The leader or a student can pray for the entire group, or a leader can pair up students and invite them to pray for one another.

WHY DOESN'T GOD FIX THE WORLD'S PROBLEMS?

Ask, **What are some of the problems you see in the world? How about in your school? In your family?**

Pick one or two Minute to Win It games. Offer tickets or another prize as incentive to play, but instead of giving a ticket or prize to the winner, give prizes to anyone other than the winner.

After playing each game and giving out the prizes, follow up your games with some questions.

- How did you feel when you won the game?
- How did it make you feel when you won but didn't get the prize?
- Why are there times when you do what is right and follow the rules but don't get rewarded?
- Or have you ever experienced a time when someone wronged you (maybe hit you or stole something from you), but they were not punished for it?

MINUTE TO WIN IT GAMES

State of Fun—Have players write down as many state capitals as they can before the timer goes off.

Good Sports—Pick a sports league (i.e., the NFL) and have players or teams write down as many cities and/or teams as they can (i.e., the Atlanta Falcons). Whoever gets the most in one minute wins.

Tower of Terror—See which player can build the tallest marshmallow tower in the group in one minute. Tower can only be built using toothpicks and marshmallows.

Toothpick Words—Give each player a large pile of toothpicks, and instruct them to spell out three-letter words without breaking or bending any of the toothpicks. Whoever has the most words when the timer goes off wins.

There are so many problems and bad things that happen every day all around us. If God is everywhere, and if he is as powerful as we talked about last week, then why do you think he doesn't just fix all these problems?

Allow students to answer. Let them know that this is a common question many people ask.

Say, **It's an important question to know the answer to. That is why we will be discussing it today.**

Heart



Facilitate activity and study to help kids know and love Jesus.
(20 – 25 minutes)

Small Group Session 2

LIFE APPLICATION

(Optional) Review the large-group lesson, and share how you personally came to know Jesus and how he has changed (and is changing) your life.

OBJECT LESSON: A TELEVISION REMOTE CONTROL

Show the students a TV remote control, and ask them what it is and what it does.

Say, **The person who is holding this remote control is the person who controls what channel the TV is on, how loud it is, and much more, right? Sometimes the person holding this remote control might choose not to use it. Why do you think they might do that?** (They are letting another person in the room watch what they want.)

God does not like all the bad things that happen. They make him very sad and very mad. God has the power to stop them. He is holding the remote control, but because he loves us he chooses to give us free will. He allows us to choose how we will live our lives.

BAD THINGS HAPPEN BECAUSE OF SIN:

Sadly, everyday people choose to live in ways that harm themselves, people around them, and God's creation. When they do this, God allows there to be consequences for their actions. Sin leads to three things: suffering, isolation and nastiness.

Show kids the graphic representation of S-I-N (printout 1) and explain each of these three results from sin.

Say something like: **We often suffer when we choose to do things that are against God's will. Sin separates us from God because he is perfect and sin makes us imperfect. This makes us isolated. Sin also leads to nastiness and mess in our lives because it means we are not following God's plan for us.**

(Optional) Using some balloons from the earlier activity, try to have the kids play volleyball with an un-inflated balloon. They will not be able to do so very easily. Then have them try to play balloon volleyball with a full balloon.

Explain, **As people, we work best when we are functioning as God designed — full of his Holy Spirit. Working against God's plan does not work well and leads to suffering, isolation, and nastiness** (as shown in the graphic).

Say, God does not push the buttons on the remote control of our lives because he wants us to choose to follow him and choose not to sin—to invite him into our lives because we love him and want to follow him, not because we are forced to. But because God gives us this choice and because many people reject God, there are many problems in the world.

- **What would be different in the world if tomorrow everyone chose to live God's way?**
- **Do you think that people who have accepted Jesus as their Savior still experience problems?**

Hands



Lead kids to live out the mission of the Gospel.
(5 – 10 minutes)

Small Group Session 2

WRAP IT UP: HOPE IN A BROKEN WORLD

Show the children John 16:33. Read the verse aloud, and explain that Jesus' followers do have trouble just like everyone else, but we can have peace because we know that God is with us and in us.

Read and discuss Romans 8:38–39. Explain how these verses give you, personally, hope and comfort.

(optional) Consider having students look up and read the passages in small group. This may take some time teaching students how to find books, chapters, and verses.

Explain, **All of us are sinners, and our sin separates us from God. Jesus came to deliver us from sin and connect us to God. Then he sends us out to bring hope and healing to the broken world. He changes us from the inside out just as the balloon was changed when the air went into it. But he doesn't force us with a remote control. We have to invite him into our lives.**

RESPONSE & REFLECTION

Ask if any of the students want to invite Jesus to be their Savior, and then pray with them to receive him as their Savior.

Ask the students for any additional prayer requests and pray with them. If time permits, review the Bible verse with the students.

Bible Verse Cards

BIBLE VERSE:

The heavens proclaim the glory of God. The skies display his craftsmanship. Day after day they continue to speak; night after night they make him known.

Psalm 19:1-2, NLT

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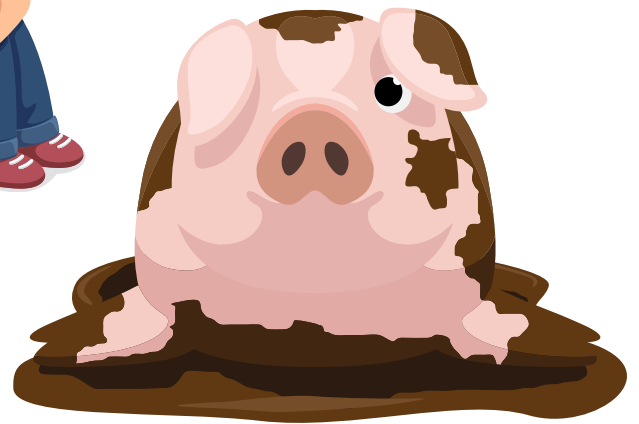
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Printout 1

SIN = **S**uffering + **I**solation + **N**astiness



Printout 2A

Hitting
someone else

Someone
hitting you back

Stealing

Going
to jail

Name
calling

Someone calling
you a name

Bullying

Going to
the principal

Littering

Destroying
nature

Leaving trash
(never taking it out)

Everything
stinks

Printout 2B

Taking toys out but
never putting them away

Not able to
find anything

Lying

No one
believes you

Not obeying
teachers

A leader calls home
about your actions

Never brushing
your teeth

Losing
teeth

Cheating when
playing games

No one
trusts you

Disrespecting
others

Others not
respecting you