

BSI

Bible Scene Investigations

Choose Wisely, Seek the Lord, Investigate His Word

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BIBLE SCENE INVESTIGATIONS

PROGRAM OVERVIEW:

BSI: Bible Scene Investigations is an interactive hour of Bible study where the students get to act the part of crime scene investigators looking into “crimes” based on passages of the Bible. Students will be broken into small detective units, each with an adult leader to act as their Lead Detective. Each session will follow the same outline:

Welcome by the Chief of Detectives (Group Leader).

Game: A team exercise that will break the ice, and tie into the day’s lesson.

Intro: A brief introduction to each day’s “case”, introducing the video-taped testimony. (This may be given by the Chief, or by the Lead Detective for each investigative team.)

Witness Testimony: A video (or live) interrogation of a witness or suspect of the alleged crime, giving the first set of clues.

Final Instruction: A final word from the Chief before the investigation begins.

Crime Scene Investigation: Detectives will visit a crime scene to discover more clues.

Analyzing the Evidence: Each team’s chief detective will facilitate as the detectives put the clues together from the crime scene and testimony to discover who committed the crime and why, with why being the theme and key lesson for the day. (Honesty, Pride, Rebellion, Peer Pressure, Standing Up for Your Faith, and Lukewarm Faith.)

Choosing Wisely: Group discussion with questions will explore the choices made by the guilty, and how we face similar choices in our lives today.

Seeking the Lord: Through questions and discussion, detectives will try to uncover how seeking God could affect their choices and the outcomes.

Investigating His Word: A look at a parallel story from the Bible, where someone made the right choice in a similar situation. Questions and discussion on how we can use God’s word to make better choices.

Prayer.

BIBLE SCENE INVESTIGATIONS

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

Witness Testimony

Scripts have been provided for the police interrogations that are a part of each lesson. These can be performed live on stage or filmed on video. Righteous Insanity also has posted each one of these videos online. You can access them for free at:

<http://www.righteousinsanity.com/kidscurriculum/>

Detective Kits

Each student will need the following materials for their detective kit:

Required:

Small mirror

Brush and powder (for cleaning for clues, dusting for prints)

Flashlight

Magnifying glass

A pencil and notepad for writing down clues

Optional:

Sunglasses

I.D. badge

Latex gloves

The Case of the Stolen Birthright

WELCOME

CHIEF: Good morning, detectives. Welcome to the BSI Division: Bible Scene Investigations. Here at BSI, you will encounter some of the biggest crime cases in history. Using your detective kit, crime scene clues, and eyewitness interviews, it will be your job to discover who committed these crimes, and more importantly: why!

Before we embark on our first case, we need to do a little exercise. Questions are a very important part of our job, and in this exercise, you will use questions to uncover a great mystery: Who are YOU?

GAME: WHO ARE YOU?

Have name tags for every member of the group. On each name tag, write the name of a celebrity, musician, TV or movie character, or famous historical figure that the students should know. Without letting the kids see the name tags, place one on every person's back.

Once everyone has a name tag, the students should move about. They must ask one question of each person in the group about who they are. After everyone's had a chance to ask and answer a question from everyone, bring the group back together and see who can identify the name on their back.

CASE INTRO:

CHIEF: This exercise was designed to warm you up for today's case, which involves a mistaken identity. A man of Canaan named Esau was set to inherit the family birthright from his father Isaac. Isaac is very old. His hearing, and his sight are failing, and just yesterday, he sent Esau out to hunt for some game and prepare dinner so Isaac could bless him.

But Esau never got his birthright. Someone posing as Esau took a meal in to Isaac and received the blessing instead.

A few facts you should know: Esau is a very hairy man. Jacob is fair skinned. Isaac told investigators that although the man's voice did not sound like Esau, his arms and face were hairy like his favorite son.

We were unable to detain Jacob for questioning, as he disappeared shortly after the theft took place. However, we did sit down to question his mother Rebekah. Watch closely, for their maybe clues in her testimony!

REBEKAH'S TESTIMONY

The video is a black and white police interrogation video. Rebekah sits in a chair behind a table. The cop is off camera.

COP: State your name, please?

REBEKAH: Rebekah.

COP: And your relation to the victim?

REBEKAH: I'm Esau's mother.

COP: Can you describe to me the events that took place?

REBEKAH: Well, I wasn't there when it happened, but this is what I remember. I was in the kitchen with my dear Jacob - he's the baby - baking cookies when my poor old hubby called Esau in. He asked Esau to go out and hunt him some dinner so that Isaac could give Esau the birthright. Well, Esau went out hunting, and the next thing I knew, he was running out of his father's tent, screaming that Jacob had stolen his birthright!

COP: And Jacob was with you this whole time?

REBEKAH: Well... not the WHOLE time. You see, after Esau went out to hunt, I ran out of chocolate chips. So I gave Jacob a couple dollars and sent him down to the market.

COP: And he brought them back?

REBEKAH: Well... no. Jacob never did come back.

COP: Why not?

REBEKAH: Well, I'm not sure.

COP: Perhaps he's hiding from his brother?

REBEKAH: I don't know why. They haven't played hide and seek in years.

COP: What about Esau's claim, that Jacob stole his birthright?

REBEKAH: Well that's just ridiculous. My Jacob is perfect. He'd never do anything like that.

COP: You're not just saying that because he's your favorite?

REBEKAH: A mother does not have favorites. But Esau was their Dad's favorite, so if I gave a little extra attention to Jacob, he needed it.

COP: That's interesting, because Esau accused you of helping him.

REBEKAH: Never! I never would... and Jacob would never steal his birthright... although technically, Esau had already bargained away his birthright so it really wasn't his to begin with.

COP: When did this happen?

REBEKAH: A few years ago. Esau came in, tromping his dirty feet on my carpet, and asked Jacob for a bowl of stew. Jacob makes wonderful stew, and he agreed to feed Esau in exchange for his birthright.

COP: Doesn't seem like a fair trade.

REBEKAH: A deal's a deal! He traded it away.

COP: And you helped your son steal it when the time came.

REBEKAH: No!

COP: You've all but admitted he was your favorite.

REBEKAH: A mother does not have favorites. But since you mentioned it, when the children were born, God himself indicated he had a favorite. He told me there were two nations in my womb, and that the older would serve the younger.

COP: And you believe that gave Jacob the right to steal from his brother?

REBEKAH: Jacob couldn't have stolen his birthright. For one very good reason.

COP: And what's that?

REBEKAH: Esau's a hairy, hairy man. I mean gross hairy. Not just his face and arms, but his nose hairs - ick. But Jacob! Jacob's not hairy at all. Isaac may be mostly blind, but he would have known, just by feeling his son's face it was Jacob. So how could my perfect boy possibly steal that birthright?

FINAL INSTRUCTIONS

CHIEF: Remember, detectives, this is the testimony of one person, who may or may not have been involved with this crime. Your job is to examine the clues on the crime scene and weigh the evidence against her testimony. Is she guilty? Is Jacob? We want to know who, and why this crime occurred!

It is now time to visit the crime scene. Two reminders before we go. One, put on your gloves. We don't want to ruin any evidence by covering fingerprints of the guilty with our own. And two, bring your notepads. Write down everything. A clue could be anywhere.

CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATION

The scene is the campsite where Isaac, Rebekah, and sons were camped when the theft take place. Be as elaborate or simple as you want, but the scene must include:

- A fake red beard (you may also have fuzzy or hair gloves left on the scene)
- An empty packet of goat meat (again, be as creative or simple as time and budget allows)
- A handwritten note from Rebekah to Jacob, giving him directions to Laban's home, written backwards. (Detectives will use their mirror to read the note during analysis.) A suggested note may read:

My dear son,

When your brother learns what you've done, he will be very angry. Go to the land of my family to the house of Laban, and ask him to give you a place to live and work. If it is safe for you to return, I will write and let you know.

I love you,
Mom

ANALYZING THE EVIDENCE:

Allow the detectives a moment to read Rebekah's note.

CHIEF: Well, detectives, we've heard a mother plead her son's innocence. But we're also seen some surprising evidence: a fake beard, evidence of a second meal prepared for Isaac, and that cryptic note from Rebekah to Jacob. Based on this evidence:

1. Who is responsible for stealing Esau's birthright?
2. How did he/she/they manage to pull off the crime?
3. Most importantly, why did they do it?

CHOOSING WISELY

1. God told Rebekah that two nations would come from her children, and that the older would serve the younger. But does God's promise justify Jacob and Rebekah's choice to be dishonest?
2. Imagine if you were playing baseball or softball, and it was the championship game. You're running for home just as the ball is thrown to the catcher. You slide, kicking up so much dust the umpire can't see the catcher tag you out, costing you the game. The catcher says he tagged you out, but the umpire wants you to tell the truth. With the game on the line, what would you do?
3. Can you think of a time you were in a situation where being dishonest would have benefited you? What choice did you make, and how tough was it or would it have been to make the right choice?
4. It is easier to tell the truth when you know you'll get caught if you lie. But what if you were in a situation when you knew there was no way you'd get caught? How big of a lie would you tell?

SEEKING THE LORD

1. God often puts us in situations that test us. Do you believe this was a test for Rebekah and Jacob? How do you think they fared?
2. If it was God's will for Jacob to have the birthright already, do you think that God could have made another way to pass the birthright to Jacob?
3. Before Jacob was born, his grandfather Abraham lied to the Pharaoh of Egypt about his wife Sarah. Jacob's father Isaac also once lied about his wife Rebekah. When Jacob wanted to marry Laban's daughter Rachel, Laban tricked him into marrying both his daughters. Rachel stole her father's property when they returned to Jacob's family, and Jacob's sons sold their brother as a slave and lied about it. Is this merely coincidence, or do you believe that families can pass down a legacy of sin?
4. How can we be the one to put an end to the cycle in our families?

INVESTIGATING GOD'S WORD

1. Let's look at another young man in the Bible named David. David was promised he would be king of Israel. (1 Samuel 16:1-13.) Problem was, Saul was king, and his son Jonathan was the rightful heir. Does anyone remember how David responded to this promise?

David was a man after God's own heart. Even when given the opportunity, he refused to take matters into his own hands and seize the throne. (1 Samuel 24:1-7.) And God rewarded him by placing him on the throne when the time was right.

2. How does David's example compare with Jacob?
3. Which choice should we model when faced with a tough decision?

Read Proverbs 12:22. Discuss how this can be applied to our lives, no matter the cost.

CLOSE WITH PRAYER

The Case of the Missing Son

WELCOME

CHIEF: Welcome back to the detective bureau, team. You all did excellent work yesterday cracking the Esau case, and I know you'll do the same with today's assignment. Before we go on to today's case, I want us to do another exercise. Everyone stand up in a circle.

GAME: ONE TEAM, ONE CHAIR

The Chief will have his team stand in a circle. Everyone moves in until they are shoulder to shoulder. Everyone then turns to the right and continues to move in slowly until they are about an inch away from the person in front of them. The Chief will then count to 3 slowly, and on 3, the team will sit down. If done right, everyone should be sitting on the lap of the person behind them, with no one sticking out or falling over.

CHIEF: Detectives, you see what we can do together. If one person was out of place, we would have fallen in a heap. We solved yesterday's case because we worked as a team. Every member saw the evidence and heard the testimony from their own point of view, and each person brought their own insight to our investigation. More importantly, no one took sides. We looked at the facts objectively, and we didn't become divided by favoritism.

A family works in much the same way. But when a family becomes divided by favoritism, pride, or jealousy, the results can be devastating, as you'll see in today's case.

CASE INTRO

CHIEF: Today we're investigating a missing person's case. One of the country's wealthiest shepherds has lost a son. Joseph, the eleventh of twelve sons, was last seen this morning when his father sent him out into the field to check on his older brothers. A few hours later, the brothers showed up at the house with a coat of many colors that belonged to Joseph, tattered and torn and drenched in blood. According to the brothers, a wild animal devoured Joseph, leaving nothing but his coat behind.

This seemed like an open and shut case, but some servants of Jacob tipped us off that there may be more than meets the eye. We have preserved the crime scene for your inspection, but before we get to it, we have the video-taped testimony of Gad, one of Joseph's sons who found the bloody coat. Watch closely, detectives. For things are not always what they seem!

GAD'S TESTIMONY

COP: And the camera's rolling.

GAD: Are you taping this?

COP: Yes we are.

GAD: Why are you taping this?

COP: We tape all our interviews so the detective bureau can review them later.

GAD: Why do you have to tape it? Can't you just take notes and tell them what I said?

COP: Just state your name and occupation for the camera.

GAD: Gad. I'm a shepherd.

COP: Who do you work for?

GAD: My father. My brothers and I all watch the sheep. Except Benjamin and poor Joseph, may he rest in peace.

COP: You know we're investigating the alleged death of Joseph, don't you?

GAD: Of course I know that! I know that.

COP: You want to tell us what happened?

GAD: Why do you need me to tell you?

COP: We just want your version of events.

GAD: My version? There's only one version. The truth. A wild animal jumped out of the bush, ate Joseph, and all he left was his blood-soaked coat. It's all very simple and believable.

COP: Why do you say that?

GAD: Say what?

COP: You said it was simple and believable.

GAD: Well... it is, isn't it? I mean wild animals attack all the time.

COP: What sort of wild animal was it?

GAD: What sort of animal? It was... wild. Scary. Big fangs in the front.

COP: A wolf?

GAD: Yeah! That's it. A big wolf with big, pointy teeth.

COP: According to your brother Reuben, it was a bear.

GAD: Well, they're all in the same family, right? I mean I thought it was a wolf, but to be honest, it was kind of big for a wolf.

COP: And this wolf or bear ate everything except the coat?

GAD: That's right.

COP: He ate all his other clothes?

GAD: Yes he did!

COP: Then I have to ask, why wouldn't he have eaten the coat too?

GAD: I don't know why. All I know is he came out of the brush, ate Joseph, and all we found was his coat. It's all very simple and believable!

COP: Why are you so nervous?

GAD: I'm not nervous! Why are you nervous?

COP: I'm not nervous.

GAD: Why do you keep asking so many questions?

COP: That's my job.

GAD: Why do you have to ask me all the questions? Ask someone else.

COP: We asked all your brothers.

GAD: Well ask them again. They'll tell you. He was eaten by a wild animal. All he left was his coat. It's all very simple and believable. Don't you believe it?

COP: I believe someone did something to him.

GAD: A wild animal?

COP: No, someone jealous of Joseph.

GAD: Jealous? Don't be ridiculous. I'm not jealous. No one's jealous of Joseph.

COP: Are you sure?

GAD: Why would we be jealous? Because Dad bought him a coat of many colors and not us. Because he gets the cushy office job and not us? Or because he keeps bragging about his dreams where he's a big star or a big sheaf of wheat and we're all little stars and little sheaves of wheat and we keep bowing down to him? Like we'd ever bow down to Daddy's little favorite with his pretty coat of many colors! He got what he deserved!

COP: So you did do something to him!

GAD: Of course! Not! It was the wild animal. He ate Joseph, and all he left was his coat. It's all very simple and believable! Why don't you believe me?

FINAL INSTRUCTIONS

CHIEF: We questioned ten of the brothers, and while they all told the same story about Joseph being eaten by a wild animal, they all had inconsistencies within their story. What's more, all of them seemed to have a strong dis-like for their missing brother. If there was foul play involved, the brothers might be the reason.

Search the crime scene carefully, detectives. Leave no stone unturned. Remember to wear your gloves, and to take notes. We're all counting on you!

CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATION

The crime scene should ideally be in an open field. Some sheep's wool, feed, and other evidence of sheep might be scattered about. The scene must include:

- A tattered, bloody coat of many colors.
- A note in the pocket of the coat: "To my favorite son with love, Dad."
- A drawing of a large star labeled "Me" with thirteen smaller stars (each named for the brothers, plus Mom and Dad) bowing to the big star.
- If possible, a ditch or hole where Joseph might have been thrown.
- A receipt for the sale of Joseph, written backwards. (The detectives will read this note with their mirror.) The receipt can be very simple:

1 Hebrew Slave
Purchased from: Reuben and Brothers
100 Ishmaelite Dollars
Thank you for your business

ANALYZING THE EVIDENCE

Allow the detectives to take some time in decoding the receipt and examining the clues.

CHIEF: Well, detectives, you've heard the testimony of Joseph's brother. You've also seen the bloody coat, and the coded message we found in the pasture.

1. Does the evidence we found in the sheep's pasture to support or dispute Gad's story?
2. If Joseph was not eaten by a wild animal, what happened to him?
3. Why did the brothers act so jealous? What caused them to be so upset with their brother?
4. The brothers are guilty of selling Joseph into slavery, but does Joseph deserve part of the blame? What about Jacob?

CHOOSING WISELY

1. Joseph had a lot to make him proud. He had his dreams, and he had the love of his father. None of the other brothers got special gifts like the coat of many colors. But did Joseph make the best choices in how he accepted these dreams and gifts?
2. When you do well in sports or academics, it's not a bad thing to be proud of what you've accomplished, but when do you cross the line from good pride to bad?
3. Have you ever been in the brothers' position? Have you ever known someone who seems to have all the luck?
4. How does it make you feel when that person gets so much and you get nothing, especially when that person is prideful?

5. No one likes to hear a braggart, and people who act pridefully tend to turn those closest to them against them. So why do we fall into the sin of pride so easily?

SEEKING THE LORD

1. It's clear from the rest of Joseph's story that his dreams were prophecies. Joseph's brothers did bow before him when he was second in command of Egypt and they came begging for food. But did Joseph behave in a way that honored God?

2. How could Joseph have acted differently in response to his dreams?

3. We talked before about Jacob, how he deceived his father to steal his brother's birthright, and how his mother and father played favorites. Do you think Jacob could have kept all of his sons from sin if he had learned from the mistakes he and his parents made?

4. Think about your own family. Are there times you feel your siblings are more favored than you?

5. How can you respond in a way that would bring peace to your house?

INVESTIGATING THE WORD

Let's take another look at David and his best friend Jonathan. David was promised the throne of Israel, even though Saul was king and Jonathan was his rightful heir. Saul knew this and was jealous of David, but Jonathan was David's best friend, and even though he knew David would be king, Jonathan did everything he could to protect David. (1 Samuel 19:1-7; 1 Samuel 20).

1. David knew the throne would one day be his. But how did David behave given this knowledge? Was he led by pride, or something else?

2. If anyone had a right to jealousy, it was Jonathan. After all, a mere shepherd would sit on the throne he was born to inherit. So why didn't Jonathan act jealous toward David?

3. Read Philippians 2:3. What does this verse say to Jacob? The brothers? David and Jonathan? And us?

CLOSE WITH PRAYER

The Case of the Crooked Priests

WELCOME

CHIEF: Welcome back, detectives. I want you all to know that everyone here on the force is proud of the work you've done. You've cracked two tough cases so far. Not only did you identify the culprit in each scenario, you were able to get right to the heart of the crime and identify motives.

We have our biggest case yet ahead today, but before we get to the detective work, the bureau has asked me to administer a test. This will be a test of your teamwork and your willingness to do what you're told. I'm going to give one copy of the test, and as a group, you will have five minutes to complete all the tasks listed. Good luck!

GAME: DETECTIVE EXAM

The "test" is actually a trick game. If the kids follow instructions exactly, they should read all the instructions before doing anything. In doing so they will find, in number 10, that they are to ignore steps 2-9, write your name on the paper, and sit quietly. (Test is on the following page.)

After the students complete the test, point out their success or failure. Ask them why they made the decision to go ahead and do the steps in order if they failed. Did anyone object? Did anyone hold back? Has anyone seen this kind of test before?

CASE INTRO

CHIEF: The test you've all just been given was an important preparation for today's case. Israel has suffered a great tragedy. The high priest Eli and his two sons are dead, and the Ark of the Covenant is missing. The sons of Eli, Hophni and Phineas, left with the army of Israel to fight the Philistines, carrying the Ark of the Covenant with them. In the past the Ark has always guaranteed our victory. But this time, Hophni and Phineas were killed, and the Philistines captured the Ark. A messenger carried the news of the young priests' deaths to their father, High Priest, who fell and broke his neck after receiving the news.

Eli's death as natural causes, and Hophni and Phineas died in battle. So why are we investigating this in the detective bureau? Because we believe Hophni and Phineas may have been responsible for everything. We've interviewed a young woman who knew Phineas, and she had some interesting information about their life, which may give us some clues as to their deaths.

DETECTIVE'S EXAM

1. Before you begin, read all the directions. Then go back and do each item in order as numbered.
2. Write all the names of your group members on the back of this page.
3. Have each person remove one shoe and stack them on the table.
4. Any people who took off their left shoes must also take off their right shoe and add it to the pile.
5. Everyone who still has one shoe must run a lap around your table.
6. As a group, sing a TV show theme song as loud as you can.
7. Form a circle around your table and do the wave, twice!
8. Have everyone put their right shoe on their right hand.
9. With your right shoes over your heart, say the Pledge of Allegiance.
10. Ignore steps 2-9. Instead, write the name of your chief detective at the top of this page, sit down quietly as a group, and await further orders.

LITA'S TESTIMONY

COP: Will you please state your name and occupation for the record?

LITA: I'm Lita, and I run a beauty salon. What's all this about?

COP: We understand you used to date one of the high priests, a man named Phineas?

LITA: Yeah, I dated the creep. What, is he in some kind of trouble?

COP: No, ma'am. He's dead.

Pause.

LITA: I'm sorry. Am I supposed to be upset? Should I cry? Is that what the cameras are for?

COP: No, ma'am. We just wanted to ask you a few questions about the deceased.

LITA: He was a liar, a cheat, and a bad boyfriend. I didn't kill him.

COP: We know that. Phineas and his brother Hophni died in battle, carrying the Ark of the Covenant, which was stolen.

LITA: You mean that idiot lost the Ark? I knew he was a moron, but wow. Didn't see that coming.

COP: You don't think much of the priest, do you?

LITA: No I do not! He was a bad priest and a bad person.

COP: How so?

LITA: Look, when people go to the temple, they're supposed to sacrifice first, then give anything remaining to the priests, right?

COP: Right?

LITA: Not Phineas and his brother. You show up at the gate of the temple, and they're waiting with their forks. Either you give them what they want, or they'll have you beat up.

COP: Really?

LITA: He beat up my Dad once while we were still dating!

COP: Really?

LITA: Plus he never opened doors, never brought me flowers, and never EVER paid for my dinner. Usually he expected me to pick up the check!

COP: Seems like if it was that bad, someone would have said something.

LITA: Oh, their Dad tried. Sort of. Every time I'd go over for dinner, he'd remind them about the law, and how they should behave as God's priests. But did they listen? Nooooo! Eli had this little 9 year old kid Samuel working for him. He listened. Phineas and Hophni didn't. They got what they deserved, and good riddance.

COP: You really think they got what they deserved?

LITA: I don't know. Look, every time God has gotten really upset, he's taken people out. There was the flood, the first born in Egypt. Forty years in the wilderness? God doesn't like rebels. And if someone told me God had decided to wipe out the sons of Eli... I'd have said it's about time.

FINAL INSTRUCTIONS

CHIEF: Was this a random event that took place in battle? Or were Hophni, Phineas, and Eli - and all of Israel - under God's judgment? If this is the case, Israel needs to know so we can repent and be reconciled to God.

Detectives, we want you to examine the scene for yourselves, and see what you can learn about these young men. Were they misunderstood? Or were they bad boys doomed to punishment by God? And if they were to blame, why?

Remember to take notes, and as always, wear your gloves. We don't want our fingerprints getting in the way of learning a secret or two about these young men.

CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATION

The scene is a tent where Hophni and Phineas camped out before battle. Inside and around the tent, the detectives will find:

- Two Bibles, gifts from their father, never opened. (The detectives will dust the Bibles for prints to see the books were never read; it's important the Bibles be print-free.)
- Stolen money.
- Stolen food.

ANALYZING THE EVIDENCE

Give the detectives time to compare notes, and check the Bible for prints. Lead them to the conclusion that the Bibles were never read, then proceed with the analysis.

CHIEF: It would appear that the lack of prints on Hophni and Phineas's books means the boys had never actually read the scripture.

1. What can we conclude from this?
2. Are Hophni and Phineas guilty? Of what crime?
3. The law of Israel states that people making a sacrifice are to burn up the sacrifice first. Anything left over would go to the priests. Why would God be upset with Hophni and Phineas for taking their portion first?
4. The young priest Samuel prophesied that Eli and his sons would lose the priesthood, and that God vowed to wipe out their entire family. How were these young men, raised to obey the law, become such rebels?

CHOOSING WISELY

1. Hophni and Phineas rebelled against God, but also their father. Eli had taught them the laws of God in preparation for the priesthood. Why would they willingly choose to defy God's word for their own selfish gain?
2. Do you think Eli did enough to stop his sons in their rebellion? What more could he have done?
3. God has given us his word to be the ultimate authority in our lives, but he also places people and powers over us to set and enforce rules for life. What authority figures can you think of in your own life?
4. Think of a time when you chose to disobey a rule in your home or school. What was your reason for disobeying? Was it a good reason?

SEEKING THE LORD

1. When God laid out the Ten Commandments, he set down the basic guidelines for the rules we obey in our homes, schools, and country. Why do we need rules and laws? (Discuss how the ten commandments and other laws/rules are made to help us honor God, keep us from harm, and keep us from harming others.)
2. We've all done things we were not supposed to do. Even after being told a hundred times, we still want to do the thing our parents forbid. Why is it so hard sometimes to resist the temptation to rebel?
3. When you were little, before you could talk, your parents might have slapped your hand if you tried to touch the hot stove. You were too young to understand the reason why you couldn't touch the stove, but your parents did so to keep you from an even greater hurt by burning your hand. Rules can sometimes seem unfair and pointless, like not touching the stove. But even the most unfair rule usually has a purpose. Can you think of any examples in your own life?
4. It is our sin nature that leads us to rebel against God. But when we accept Jesus, we commit our lives to following him, not our selfish desires. What steps can we take in our daily lives to keep us focused on Jesus?

INVESTIGATING HIS WORD

Let's look at the young boy who served under Eli, Samuel. Samuel was born to a woman who was barren. (1 Samuel 1.) His mother, Hannah, dedicated it to the Lord's service, but it was Samuel who chose to obey God's laws and keep them. Eli was careful to instruct Samuel to obey God no matter what, and Samuel did as he was told, even when that meant prophesying the end of Eli's family (1 Samuel 3.) For that, he was well-regarded by God and men. (1 Samuel 2:26.)

1. Samuel was instructed in the priesthood by Eli the same as Hophni and Phineas. Why do you think Samuel turned out so different than Hophni and Phineas?
2. God took the priesthood from Eli's family because of Hophni and Phineas' rebellion. God chose Samuel to be the new high priest because of his obedience. Can you think of examples in your church, school, and family where rebellion might cost you something of value?

3. The Bible is the ultimate authority for our lives. The best way to stand up to temptation is to bury God's word in our hearts. How can we internalize God's word and in doing so, keep ourselves from a life of rebellion?

4. Read Hebrews 13:17. What does this verse mean for our lives?

Challenge the detectives to commit this verse to memory as reminder that God wants them to respect all types of authority placed over them.

CLOSE WITH PRAYER

The Case of the Twelve Spies

WELCOME:

CHIEF: Good morning, detectives. Today is our last day working together, and I have to say I am proud of all of you. You've learned that fighting crime is not just about learning "whodunit", but discovering why crimes like these happened in the first place. By discovering the motives that led to the crimes of Jacob, Joseph, and the sons of Eli, we can keep ourselves from committing similar crimes in our lives.

We've got one more big case to crack, but before we do, we have another warm-up exercise that will sharpen our minds for our biggest case yet.

GAME: MODIFIED TUG OF WAR

Place a piece of rope or draw a chalk line on the ground. Line the group up from smallest person to largest. Take the two smallest people and place them on either side of the line. The two detectives will grab hands, and on the count of three, each one tries to pull the other across the line to their side. When one person wins, those two stay on that side of the line, and the next biggest person stands across the line. This time, two people will pull one. The loser or losers will stay on the winning side, and the next person steps up to challenge them.

As the game goes on, the side with more people will dominate. No matter how big the opponent, they will not be able to resist the stronger side. After the game is done, discuss how hard it was for the later contestants to resist the pull of the group. Compare that with how easy it was for the entire group to pull the biggest person across the line.

INTRODUCING THE CASE

CHIEF: Detectives, we've had another big case assigned to us, one that affects the future of Israel. As you know, God's children were rescued from Egypt, and followed Moses to the border of Canaan, the Promised Land. Before entering the land, Moses decided to send a team of spies - one from each of the twelve tribes of Israel - to investigate the land. God had promised that Canaan would be land flowing with milk and honey. But only two of the spies had anything good to say about Canaan! A man named Joshua and another named Caleb told the people the land was ready for the taking. But the other ten spies brought back a much different report: giants! Giants eight feet tall, with long spears and tall shields. Instead of seeing a land of opportunity, they saw an immovable army of giants that would destroy them.

Ladies and gentlemen, Israel is in a state of turmoil. People are scared, and many are accusing Moses of leading them to their deaths. They're even suggesting they were better off as slaves in Egypt!

We questioned each one of the spies, and we have the testimony of one of them to show you. Listen carefully, for your investigation into the Promised Land begins now!

SPY TESTIMONY

COP: Camera's rolling.

TROY: Hi there.

COP: State your name, please.

TROY: I'm Troy. I'm from the tribe of Asher.

COP: We understand you were one of the twelve spies sent into the land of Canaan.

TROY: That's right. Moses selected me himself.

COP: Would you tell me exactly what happened?

TROY: Well, Moses asked each tribe to pick it's four finest. Then Moses came up, took a look, and he went, "Eeny, Meeny, Miney, Moe, Catch-a—"

COP: I meant when you crossed over into Canaan.

TROY: Oh right, right. Well, we snuck across under cover of darkness. Climbed the mountains. Crept in among the underbrush, and had a look. And everywhere - I mean everywhere, there were giants!

COP: Giants?

TROY: Big ones. I mean I thought the pyramids were huge, but these guys - they were as tall as the trees! With big long spears, huge shields, and razor sharp teeth. I took one look and thought, man, I don't want to run into those guys in a dark alley.

COP: Was that all you saw?

TROY: Dude, it was enough. Glen turns to the rest of us and says, "Let's make like a tree and leave!" And we're all like, "Right behind you, pal!"

COP: And yet all this time, Moses has claimed that God promised you a land flowing with milk and honey, with lots of fruit and good crops.

TROY: Well, yeah, but--

COP: Did you see these things?

TROY: Well, I guess so.

COP: Either you did, or you didn't.

TROY: Look, it was kind of hard to see because of the giants. They're really tall, and you can't see around them too well.

COP: But you did see the crops and the bountiful harvest.

TROY: Well, sure. It was amazing. But there were giants!

COP: We have testimony from all eleven of your fellow spies.

TROY: They told you about the giants too, huh?

COP: Most of them did, yes.

TROY: I told you! They were scary! We would have been better off staying in Egypt than trying to take their land.

COP: That's funny. Because two of your group had a different story. They believed that God would give you that harvest and drive out the giants before you.

TROY: Who said that?

COP: Caleb and Joshua.

TROY: Well... they're wrong! It's ten against two. We agreed, the giants were too big and scary.

COP: Did God reveal this to you?

TROY: It was ten to two in favor of not going back!

COP: But did God say not to go back?

TROY: Look, maybe he did, maybe he didn't. All I know is Glen saw the giants, he showed them to John, who showed them to Hugo, and all of us agreed it's just not safe out there!

FINAL INSTRUCTIONS:

CHIEF: There's only one way to settle this matter. We're going to have to inspect the Promised Land ourselves. Look closely, and see for yourself if this is the future - or the end - of Israel. No gloves today, detectives. This assignment requires you to be in disguise. Everyone get out your sunglasses, and prepare for our most dangerous assignment yet!

CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATION:

Rather than visit a crime scene, the detectives will enter a small corner of the Promised Land. You might have some large spears or shields set up against the trees as evidence of giants, but more importantly, there needs to be evidence that this is a land of plenty. The best way to do this would be to have some actors playing Canaanites who are selling fruits, milk, honey, and other harvest items. Have the detectives interact with the Canaanites, asking questions. The Canaanites will tell them that this is a good land, full of rich harvest.

ANALYZING THE EVIDENCE

1. The spy told us he saw a land full of giants, might and invincible warriors. But what did you see when you entered the Promised Land?
2. It's clear from what we saw that everything God promised the children of Israel was there. It truly is a land of milk and honey. So why did the spies focus only on the negative?

CHOOSING WISELY

1. Only two of the spies had anything good to say about the Promised Land. Who do you think had a harder time telling their story, the two or the ten?
2. Do you think all of the ten spies were fearful when they first saw the promised land, or is it possible they turned against Jacob and Caleb because their friends did so?
3. Imagine if you and a group of your best friends saw a movie. When you came out of the theater, another friend asked how the movie was. You loved the movie, but all of your friends said they hated, hated, HATED it. When it came down to you, how easy would it be to admit you actually liked the movie?

Think about the tug of war game we played. The fewer people who were involved, the easier it was for both sides to win. Yet as more people stacked up on one side, it became harder and harder for the one to resist the many. It's the same with peer pressure in our daily lives. We all want to fit in and belong with friends. But the more you go along, the harder it is to stand your ground when they do something wrong.

4. Think about these situations. Would you walk away or join in with friends if they:
 - Did drugs?
 - Stole candy from a store?
 - Watched a rated R movie?
 - Played a violent video game?
 - Cheated on a test?
 - Called another kid bad names?

SEEKING THE LORD

1. What do you think is more important to Jesus: being popular with people, or obeying his word?
2. If Jesus wants us to obey him, and we know what his rules for our lives are, why is it so hard to stand up to the crowd?
3. Sometimes peer pressure tries to get you to do something bad. Other times, peer pressure may try to keep you from doing something good. Jesus wants us to stand up for him, and share the gospel with others. But how hard is that when you are in a situation with people who may not even go to church?
4. Is it easier to live for God, to speak out, to stand strong when you're with friends, or strangers?

INVESTIGATING HIS WORD

Three young men in the time of Daniel had an incredible story of resisting peer pressure. King Nebuchadnezzar had built a giant idol, and commanded that the people of Babylon, including captive Israel, bow and worship it daily. But Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, three faithful Hebrews, refused to bow to any god other than the Lord. Nebuchadnezzar threw them into a fiery furnace for their refusal to follow the crowd, but God protected them in the fire. In the end, Nebuchadnezzar realized he was in the wrong, not the three boys. (Daniel 3.)

1. How did the faithfulness of the three boys impact the king and the people of Babylon?
2. After the spies made their report, the Israelites rebelled against God. God punished them by making them wander the wilderness for forty years. How might things have turned out differently for Israel had the spies not given in to fear and peer pressure?
3. Read Hebrews 11:1 and 6. What is our best defense against fear and peer pressure?

Every year when it is time to spawn, Pacific salmon swim upstream against the flow of the river. They swim against the current to the place where they were

born where they mate, have their young, and die. The Christian life is a lot like the salmon run. God wants us to be willing to sacrifice ourselves like those salmon to get closer to him. In doing so, we will encounter a lot of resistance, but God will also make you stand out for him

We're going to be leaving camp soon, and you will all go back to your regular lives. You won't be in this safe place with Christian friends and leaders. You'll be back in your ordinary world with the same friends, pressures, and temptations you knew before. When you get there, will you fall back into the flow of life as before? Or will you be the fish that resists the current and stands out for God?

God has promised us to always be with us, and to protect us. Even though we may suffer some here on Earth, he has promised in the end to take care of those who stand for him, no matter what the cost.

CLOSE WITH PRAYER

The Case of the Disloyal Friend

WELCOME

CHIEF: Welcome back, Detectives. We've got a big case on our hands today, and I need all my best team members on the job. You're going to be dealing with a pretty tricky suspect today, and I need to know that you all are ready. By ready, I don't just mean your detective skills. You all have worked well as a team up to this point, but we're dealing with some people who nearly caused a rebellion. I need to know that my detectives are going to be loyal, not only to the force, but to each other. Your leaders have all been given another test for you to take, so before we get into today's case, you'll need to take the test.

GAME: YOU DIRTY RAT

The leader has a set of playing cards that includes a Joker. Hand the cards out to the detectives, making sure one of them gets the Joker. Explain to them that he is looking for the Joker of the group, but that they, as a team, must work together to protect the Joker's identity. Have the detectives share their cards so they know who the Joker is. Tell the detectives that another group leader is going to test them, and see if he can make them give up the Joker. Tell the detectives they must not reveal anything; they have to protect the Joker.

The leaders switch off teams so each is with a new team. The leaders then begin asking questions:

Is the Joker a boy or girl?

Is the Joker tall or short?

Tell the leaders to be creative. Have fun with the kids. If the kids hold out and refuse to answer, offer bribes to the team. Offer a bag of candy to all the rest of the team. Then two bags. Then three bags to the team. Finally, as a last effort, offer three bags of candy to the ONE person who will betray the Joker. If the team succeeds in defending the Joker, they get to split a bag of candy. If not, they get nothing.

Once all the teams are done, the leaders go back to their original groups and discuss what happened, what decisions they made, and why.

CASE INTRO

CHIEF: Detectives, I told you this is a big case, and it might be the biggest one of your careers. Recently, a man came here to Jerusalem with a rather large following. This man was a preacher, who taught about God's love. According to some witnesses he was able to perform miracles, healing the sick, even raising the dead. But there was a great deal of evidence to suggest this man may be leading a rebellion. The man's followers included some rebels, criminals, and

scoundrels. And he recently claimed that he could destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days. Dangerous words indeed.

We arrested the man Jesus in the garden outside town. One of his men took a swing at one of the High Priest's men with a sword. Supposedly he cut the servant's ear off - but the servant said Jesus healed him. After that, all of Jesus' followers fled the scene. Our job is to track down some of his followers, just in case they may be plotting a jail break.

We were able to stop a suspect for questioning, and we want you to take a look at his testimony. Listen carefully, detectives. The fate of Israel is in your hands this time.

PETER'S TESTIMONY

PETER: Wow. This is just like on TV, huh? You guys watch CSI: Jerusalem? I'm a huge fan.

COP: Your name Simon?

PETER: Yeah, that's me.

COP: Alias Peter, alias the Rock, Rocky, Rocko?

PETER: Don't forget honey. That's what the wife calls me.

COP: Occupation?

PETER: She's a home maker.

COP: Your occupation.

PETER: Oh, uh, fisherman.

COP: Got a license?

PETER: Yes I do.

Peter slides his license over.

COP: This is expired.

PETER: Yes, well I've been on sabbatical the last few years.

COP: Following Jesus?

PETER: Who?

COP: Jesus of Nazareth. You've been following him?

PETER: I'm not a stalker.

COP: I didn't mean that way. You're part of his inner circle.

PETER: Me? No, no, not me. I don't know any Jesus.

COP: That's funny. We have a number of witnesses that saw you with him.

PETER: That's crazy. I don't know anybody named Jesus. Never heard of him.

COP: Look, we've got a guy downstairs said you cut his ear off in the Garden of Gethsemane defending him.

PETER: I did not cut his ear off. I was holding the knife, and he backed into me. That's all. I didn't do it.

COP: But you were there with Jesus!

PETER: No I wasn't! I'm telling you, I don't know the guy, okay? May God strike me dead if I'm lying!

A rooster crows.

PETER: Aw no!

End.

FINAL INSTRUCTIONS

CHIEF: Was this man one of Jesus' followers? Why would he deny it? And why did he react so strangely near the end of this interrogation?

We are going to take you to the garden where Jesus was arrested. Nothing has been moved or disturbed since the arrest, so you are going into a fresh crime scene. Remember to take notes, and as always, wear your gloves. We don't want our fingerprints to get in the way.

CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATION

The scene is a garden, the Garden of Gethsemane. The evidence the detectives will find includes:

- The rock where Jesus prayed - may have some blood stains from where Jesus sweated blood.
- Blankets lying on the ground where the disciples fell asleep.
- A cloak and robe - left behind by the young follower (John Mark?) who fled the scene and left his clothes.
- Peter's sword. The detectives will dust for prints.

ANALYZING THE EVIDENCE

Give the detectives time to compare notes, and check the fingerprints on the sword against a set taken from Peter. Lead them to the conclusion that Peter was indeed one of Jesus' followers, the one who struck the man with the sword.

CHIEF: It would appear that the prints on the sword match those of the suspect Peter. But as you could see, there was no ear left on the scene.

1. What conclusions can we draw from this? Did Peter strike the servant? Why would he do that, and why would he then turn around and run?
2. Was Peter a follower of Jesus? How do you know?
3. Why would Peter deny that he knew Jesus?
4. We found a number of other items on the scene: a cloak and robe, plus blankets that were left behind. What can we conclude from this? Did all of Jesus' followers desert him?

CHOOSING WISELY

1. Peter was ready to defend Jesus at first. He even told Jesus at dinner that he would die for him. Why did he have a change of heart?
2. The Bible tells us that all of the disciples fled the garden when Jesus was arrested. One young man even left his clothes behind when someone tried to grab him. After all they had seen Jesus do, why would they be so afraid?
3. Do you think you would have stayed in the garden with Jesus? Why or why not?
4. We know the end of this story from our Bibles. Jesus was crucified, but he rose from the dead. The same disciples who ran away were later killed for their faith (except John). Yet sometimes we deny Jesus in our lives. Can you think of any examples of how we deny Jesus, either with our words or actions?

SEEKING THE LORD

1. Jesus warned his disciples three times that he would suffer. He asked them three times in the garden to watch and pray, knowing that he would be arrested. Why do you think he warned the disciples so many times?
2. The disciples didn't understand what Jesus meant when he talked about dying. They fell asleep in the garden. So when the guards arrived, they ran. Do you think things might have gone differently if they had listened and prayed? Why?
3. In our time, we face a lot of challenges to our faith. People do not believe in Jesus. They do not believe in Creation, or the Ten Commandments, or that there is one way to Heaven. Have you encountered any other challenges to stand up for what you believe?
4. How can we prepare ourselves to face these challenges?

INVESTIGATING HIS WORD

1. Let's look at another young man whose beliefs were challenged. His name was Stephen (Acts 6:8 - 7:60). Stephen was a leader in the early church who was arrested for his faith. He was also the first martyr recorded in the Bible. How is his story different than that of the disciples?

Jesus said no servant is greater than his master. Do you know what happened to the disciples? [Note: please use discretion in determining how detailed you should be with the martyrdom of the disciples.] According to Foxe's Book of Martyrs:

James the Greater was beheaded.
Philip was whipped, then crucified.
Matthew was killed with a halberd, a weapon that is a combination axe and spear.
James the Less was stoned, then clubbed in the head.
Andrew was crucified on an X-shaped cross, known as St Andrew's cross.
Peter was crucified upside down.
Bartholomew was beaten and crucified.
Thomas was killed with a spear.
Simon the Zealot was crucified.
Barnabas was killed on the mission field.

John died in exile of natural causes. He suffered intense physical persecution throughout his life, including being boiled in oil.

2. What changed in these men that turned them from cowards to heroes?

3. Foxe's Book of Martyrs tells the story of James the Greater's death. The man who accused James of being a Christian, the charge for which he was killed, repented when he saw James was headed to his death. The man gave his life to Christ and was executed alongside James. Why do you think this man had such a change of heart?

4. Do you think you can have a similar impact on friends, teachers, and neighbors by standing up for Jesus when you are picked on for your faith? How so?

God may never put you in a position to sacrifice your life, but persecution goes way beyond death. Let's commit to memorizing this verse, and when the challenge comes to us to defend our faith, let it be a reminder to stand and not run.

John 16:33: "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

CLOSE WITH PRAYER

The Case of the So-Called Christian

CHIEF: Welcome back, Detectives. First, let me say how proud I am of all of you. You have faced some very difficult cases, and asking and answered questions that have puzzled some of the greatest minds. I'm proud of your professionalism, your insight, and your dedication to detective work. We have another case for you to solve today. This one's a bit different than the others. But before we get to the investigation, I have another challenge to prepare you for this case.

GAME: FIREBALL!

Each team member is given a fireball candy. The object of this competition is to see who can keep the fireball in their mouth the longest. (If you think parents might have a problem with this, instead of seeing how "hot" the detectives are, you can test how "cool" they are by having the same competition with ice cubes.)

CASE INTRO

CHIEF: Detectives, you've all noticed there's something unique about our investigations. The crimes we've investigated are not your typical police fare; they are spiritual in nature, and today's case is no different. The Lord is looking for spiritual leaders, committed believers he can use to further his kingdom on Earth. We hope that you have gained significant insight into what it means to be a dedicated believer through our investigations.

Today's investigation centers on a person just like you. She's a young woman who attends church, goes to Bible study, and was even baptized into Christ. But is this the kind of young person that God is looking for? It will be up to you to listen to her testimony, examine the evidence, and determine what kind of believer she is.

JULIE'S TESTIMONY

COP: Camera is rolling.

JULIE: Wow, this is just like that CSI show on TV. Are you starting a new show here in town?

COP: Will you state your name, please?

JULIE: Julie. Am I in trouble or something? Because I didn't do it.

COP: We're not investigating any crimes here.

JULIE: You're not?

COP: We simply want to know who you are.

JULIE: Well, I'm Julie. I play volleyball and soccer. I like sewing, music, and I still love all those stupid Disney princess movies.

COP: Would you say that's a fairly complete description of who you are?

JULIE: Well, no. I have a brother and sister. My parents are divorced, but they get along. I have a best friend Kim, two other really close friends named Alex and Becky. We all play sports together.

COP: And?

JULIE: And... I have a dog? And a goldfish. The dog is Allegro, the goldfish is named Simon.

COP: Is that everything?

JULIE: No, but... what else do you want to know?

COP: What about God?

JULIE: God?

COP: Do you believe in God?

JULIE: Of course I do.

COP: Are you a Christian?

JULIE: Yeah. I got baptized a few years ago.

COP: And you have a daily walk with Him?

JULIE: Well... not daily. But I pray. And read the Bible.

COP: How often do you do those things?

JULIE: I dunno. How often do you pray and read the Bible?

COP: I asked you first.

JULIE: At least once a week.

COP: You mean in church.

JULIE: Yeah.

COP: But not any other time?

JULIE: I pray more than that!

COP: When's the last time that you prayed?

JULIE: Yesterday afternoon.

COP: Why?

JULIE: I had a test.

COP: When else do you pray?

JULIE: I dunno. Sometimes before a game.

COP: Why?

JULIE: That no one gets hurt. And that we can win.

COP: Do you pray with your friends?

JULIE: No!

COP: Why not?

JULIE: They don't go to church.

COP: Do they know that you do?

JULIE: I don't know. Maybe.

COP: Do you pray for them to know Jesus?

JULIE: I guess.

COP: Julie, I want you to be totally honest with me. Do your friends and the people around you know that you're a Christian?

JULIE: (*offended*) Of course they do!

COP: How?

JULIE: I don't know how! Because I just am!

FINAL INSTRUCTIONS

CHIEF: They say every Christian has a testimony to give. You've heard the testimony of this young woman. Now, you get to examine the evidence. You're going to investigate the subject in her most personal space: her room. Take note of everything you see. Find the evidence that says this girl is a Christian - or find the evidence to say she's not so hot. Ask yourselves: if being a Christian was a crime, could this girl be convicted? Good luck!

CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATION

Set up a room like a girl's bedroom. Some ideas for items in the room include posters of actors, athletes, and pop stars; CD's; movies; sports magazines; Disney princesses; school books; notes from friends. There should be some Christian evidence, but it needs to be clear that she has never used it: a Christian CD still in the wrapper; a Bible still sealed in a box; a cross in a jewelry box that has never been taken out.

ANALYZING THE EVIDENCE

Have the students put together two lists: evidence for and against Julie being a Christian. Let them look at the two lists and draw their conclusion.

CHIEF: The Bible talks about a church at the end of times where the people are satisfied with worldly things, and very lazy in their faith. He describes the church as neither hot or cold, but lukewarm.

1. Have you ever had a meal that should have been hot but tasted lukewarm? What's it like to eat burgers or pizza or chicken that is no longer nice and hot? Or to drink a soft drink at room temperature and not cold?

2. If you had to describe Julie as being hot, cold, or lukewarm, how would you rank her? Why?

CHOOSING WISELY

1. If you look at countries where Christians are persecuted, you're not likely to see lukewarm Christians. Those who choose to believe are very hot, and stand by their faith even to the point of death. Why do you think it is so easy for Christians who have religious freedom to become lukewarm?

2. Is it easier to be "hot" when life is good or when times are hard?

3. In what ways are you like Julie?

4. In what ways are you different?

5. If someone were to look at your life, go through your room, and make two lists, would they convict you of being a Christian?

SEEKING GOD

1. In Revelations 3:14-22 God says people who are lukewarm make him want to vomit. Why do you think God has such a strong reaction to lukewarm Christians?

2. Why do you think God would prefer a person to be cold over lukewarm?

3. A hot Christian is focused on a relationship with God. What is a lukewarm person focused on?

4. A lukewarm Christian is interested only in their own comfort. A hot Christian is interested in the will of God. What type of blessings and opportunities might a lukewarm Christian miss?

INVESTIGATING HIS WORD

1. Let's look at another story - the parable of the sower (Matthew 13:1-8). Some of the seed sown by the sower landed in the weeds, where it grew for a time but was then choked out. What similarities do you see in this seed and a lukewarm believer?

2. Let's look at another story from Acts 8:26-40. Philip was an early follower of Christ, who was always alert to the Holy Spirit. When Philip saw an Ethiopian on a chariot, he didn't look and then look away. He asked God to give him an opportunity to share his faith. He saw the Ethiopian reading the Bible, and used it to lead him to accept Christ. Can you use the Bible to lead someone to Christ?

3. How could you better prepare yourself to be a witness for Jesus?

There's an old saying: You are the only Jesus some people will ever see. When people look at you, what do you want them to see? Let us pray to know Jesus better, and to be on fire for him in our daily lives.

CLOSE WITH PRAYER

ABOUT RIGHTEOUS INSANITY

Righteous Insanity provides drama resources, films, and writing services to churches and ministries around the world. Founder John Coper is an award-winning writer and contributor to Minister's Label, Youth Specialties, Lillenas, DramaMinistry.com, and more. Righteous Insanity can provide script writing services at your direction as well as lesson plans, games, and more. Please contact John at john@righteousinsanity.com to learn how we can assist you with your ministry programming needs.

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