



# **TRUE LOVE WAITS**

## **Follow-up Bible Studies**

### **Book Two**

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Many thanks to the folks who attended the TLWI Summit in August, 2007 for lesson ideas. And thanks to Cindy Schirle who contributed much to this manual!

True Love Waits is a youth movement that began in the USA in 1993 through the efforts of Jimmy Hester and Richard Ross of LifeWay Christian Resources and thousands of youth who wanted to make a difference through a commitment to sexual purity.

In 1994, True Love Waits as it is in the large presentation of this manual began in Uganda through the efforts of Larry and Sharon Pumpelly, Andrew Mwenge, and thousands of youth who wanted to change the history of their nation.

Sexual purity is God's idea from the creation of male and female. We believe that God put this manual together as we worked with youth beginning in Uganda and now in many other places. The presentation is an oral presentation and can be learned by someone else just by observing and participating. Many people contributed ideas to help with this presentation.

God has a purpose for all that happens in history. May we be faithful to bring glory to His name during this time in history.

Sharon Pumpelly  
True Love Waits International

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**BOOK 2**  
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## FOLLOW-UP LESSONS

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The next section of this manual contains follow-up materials to be used with your group. They can be used as youth form a True Love Waits Club. Use the materials in a way that fits the group; they do not have to be used in the order they are given. You can use them weekly; every two weeks or monthly. The True Love Waits Club should include those who have signed a card and made a commitment and those who are interested in learning more but have not yet signed a card. Provide an opportunity to sign cards once a month for any who have not signed but wish to do so.

The leader of these lessons needs to be prepared in advance for each lesson. Read through the material and be ready to lead/teach the lesson naturally. Stay sensitive to the needs of each person. The lessons include instructions to the leaders that are indicated by regular print in each lesson. The information the leaders are to speak (say or ask) are indicated by **bold print** in each lesson. Possible or correct answers are *italicized*.

Remember that many who have signed cards have failed in the past and may do so again. Remember that God is willing to forgive them and help them continue to keep the commitment. They CAN do it, so continue to let them know you BELIEVE in them. With God's help, all things are possible.

Do not leave out any activities. Youth get bored with only lectures. Keep the lessons fun and active.

Some of the lessons require a panel. Choose panel members wisely. They should be open to share about their lives and to answer questions youth will ask. Choose those whose lives reflect a commitment to the values of True Love Waits.

God bless you!! Although you may not see the results, you are making a difference for generations to come. Stay faithful. Youth need you!!

## **How to Memorize Scripture**

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The Bible says that we should fix God’s Word in our hearts and in our minds (Deut. 11:18). By memorizing Scripture, we are able to call upon it in situations that are tempting or challenging. Always memorize the verse and the reference (which is the “address” that tells where the Bible verse may be found).

To memorize the verse for the week’s lesson, always follow these three steps:

- 1) **READ** the verse from the Bible to show that it is God’s Word.
- 2) **EXPLAIN** any hard words or phrases in the verse. It does no good to memorize something if one does not understand its meaning.
- 3) **PLAY** one of the games below to repeat the verse many times until the class has learnt it well.

### **Games you can use with the verses printed in the manual:**

**Important Phrases** – Direct the group to read the verse out loud. Then call on one person to tell the group which word or phrase is the most important and why they think so (this helps the group to think about the meaning of the verse). Read the Scripture again, this time saying the chosen word or phrase very loudly. Call on another person to choose a different word or phrase and tell why it is important. Repeat the verse again with that phrase spoken loudly. Do this as many times as you have volunteers!

**Make it personal!** – Direct the group to read the verse several times together. Then let each youth take a turn saying the verse, putting his or her name in the appropriate place. For example, “For God so loved the world that He sent His one and only son...” would become “For God loved me, Jane Smith, so much that He sent His one and only son....” This game only works for certain verses.

**Crazy stand-ups** – Read the verse together two times while sitting down. Then give directions, such as the following, to the group: “Everyone who is wearing something green, stand up and say the verse together.” “Everyone who is in Grade 9, stand and say the verse

together.” (everyone who has a younger sister; everyone who likes donuts; everyone who is wearing black shoes; wearing trousers; wearing a skirt; ....use your own fun ideas!).

**Table Tennis** – Read the verse aloud, altogether, two or three times. Then, line up the group in two rows facing each other, or divide the group into two teams. Team One says the first word of the verse, then Team Two says the second word, Team One says the third word, and so on. They should try to say it as quickly as possible without mistakes. Variations of this game: Let each participant choose a partner and practice saying the verse back and forth in pairs. Or, use a block or a beanbag; toss the block back and forth saying a word each time.

**Next Word** – The teacher begins to repeat the verse. When he or she stops, the group must quickly say the next word. After doing this several times, the teacher chooses someone to go to the front and lead the game.

**Whisper a word** – Read the verse together several times. Then ask a participant to come to the front and point to a word or words to whisper as you all say the verse again. Each time, let a different youth point to another word to whisper as the group says the verse, until at last the group whispers the whole verse.

**Add a word:** After reading the verse and discussing its meaning, begin repeating it in the following way: Start with the reference, then the reference and the first word. Then continue, adding one word at a time until you have said the whole verse.

**Games you can use if you have a white board or chalkboard:**

**Remove a word** – Write the verse and reference on the board. Direct everyone to read the passage together out loud two times. Then choose one person to come to the board and rub out one word while everyone else closes their eyes. Instruct everyone to open their eyes and read the verse out loud. Continue to do this, having volunteers rub out one to three words at a time while others close their eyes, then repeat the verse together. Each time the group will be saying more and more of the verse from memory. When you think they know it, rub out any remaining words and have them say the passage from memory two times.

## **Games you can use if you have paper, pen/koki pen and cello tape:**

**Rectangles** – Cut small rectangles from paper and write one word of the verse on each paper rectangle. Stick them to the board or wall in the correct order. Point to each paper in turn as you read the verse together three times. Then let a participant remove one paper from the board/wall, then all read the verse again, including the missing word. Repeat until all the words are off the board/wall and the students can say the verse and reference without help.

**Verse scramble** – Prepare the verse in the same way you did for “Rectangles”. Only this time, stick the words anywhere on the board or wall (all mixed up). Direct the class to read the verse and reference three times. Then close the book and ask for two volunteers to come and put the mixed-up words in order. If they succeed, instruct everyone to read the verse together. Then let two others mix the words up again, another two put the words in order, and so on. They all say the verse each time it is successfully put in the right order.

**Flip strips** – Copy the verse by short phrases on strips of paper. Stick these to the board or wall with the writing hidden, using the cello tape as a hinge. Open the strips to learn the verse and then turn each strip over by turn (to hide the words again) as the verse is learnt.

## **Game you can use if you have a ball or potato:**

**Hot potato** – Direct the group to stand in a circle. As they are repeating the verse, they must pass the potato/ball from one person to the next around the circle as quickly as possible. When the verse is finished, the person who is holding the ball at that moment must say the verse by himself or herself. After the youth is finished, begin to say the verse together again, passing the ball/potato around. Repeat the game until the verse is learnt.



## **LESSON 1: HOW DO I MAKE WISE CHOICES?**

**Aim:** To guide youth to examine wisdom and folly and the characteristics of both; thinking through choices they make.

**Words for Life:** Proverbs 17:24: “A discerning man keeps wisdom in view, but a fool’s eyes wander to the ends of the earth.”

**Bible Story:** I Kings 3; Matthew 7:24-27

**Activity:** Small groups looking at scriptures to understand wisdom and folly better.

**Materials for Activity:** Small group instructions, one for each group.  
Group 1: Proverbs 8:22-31; Questions: When did wisdom begin? How does creation display wisdom? What emotion does wisdom have?  
Group 2: Proverbs 1:20-33; Questions: What are characteristics of those who reject wisdom? Group 3: Proverbs 8 10-31; Questions: What are the characteristics of those who embrace wisdom? Group 4: Proverbs 2:1-6, 9, 11, 12, 16, 20; Questions: Where is wisdom found? Who is the source? How do we obtain it? What are the benefits?

**Activity #2:** Students reading a passage in the whole group and stating what shows wisdom and/or foolishness.

**Material for Activity #2:** Slips of paper with one of the following verses on each one (all from Proverbs): 4:6; 4:9; 12:8; 14:1; 14:8; 23:4; 23:19-21; 16:8; 22:1; 23:24; 4:18; 8:8; 10:8; 10:9; 10:11; 10:14; 15:26; a basket to hold the slips of paper.

**Other materials:** Two cups that are not clear, one with a very small amount of water in the bottom, the other empty.

**Say:** **Life brings you lots of choices. You will not have anyone there every minute to tell you exactly what to do. But God has a wonderful gift for all who ask him and that is the gift of wisdom. We often think wisdom is only for old people who have lived a long**

time, but old people can be wise or foolish. Without wisdom, our choices would all lead to our destruction rather than life and joy. Today we are going to look at the character of wisdom as we seek to become wise ourselves.

**Ask:** Can you think of situations where you need wisdom? Allow time for sharing.

**Say:** Let's look at one of the wisest men in the Bible, King Solomon:

**Tell the Bible story:**

After Solomon was king, he showed God how much he loved him by obeying the teaching of his father, David. One night the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream and said to him, "Ask me for whatever you want me to give you." Solomon answered the Lord, "You have shown me so much kindness as you did to my father who was faithful, righteous and had a pure heart. God, you have made me king but I am young and do not know how to carry out my duties as king. Please give me a discerning heart to govern your people and to understand right from wrong." God was pleased that Solomon asked for discernment and said, "I will give you a wise and discerning heart, so there will be no one like you ever before or after you. I will also give you what you did not ask for – riches and honor.

Not long after that, two prostitutes came before the king. One told the king that they both lived in the same house. "I had a baby. On the third day after his birth, this woman also had a baby. But during the night, her baby died when she lay on him. She got up while I was asleep and switched the babies, giving me her dead one and taking my live baby. I looked at the baby I had and it was not my baby!"

The other woman cried out, "No, the living baby is my son. Your son is dead."

Then Solomon asked for a sword. He said, “Cut the living child in two and give half to one and half to the other.”

The woman whose son was alive and had been switched was filled with compassion for her baby. She cried, “Please give her the living baby! Don’t kill him!” The other woman said, “Neither of us will have him. Cut him in two!”

Solomon gave his ruling. “Give the living baby to the first woman. Do not kill him; she is the mother.” All Israel heard about this ruling and they held the king in awe because it was obvious he had God’s wisdom to administer justice.

**Say:** The book of Proverbs, written primarily by King Solomon, is full of wise teaching. We can learn a lot about wisdom from Proverbs. In fact, I would suggest you read one chapter of Proverbs every day and do so for many months. You will find many words of wisdom there.

**Activity:** Divide students into small groups and give each group an assignment as described above. Give them 10 minutes or more to write out the answers to the questions. Then ask the groups to share what their questions were and what they learned about wisdom.

**Say:** It’s obvious that Solomon is very passionate about wisdom. Solomon is David’s son. When David died, Solomon became king.

**Ask:** Do you know who Solomon is speaking to? *His son.*

**Ask:** Do you think his son is an old man? *No.* Perhaps God offers wisdom to all of us.

**Activity 2:** Have students pick slips from the basket and look up the verses. **Say:** As you read the verse, state the area of wisdom. Give time for each student to share.

**Say:** Now let’s see what Jesus has to say about wisdom.

**Ask:** When someone builds a house, what is the first thing they need to do before they begin to build above ground? *Have a solid foundation.* Jesus has a story about wisdom that is related to building a house.

**Tell the Bible story:**

Jesus took a lot of time to teach his followers. In the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5-7 Jesus teaches us how to live toward God, others, and in our attitudes and actions. At the end of the sermon he makes a comparison concerning our obedience to his teaching. Jesus said, "Everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice in their lives is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house. But it did not fall because its foundation was on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice in their lives is like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. The rains came, the water rose, and the wind beat against that house, and it fell with a loud crash."

**Ask** the following questions:

1. What is the source of wisdom? (*Jesus' teaching*)
2. Is just knowing what Jesus taught enough?
3. What must we do with Jesus' teaching to be wise? (*Obey*)
4. So what do we need to do to succeed at gaining wisdom?

**Say:** I want to show you an illustration that shows why we want to have the foundation of wisdom in our lives as we say in the story Jesus told.

Ask one student to come up and hand him/her the cup with a small amount of water. Ask the student to shake the cup very, very hard, like the storm against the house. When the water comes out, **Ask:** Why did the water come out? (Most students will say because the cup was shaken. Let that answer stand.)

Now hand the student the other cup (with no water) and ask them to shake the cup. When he/she finishes, **Ask: If the water came out because the cup was shaken, then why did no water come out when this cup was shaken?** (*There was no water in the cup.*) Thank the student.

**Say: So the truth is that the first cup spilled water because it had water in it. You see, many things can shake us and then whatever is inside will spill out. If we are full of foolishness, it spills out because it is inside us. If we are full of wisdom, it will spill out when we are shaken because that is what is inside us. Jesus wants you to be full of obedience and wisdom. Only then, when life brings storms, can you stand on solid ground.**

**Ask: I would like you to think of one area where you need wisdom. Then I would ask you to pray silently asking God for wisdom. James 1:5 says, “If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask of God, who gives generously to all without fault, and it will be given to him.”**

After you give them time to pray, close in prayer.

## **LESSON 2: How Should I Treat Other People? (Even those with AIDS)**

**Aim:** To help youth understand the biblical perspective on caring for others, no matter who they are.

**Bible Story:** The Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37)

**Words to live by:** Luke 6:31: “Do to others as you would have them do to you.”

**Materials for Activity:** Strips of paper cut smaller than a person’s forehead, one strip for each of the following phrases, and cell tape. Phrases to be written, one on each strip of paper: “I have a speech problem and am hard to understand. Ask me to repeat everything I say.” “I was burned and my face is badly scarred. Glance away when I try to talk with you.” “I am really beautiful. Stare at me.” “I am very wise. Agree with everything I say.” “I am really foolish. Laugh at everything I say.” “I am a disagreeable person. Argue with everything I say.” “Everyone is afraid of me. Totally ignore me.”

**Object of Activity:** The object is for the persons with the words stuck on their foreheads to guess what is going on by how they are treated by the others, to comment on how it felt to be treated that way, and for the observers to comment on what they observed. It is important that the words are put on at the beginning of the activity and no one lets the person see the paper or tells them what is on the paper.

**Optional Activity:** Ask a person who is HIV+ or has AIDS to share their story with the group. The group may ask questions, except, “How did you get it?” The person answers questions he/she is comfortable answering.

**Say:** Today we are going to do an activity to help us understand better how we treat other people. Choose the right number of people for the strips you have (you may want to include other strips that you know are issues with your students). Explain that these people may

read (silently) what others have written on their papers, but not what each of them has on him/herself. They must keep what is written a secret from the person wearing it. Then, tape one paper on each person's forehead, trying to put what is written with someone who does not match the words at all. Explain to those who are not participating in the 'role play' that they are observers and need to notice the behaviour of the participants. Seat the participants in a semi-circle so that the observers can see everyone.

**Say:** For the participants in this role play, I want you to discuss, "What, in your opinion, is the biggest challenge facing youth today?" While you are discussing this issue, you are to treat the other people in this discussion according to what is written on the paper taped to their foreheads. Remind the others to observe and make notes as to what they see happening.

Let the role play go on for long enough that students' reactions to one another is obvious and making an impact.

**Discuss:**

**Ask:** (Each person in the role play): Do you have any idea, from the way the others were treating you, what was written on the paper on your forehead? How did the way you were treated make you feel? Let each person have a turn to answer those two questions.

**Ask:** Observers, what did you see happening with the people who were in the role play? Give sufficient time for people to share their observations.

Let the participants take off their papers and read them. See if anyone has a special reaction to what he/she wants to share. Thank everyone for their participation and allow them to sit together.

**Tell the story:**

Let me start by telling you about four of the characters in this story. One is the Samaritan. Historically a Samaritan had been taught to hate Jews. Another character is the priest. He was the religious

leader. Then there was the Levite, who not only had some religious responsibility and political responsibilities. Please keep these in mind as you listen to the story.

Jesus was preparing to send out his disciples when a scholar of the law stood up and asked Jesus a question. “Teacher, how do I inherit eternal life?” Jesus answered him and said, “What is written in the Law? What do you understand it to read?” The scholar said that it is to love the Lord God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind; and love thy neighbor as thyself. Jesus told him that he answered correctly and if he did these things he would have eternal life. The scholar then asked Jesus who was his neighbor.

Jesus answered by telling a story.

There was a man who was traveling from a city called Jerusalem to a city called Jericho. As he was traveling he was attacked, beaten and robbed of everything he had by thieves. When the thieves ran away, the man was near death, lying on the side of the road. Then a priest came by on the road, saw this man, but passed by on the other side of the road. A Levite also came by, and did the same as the priest and passed by on the other side of the road. A Samaritan, traveling along the same road, saw that this man had been attacked and injured. He had compassion for him and tended his wounds and put him on his animal and took him to an inn. When the Samaritan departed the next day, he left money with the innkeeper and instructions that he was to take care of this man. The Samaritan told the innkeeper that whatever money was over the amount left, he would pay the next time he was there.

When Jesus finished the story he asked the scholar and the crowd that was present, “Who out of the three was this man’s neighbor?” They all answered the Samaritan was the true neighbor because he showed compassion. Jesus told them all to go and do the same.



**Questions to ask:**

- 1. Why was it important who showed compassion?**
- 2. Who, out of the three, kept the law that Jesus was talking about?**
- 3. How were these three passers-by different?**
- 4. What attitude made the Samaritan stop and help?**
- 5. Who are your neighbors?**
- 6. Are there any that are different from you?**
- 7. Are there any that are hard to love or that you avoid?**
- 8. How can you show compassion to someone who is different from you?**

Divide into groups of 3-4. **Ask groups to discuss: What did you learn about attitudes from today's lesson? How can we show compassion to someone who is suffering, even if they are not a 'friend'?** If you had a person with HIV or AIDS share, ask what they learned from that person. After discussion, ask them to ask for God's help in having righteous attitudes to others who are different from us.

Ask these groups to report. If good ideas emerge concerning ways to show compassion, work with the group to plan a way for the group to help other people in the community.

Close in prayer.

Be sensitive to a need to talk as a group or to have a time of private or public confession in the treatment of others.

### **LESSON 3: SHOULD I CONFRONT MY FRIEND WHEN HE/SHE DOES WRONG?**

**Aim:** To help youth understand their responsibility to one another and how to confront a friend who is doing wrong.

**Bible Story:** Nathan confronts David's sin. II Samuel 12:1-15.

**Words for Life:** James 5:19-20: "My brothers, if any among you strays from the truth, and someone turns him back, he should know that whoever turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his life from death and cover a multitude of sins."

**Activity:** Small group discussion on "How to or Not to Confront".

**Materials for activity:** Use ½ sheets of paper, writing one of the following on the top of each ½ sheet: Matthew 5:21-22; Matthew 5:23-24; Matthew 7:1-5; Ephesians 4:29-32; Matthew 18:15-17; Ephesians 4:15-16; Proverbs 15:1.

**Tell the following Bible story found in II Samuel 12:1-15 of Nathan going to David.**

**This story took place in the spring when kings go off to war and David had been king of Israel for several years. Instead of going off to war himself, King David sent his captains out to fight a neighbouring people. While the captains were off at war, King David saw Bathsheba, the wife of his captain Uriah, while she was bathing. King David greatly desired her and he summoned her to his house and had relations with her. In order to cover up his sin when she became pregnant, King David then arranged for Uriah to be killed so that David could take Bathsheba as his wife.**

**God sent His prophet Nathan to King David. Nathan told the king the following story: There were two men in a city. One man was exceedingly rich and the owner of a large flock of sheep, and the other man was very poor. The poor man only had one sheep but he**

loved it and cared for it like his own child. The poor man fed the sheep by hand and slept beside it at night. Now a guest came to the house of the rich man. The rich man was very greedy and did not want to slaughter one of his own sheep for the guest's dinner. So the rich man took the loved lamb of the poor man, killed it, and prepared it for dinner.

Now when Nathan finished this story, King David was very angry with the rich man and asked Nathan, "Who is this rich man? As the Lord lives, this man shall die for his crime! And he shall repay the poor man four times over for that sheep because he did not have pity."

Then Nathan said to King David, "You are the man! Thus says the Lord: I have made you king of Israel, I have blessed your house, I have given your master's possessions to you, and given your master's wives to you also. And if that had been too little, I would have given you much more! And yet you took Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah, and had Uriah killed to cover your sin. Therefore the sword shall never depart from your house because you despised Me. I will take your wives from you and give them to your neighbour, and he will shame you in the sight of all Israel."

King David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against God."

Then Nathan said to the king, "The Lord has forgiven your sin and you shall not die. However the child you shall have by Bathsheba will surely die." Then Nathan left the king's house.

Use any of the following questions for discussion with your group.

**Questions for discussion:**

1. What part of the story stood out to you the most?
2. What part of the story did you not like?
3. Why did God send Nathan to the king?
4. How did David respond to the fact that the sin was HIS?

5. Was there a punishment for David's sin? Did God show mercy also?
6. Nathan used a story to point out David's sin. Why do you think it took a story to show David his own sin? Why didn't David see it beforehand? Can you think of times in our lives today when youth don't see their own sin?
7. What does this story show us how to do? (*How to confront a friend in sin.*)
8. Why do we have trouble confronting friends who are in sin?
9. If you are doing the wrong thing, what do you want your friends to do?
10. **Ask** someone to read Proverbs 9:8-9. If a friend comes to you about something you've done, how should you respond?
11. What does this story tell us about helping each other keep our TLW commitments?
12. How do your friends or how can your friends help you keep your TLW commitment?

**Activity:** Give out the ½ sheets of papers with a scripture reference on the top of each sheet to groups of 2 or more.

**Ask:** God's Word gives us guidelines on how to confront and how not to confront. Please read your passage and label your page "How to Confront" or "How NOT to Confront". Then list ideas from your passage.

Allow 10-12 minutes for groups to work, and then have each group report by **Asking:** How does what you learned relate to how Nathan confronted David?

**Review the memory verse, James 5:19-20.**

**Ask:** Why is it truly caring for someone to confront their sin? Does it say you have to be perfect yourself in order to confront someone else? Why do you think it is important to have two good friends you are accountable to for your thoughts and actions?

**Activity:** Ask two youth to play act out a godly way to confront. Have the group to create the situation that one of the youth is in so the other can confront. Have two other youth act out an ungodly way to confront. Discuss the activity.

**Closing:** Encourage youth to help one another by confronting and challenging one another.

**Say:** We must confront each other in love, not in anger or in judgment. We must always be checking ourselves for sin as well. When we speak, it must be to speak the words of God to another and must be done prayerfully and with a humble attitude.

**Ask** youth to pray for each other in the groups they were in.

## LESSON 4: JEALOUSY HURTS RELATIONSHIPS

**Aim:** To equip youth to understand the temptation of jealousy, the problem with giving into that temptation, and how to deal with jealousy of others.

**Bible Story:** Jealousy based on Saul and David: I Samuel 17:20-26, 45-54; 18:5-30; 24:1-12.

**Words for Life:** Proverbs 14:30: “A heart at peace gives life to the body, but envy rots the bones.” (NIV)

### **Introductory activity:**

Divide group into four smaller groups. Give the following information to each group by number. Each group will plan and perform a short skit to show how jealousy hurts relationships.

**Group 1:** This group will act out how girls can be jealous of other girls.

**Group 2:** This group will act out how boys can be jealous of other boys.

**Group 3:** This group will act out how girls can be jealous of boys or in relationship to boys.

**Group 4:** This group will act out how boys can be jealous of girls or in relationship to girls.

Give groups 10 minutes to plan their skits and then have one skit at a time. After each skit, **discuss: What was the cause of jealousy? How should the jealous person deal with their feelings? How should the person who has someone jealous of them react?**

### **Tell the Story: Saul and David.**

A young shepherd boy, David, came to check on his brothers who were fighting the Philistines. One giant Philistine, Goliath, taunted the Israelite army. David was the only one willing to fight Goliath and did so relying on God’s help. David killed Goliath with his sling and stones and the Philistines were slaughtered. To thank David, King Saul brought him into his household as a commander of men. God showed favor and great success to David.

**As the army of Israel returned from war, women came out singing and dancing to meet King Saul with joy. As the women danced, they sang “Saul has slain his thousands and David his ten thousands.”**

**Saul became very angry, “They have credited ten thousands to David but to me they have given only thousands. There is nothing left for him but to become king!!!” Saul looked at David with suspicion and jealousy from that day on.**

**The next day, while David was playing the harp, an evil spirit came upon Saul. A spear was in Saul’s hand and he thought, “I will pin David to the wall.” Saul threw the spear at David but David escaped.**

**Saul was afraid of David because the Lord was with David but had left Saul because of Saul’s disobedience. Saul sent David from the palace and made him commander of a thousand soldiers. God blessed David and he did well in everything he did. When Saul saw how well David did, he dreaded him but those in the kingdom loved David.**

**Saul said to David, “Here is my daughter Merab. I will give her to you as a wife, only be valiant for me and fight the Lord’s battles.” Saul thought that David would be killed by the Philistines in this way. But David said to Saul, “Who am I that I should be the king’s son-in-law.” So Saul gave his daughter to another.**

**Michal, another of Saul’s daughters, loved David. When they told Saul, he agreed. Saul thought, “I will give her to him that she may trap him.” Saul commanded his servants to speak to David about Michal. So Saul’s servants did so but David said to them, “Is it a small thing to you to become the king’s son-in-law, since I am a poor man and not well-known?” The servants of Saul reported this to the king. Saul then said, “Say to David, “The king does not desire any dowry except a hundred foreskins of the Philistines.””**

**When the servants told David, this pleased him. David rose up with his men and struck down two hundred Philistines. David took their foreskins and gave them in full number to the king that he might become the king's son-in-law. When Saul saw and knew that the Lord was with David, Saul was more afraid of David. Thus Saul was David's enemy continually.**

**Saul tried many times to take David's life. While Saul was out with his men trying to find David, Saul went into a cave to relieve himself. David was in the dark cave with his men and cut a corner off Saul's robe. After Saul left the cave, David went out and called to Saul and told him that, even though he had an opportunity to kill Saul, he would never lift a hand to harm him and showed him the piece of his robe. David said, "May the Lord judge between you and me. . . but I will never lift my hand to harm you."**

**Read: Proverbs 14:30: "A heart at peace gives life to the body, but envy rots the bones."**

**Ask the following discussion questions. Allow time for discussion on each one.**

### **Discussion Questions**

- 1. What things made Saul jealous?**
- 2. How did his envy of David 'rot his bones'?**
- 3. How did David react to Saul?**
- 4. What characteristics did David exhibit that showed he did not want Saul to be jealous of him?**
- 5. How did David's attitude show a heart of peace? What was the source of his peaceful heart?**
- 6. How can you become more like David?**
- 7. Are you struggling with jealousy? Is someone jealous of you? How can you help the situation?**

**Say: If you don't feel the peace that we've been talking about it may be that you are jealous about something or toward someone. If you need God's forgiveness for that, you can ask him to forgive you**



**and give you the strength to let go of your jealousy and He will. If you haven't ever received forgiveness for your sins by asking Jesus to lead your life, we want to help you to establish a relationship with Christ so that you can experience His peace on an ongoing basis. If you'd like to talk with someone about how to receive Christ's forgiveness we would love to share with you all that Jesus has done for you through his death and resurrection, just come and talk to one of us after we pray together.**

**Closing:** Pray for any who are struggling with jealousy issues. Be sure to pray with grace and not condemnation so students will feel free to talk with you individually.

## **LESSON 5: HOW SHOULD A YOUNG MAN TREAT A YOUNG WOMAN?**

**Aim:** To help young men understand godly principals in dealing with young women and to help young women understand the character and actions that help them gain respect and godly treatment.

**Bible Story:** Ruth and Boaz from the book of Ruth.

**Activity:** Discussion before and after the Bible story.

**Materials:** Paper and pen for each participant.

**Activity:** Give each student a sheet of paper and a pen. Have them divide the paper in half from top to bottom. On the left side of the front side have the young women make a heading: Characteristics of my ideal boyfriend. On the left side of the front side have the young men make a heading: Characteristics of my ideal girlfriend.

**Ask:** What kind of man/woman would you like to have as a boyfriend/girlfriend? Write out the characteristics you would like under the column you have made for a boyfriend or girlfriend. Once they are finished, listen to several items the group will share. If possible write these out on a poster board or chalkboard.

**Ask:** What kind of man/woman would you like to marry? On the left side of the back side, make a column (if you are female) called Characteristics of my ideal husband; Guys, the left column for you should say, Characteristics of my ideal wife. Once they are finished, listen to several items the groups will share. If possible write these out on a different poster board or part of the chalkboard.

**Ask:** Do the columns differ –is the one you like to date different from the one you like to marry? How do they differ? Have them make columns on the right side of each side of the paper: Character I need to attract this kind of boyfriend (for girls)/this kind of girlfriend

(for boys). As they share ideas, have them write appropriate ideas in each column.

**Ask:** Do you think you need the same character and behaviour to attract a girlfriend as to attract the wife you want? Ladies, do you think you need the same character and behaviour to attract the man you want as a boyfriend as to attract the husband you want?

**Ask:** Do you think it is OK to try to change your character when you are looking for a spouse from the character of looking for a date?

**Say:** Let me tell you a story and see what we can learn from God's Word.

**Tell the story:**

During a famine in Judea, a man from Bethlehem named Elimelech took his wife, Naomi, and two sons and went to Moab to live. While they were in Moab, Elimelech died. After taking Moabite women as wives, the two sons also died, leaving Naomi alone with her two daughters-in-law. Naomi decided to return to Bethlehem and told her daughters-in-law to return to their families. After much hesitation, one daughter-in-law left her but Ruth refused to leave. She insisted on going with Naomi, saying, "Don't ask me to leave. Where you go, I will go. Where you stay, I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God, my God. Nothing but death will separate us." So Naomi and Ruth went to Bethlehem and arrived at the time of the barley harvest.

Ruth asked Naomi, "Let me go to the fields and pick off the leftover grain after any harvesters with whom I find favor." Naomi told Ruth to go, and Ruth came to the field belonging to Boaz. Boaz was a rich man in Bethlehem who was a relative of Naomi's husband. When Boaz arrived in the fields, he saw Ruth and asked the servant in charge of the harvesters, whose woman she was. The servant replied, "She is the Moabite who returned with Naomi. She asked

to glean behind the harvesters and has worked steadily since morning.”

So Boaz said to Ruth, “Don’t go to any other field. Stay here with my servant girls and glean after my harvesters. I have told the men not to bother you. If you become thirsty, come and drink from the water my men draw.” Ruth bowed before him and asked, “Why have I found such favor in your eyes?” Boaz answered, “I have heard what you have done for your mother-in-law—how you have left your land and your family and have come to live among a people you didn’t know. May the God in whom you now seek refuge bless you.”

At mealtime, Boaz called to Ruth, “Come here and eat some bread and dip it in the vinegar.” She ate all that she wanted and had some left over. After eating, she returned to the field and Boaz said to his men, “Don’t bother her. In fact leave some grain behind you for her to pick and don’t rebuke her.” So Ruth gleaned until evening, and then returned to Naomi with the grain and her leftover bread. Naomi asked her, “Where did you glean? Blessed be this man.” So Ruth told Naomi that she gleaned in Boaz’s field and of the kindness that he showed her. Naomi answered Ruth “Praise God for his kindness. Boaz is a close relative. Do as he said and remain in his field because in someone else’s field you might be harmed.” So Ruth remained in Boaz’s field with his maidservants until the end of the barley and wheat harvests.

One day Naomi said to Ruth, “Shouldn’t I find a home for you where you will be well provided for? Isn’t Boaz a close relative of ours? Now wash yourself, put on perfume and dress in your best clothes. Then go tonight to the threshing floor where Boaz is preparing his barley grain. When he lies down, go and lay down at his feet? He will tell you what to do.” So Ruth obeyed Naomi in all that she told her to do.

When Boaz had lain down to sleep, Ruth went and lay at his feet. During the night, something startled Boaz and he sat up to discover

a woman at his feet. “Who are you?” he asked. “I am Ruth,” she answered, “spread your cover over me since you are a close relative.” This was a culturally appropriate way to show Boaz that she was willing to marry him. Boaz answered her, saying, “This is even a greater kindness than you showed earlier, that you would not run after younger men. Don’t be afraid, I will do what you ask because everyone knows that you are a woman of excellence. Stay here tonight and in the morning, I will go to my family and if they agree for me to marry you, I will.”

So she remained until morning, but rose early. Boaz told her to hold out her shawl and filled it with barley so that she would not return to her mother-in-law empty handed. Ruth returned to Naomi and told her everything that Boaz has done and said. Naomi said to Ruth, “Wait and see what happens because Boaz will not rest until the matter is settled today.”

Meanwhile, Boaz went out to the city gates and waited for his relatives and the elders of the town. After discussing the matter with them, it was agreed that Boaz would marry Ruth. So Boaz took Ruth to be his wife.

**Discuss** these questions with the participants:

- 1) **What characteristics of Ruth did Boaz notice?** (*her sacrifice for her mother-in-law, her kindness to him, she is a woman of excellence, her hard work*)
- 2) **How did Boaz treat Ruth?** (*With favor, showed kindness, protected her, settled the question of marriage quickly*)
- 3) **Young men, do you want a wife with the characteristics like Ruth?**
- 4) **Young ladies, do you want a husband who will treat you like Boaz treated Ruth?**

**Ask:** How did Ruth treat her mother-in-law? How did she treat Boaz? Would you say her character was the same no matter who she was with?

**Say: If you behave in an honorable way as Ruth did, ladies, then men are more likely to treat you honorably.**

**Ask: How did Boaz act toward Ruth before he had any thought of being her husband? How do you think he acted toward his workers?**

**Say: The way you treat your parents, siblings, girlfriends and boyfriends WILL be the way you treat your spouse and children. If you are harsh and unkind, demanding your own way, you will be the same person in marriage. The author of this lesson warned her son that the way he treated his sister would be the way he treated his wife. The son did not believe this to be true. But some years after he was married to a woman he loves and adores, he confessed to his mother that she was right. Sometimes he caught himself saying things to his wife in an unkind way.**

**Ask: So, what should you be doing to prepare for having a great marriage, a marriage of your dreams? (*List suggestions which should include being kind, polite, helpful, caring, etc.*)**

Point out that these characteristics are found through a relationship with Jesus Christ and he can give you the strength of character to be honorable toward all people.

Divide the participants into small groups of the same sex and **ask** them to share with each other what behaviour they will need to change to treat their spouses as God would have them.

Have the groups pray together.

## **LESSON 6: WHAT IS A DREAM MARRIAGE?**

**Aim:** To define marriage as God intended and help youth see what they are waiting for?

**Words to Live By:** Ephesians 5:31: For this reason a will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife and the two will become one flesh.

**Bible Story:** Ephesians 5:21-33; Genesis 1:26-27; 2: 23-25; 3:1-7

**Activity:** Each student will be given time to write a letter to the person they will marry some day.

**Materials:** Clean sheet of paper, pen and envelope for each student.

**Say:** Today we are going to talk about marriage. I know each of you has a picture in your mind as to what a dream marriage would be like, so let's look at those pictures.

**Ask:** What comes to your mind when you think about marriage? Hear ideas from students while one student writes them on a chalkboard or poster.

**Say:** Let's see what God has to say about marriage. It was his idea so maybe we can get some idea as to what a dream marriage should look like!

**Tell the story:**

In the beginning, before there was anything else, there was God. God created the heavens and earth and all that is in the heavens and earth. Finally God created man, saying, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over all the earth. So God created man in his own image, creating male and female. When Adam saw Eve, he said, "This is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh; she is woman because she was taken out of man." Adam

and his wife, Eve were naked but they felt no shame or embarrassment.

**Say:** Wow! This is the very first marriage. Can you imagine? The first man and the first woman made by God for each other. Could anything be more perfect? The answer to that would be no, at least at this point in the story, but there is more. The crafty serpent tempted Eve with the forbidden fruit from the tree God said not to eat from. She liked it and gave it to her husband and he also ate. Because of this they could see good and evil and their innocence was gone. In fact, they found leaves and made some coverings for their bodies and God sent them from the garden.

**Questions to ask:**

1. What was good about this first marriage?
2. How did Adam view Eve? (*Bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh.*)
3. What does that say about the oneness Adam felt with Eve?
4. Why do you think they were not ashamed to be naked together?
5. What was the first sin?
6. How did it affect the first marriage?

**Say:** God created marriage to have the oneness of bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh and being naked and unashamed with one another. But sin affected marriage and as time went on men began to take more than one wife and in the Bible and in real life, you see the problems of polygamy. Then divorce entered and men wanted to do away with their wives once they were tired of them. The prophet Malachi spoke God's word about marriage to the people. Let's see what God says about marriage and divorce in Malachi 2:13-16.

**Ask** a student to read the passage while all the students follow in their Bibles.

**Questions to ask:**

1. Why were the people crying at the Lord's altar?
2. Why did God not accept their offerings?



3. What does this say about God's attitude toward marriage?
4. Who makes a couple "one"?
5. Why does God make a couple one? What is he expecting to come from the marriage?
6. What does God say to do to protect your marriage?
7. What is God's attitude toward divorce?

**Say:** It seems that God is pretty serious about marriage, what do you think? There is a passage in I Peter that also gives instructions for a godly marriage.

**Ask** a student to read I Peter 3:1-7 while all the students follow in their Bibles.

**Say:** This is written to the early church where people who were already married had come to know the Lord. As Peter is talking to wives, he mentions those husbands who may not have come to the Lord yet.

**Questions to ask:**

1. What does Peter say should be the behavior of wives?
2. What reasons does Peter give for wives behaving in this manner?
3. Do you think this means a woman cannot be beautiful, nicely dressed and with pretty hair? *No, it is emphasizing that what is on the inside is of greater importance and should get more attention than what is on the outside!*
4. How should husbands treat their wives?
5. What two ways should they see their wives? *Weaker partner to be cared for, but equal as Christians and heirs of Christ. God expects husbands and wives to share as heirs spiritually.*
6. Why do you think husbands are reminded of this?

**Say:** Have you thought about women as the weaker sex? Some may think this is physical and in many cases it is. But, God is expecting the man to be sensitive to his wife in all areas and caring for her. Paul also speaks to the issue of marriage in Ephesians 5: 21-33.

Ask a student to read the passage while all the students follow in their Bibles.

**Questions to ask:**

- 1. What is the key role of the husband?** *Love his wife like Christ loved the church and be the head of the wife.*
- 2. How does this passage define love and being the head?**
- 3. What is the wife's key role?** *Submit and Respect*
- 4. Who do you think has the more difficult role?**

**Say:** Most men, even those who belong to Christ, do not understand the important role they play in having a great marriage. The husband is told to be like Christ, to love his wife with a sacrificial love and to think of her as Adam thought of Eve, as the same as his own body. Men all over the world need to respond to being this kind of head of the home. To be a man who loves his wife above all else except Christ. My prayer is that you young men will respond to Christ to be that type of great man. Ladies, you need to choose a man you can honor and submit to his leadership. You must hold him in high respect. For many of you youth, you have not seen such a marriage. Why don't you commit today to have marriage God's way and impact your family in a great way for generations to come?

The author of this lesson is blessed to be married to such a man. He is a servant leader in our home. He will clean and do laundry if it is needed and takes wonderful care of each of us. He has shown us he would gladly lay his life down for his family when thieves threatened us and he took the attention on himself, nearly costing his life. I want to always honor him and make him look good by helping him and respecting him. That is my testimony and I pray the same for each of you!

**Activity:** Give each youth a piece of paper. Challenge them to reflect on what it will be like when they find the person God has for them and what their hopes and dreams are for their marriage. Ask them to compose a letter to be given to that person (say "Dear Beloved Wife" or "Dear Beloved Husband") on their wedding day.

When they finish, ask them to put it in an envelope and write something on the outside to remind them what it is and put it in a safe place.

Divide them into groups of the same sex and ask them to pray for each other's future marriages.

## LESSON 7: HOW LONG IS TOO LONG TO WAIT?

**Aim:** To help youth look at the benefits and challenges of continuing to wait when the waiting is long.

**Bible Story:** Story of Jacob and Rachel from Genesis 29.

**Words for Life:** Psalm 27: 13-14 “I am still confident of this: I will see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living. Wait for the LORD; be strong and take heart and wait for the LORD.”

**Activity:** Waiting: Provide a small tasty item for each person and a serviette or paper for it to sit on; or have a small wrapped box with a coin in each for each participant.

**Object of Activity:** To challenge participants to understand how difficult waiting is, but relying on God’s strength to wait.

**Materials:** Bibles for participants if they do not have them.

**Say:** Today we’re going to talk about how long we are supposed to wait for God to bring that right person into our lives. In the past we’ve talked about how to overcome temptations when we’re in the process of waiting but today we’re going to talk about how we wait on God’s timing, when we have to wait a long time.

**Ask:** What are some things you’ve had to wait on in the past? (*A taxi or bus; someone to cook a meal; a parent to come home; a relationship; the birth of a sibling.*)

**Ask:** Is it easy or hard to wait when you want something? (Hard)  
**Why do you think we have such a hard time waiting?**

**Say:** Today I am going to test you in waiting! I will give each of you an item and you will have to wait until I say to see what it is. (Give each person the item. Then at different intervals of time, let someone see what they have, but make the others wait.)

**Bible Study:** Based on the story of Jacob and Rachel in Genesis 29.

**Tell the following Bible story:**

**Listen to this story about a man who waited seven years for the woman he loved. Not only did he wait seven years, he worked fourteen years without pay in order to be with the woman he loved because his uncle tricked him. But before you feel too sorry for Jacob, let me tell you the whole story: Jacob was the younger of Isaac's two sons, and Jacob tricked his older brother, Esau into giving him his inheritance as we studied earlier. He also deceived his father into giving him the blessing that was meant for Esau. Jacob's mother told him to run away to her brother so that Esau didn't hurt him. So Jacob ran away to his Uncle Laban's home. When he got to the town where Laban lived, he talked to some shepherds to see if they knew Laban. As they were talking, Rachel, a shepherdess, walked up. When Jacob realized Rachel was Laban's daughter, and a relative, he was so excited he kissed her. Rachel ran and told her father about Jacob and Laban went for him and welcomed Jacob into his home.**

**Jacob had stayed with his uncle for about a month when Laban told Jacob that he shouldn't have to work for free and asked him what his wages should be. Jacob had grown in his feelings for Rachel because he said, "I will work for you for seven years for your younger daughter Rachel. Laban agreed, and marriage was planned for seven years later. To Jacob, those years seemed like only a few days because his love for Rachel was so great. After all that time of waiting, Jacob went to Laban and asked him to give Rachel to him as his wife.**

**They planned the wedding, but Laban pulled a trick on him so that Jacob actually married Leah, Rachel's older sister and had sexual relations with her before he realized the deception. When Jacob figured it out, he demanded to know why he had the wrong woman, and Laban told him that it was against their custom for the younger daughter to marry before the oldest daughter. Jacob was very unhappy, but Laban told him that if he would finish out the bridal**

week with Leah, he'd also give him Rachel as his wife in return for another seven years of work. And Jacob loved Rachel so much that he agreed to that.

**Questions about the story:**

1. Why did Jacob have to leave his home and family?
2. Why do you think he chose 7 years to work for Rachel?
3. Do you think 14 years would be too long to work for something you really wanted?

**Say:** Wow, seven years is a very long time. Working for someone for no pay for 14 years seems like a very long time for a wife.

**Ask:** After hearing this story, why do you think Jacob was willing to wait for Rachel? (*He loved her*). If God asked you to wait 7 years for marriage, could you be patient like Jacob?

**Ask:** Looking at things you want to accomplish, i.e., education, job, career, learning skills, etc. how long do you think you will be waiting before you would be ready for God to bring you someone?

**Activity:** Separate the group into one group of males and one group of females. **Ask:** Jacob used the time by working really hard. How would you spend your time if you knew you had 7 years to wait?

**Ask** each group to make a list of ways someone of their gender should spend the time until marriage no matter how long the wait. Give the group 5-7 minutes to talk and call them back together to share their ideas. Then have them go back to their groups.

**Say:** I want us to look at some passages of scripture that talk about what the Lord does in our lives when we are willing to wait on Him.

**Ask** students to look up the following scriptures: Psalm 37:4-7; Psalm 40:1-3; Psalm 130:5-6; Isaiah 26:8; Isaiah 30:18 and Micah 7:7. Have them make a list of what the Lord says will happen to them if they are willing to wait on Him. Then have each of the groups share their insights with the whole group.

**Activity:** Make sure each person has had their treat by now. **Ask:** How did the first ones to get their treat feel? What was it like for those who were much later to have to wait? Can you imagine Jacob waiting 7 years for Rachel? Yet God has promised he will help us.

**Have someone read Psalm 27: 13-14**

**Say:** The Lord will give you the strength to wait for all He has for you, including the person He wants you to marry.

Have the group memorize together Psalm 27:13-14 – see “How to Memorize Scripture” for suggestions of fun ways to help youth memorize passages of Scripture.

**Say:** If you need strength in continuing to wait on the Lord, Jesus can provide you with all of the strength that you need. If you have never asked Jesus to lead your life, you have probably tried to wait on your own strength. But today you have the opportunity to receive not only the strength that you need to wait on the Lord’s timing for your life, but also the free gift of eternal life through Christ. You can do that right now by praying this prayer with me:

**First, tell Jesus that you need his help with having the strength to wait on his timing for your desires to be fulfilled.**

**Thank Jesus for waiting on you and being patient while you learned about how to have a relationship with him.**

**Ask Jesus to forgive you of your sin and thank Him for the free forgiveness He offers.**

**Ask Jesus to come and be the Lord of your life, your guide, your friend, and your master.**

**Commit your life to Jesus. Tell Him that you choose His plans above your own, and that you will follow Him and wait on Him.**

**Thank Jesus for this gift He has just given you.**

**Closing:** Have groups of three of the same gender pray together and share where they think they are in the process of waiting on the Lord.

## **LESSON 8: WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT WAITING?**

**Aim:** To challenge youth to wait for God's timing by understanding that not waiting may bring unpleasant consequences.

**Bible Story:** Abraham having a child by Hagar, Genesis 15:2-6; 16:1-16; 21:1-14

**Words for Life:** Isaiah 30:18: "Yet the Lord longs to be gracious to you; he rises to show you compassion. For the Lord is a God of Justice. Blessed are all who wait for him!"

**Ask:** Our last lesson was about waiting. Do you remember why Jacob was waiting? How long did he wait? What did Jacob do while he was waiting? How did he feel about waiting so long and working so hard for Rachel?

**Say:** Today we have a story about someone who didn't wait. The Bible tells us about the father of the Israelite nation. Let us read God's promise to Abraham in Genesis 15:2-6. You could ask a student to read the passage.

**Ask:** What did God promise Abraham? (*He would have more offspring than stars in the sky*).

**Tell the story:** Abraham and his wife Sarah were old and had no children. After waiting years, Sarah became discouraged so she told Abraham to bear a child through her maidservant, Hagar, so Sarah would not be childless.

**Ask:** What do you think Abraham should have done? (*Told her no.*)

**Say:** Abraham had sex with Hagar, the maidservant. Hagar gave birth to Ishmael. Abraham had a son, but was he the son God had



**promised? (No.) Why not? (Abraham had not waited; he took action outside of God's plan).**

**Say: Many young people are like Abraham and Sarah and get tired of waiting for what the Lord has for them because they think they are waiting too long. They make decisions that cause them to miss out on God's best for their lives.**

**Ask: What have you seen people do because they are tired of waiting for the Lord to bring them a spouse? (Marry the wrong person; give into someone who says if they love them they will have sex with them; get pregnant; live with someone instead of getting married)**

**Ask: Do you truly want God's best for your life?**

**Say: Many people say they want God's best for their lives, but after waiting a long time they settle for just getting married. Others wait a long time but decide they will at least have a child. They get tired of waiting and compromise what they really want – following the desire that God put into their heart for a husband or a wife and a family, like their dream family. All of these face consequences of not waiting just as Abraham had to deal with consequences because he didn't wait.**

**Continue the story: Some years later, God told Abraham he would have a son and Abraham was to name him Isaac. Abraham said to God "Am I to have a son at this age?" He was ninety-nine at the time and asked God to bless Ishmael instead, letting him live under God's blessing. God told him that he would bless Ishmael.**

**God fulfilled his promise to Abraham and gave Isaac by his wife Sarah, when Abraham was 100 years old and Sarah was 90. Abraham held a big feast when Isaac was weaned. Sarah saw Ishmael mocking and told Abraham to get rid of Hagar and Ishmael. God comforted Abraham as he sadly sent the teenaged Ishmael away. God told Hagar that Ishmael's offspring and Isaac's offspring would be at war for generations to come.**

**Say: Just like Abraham had to wait for God to fulfill his promise to him of a son, we sometimes have to wait for God to fulfill the desires of our heart for a family. And we have choices about what we do while we wait. I want to show you what those choices are:**

**Ask** for a volunteer to come to the centre of the group. Give that person a paper with the words “Desire to be married” on it. **Ask** him/her if he/she is willing to lay that down and wait on God’s timing. (*He/she will likely say yes.*) Have him/her lay down the paper in front of him/her. Then **ask** him/her if he/she would like to continue to move forward with the Lord? (*He/she will likely say yes.*) **Ask** him/her to take some steps forward moving past the piece of paper.

**Say: In order to move forward in our relationship with the Lord, sometimes we have to lay down our desires and follow Him, regardless of what the future holds.**

**Ask: What would happen if he/she hadn’t really laid down his/her desire, but held on to it and kept trying to walk forward?** Ask your volunteer to put his/her hand on the piece of paper and try to take two steps forward. **Is it possible for him/her to move forward and hold on to his/her desire at the same time?** (*No*)

**Ask: What would happen if he/she did let go of the piece of paper, but at the same time as moving forward, kept looking back at the desire?** **Ask** your volunteer to start walking forward while looking back at the piece of paper. **What happened?** (*Tripped, bumped things, etc.*)

**Say: To truly follow the Lord, we must trust Him so much that we are willing to lay down our desires and follow Him, without holding on, and without looking back.**

**Continue the story: Years later God asked Abraham to take Isaac to a far off mountain and sacrifice him as a burnt offering to the Lord. So Abraham and Isaac set out with wood for a fire to burn a sacrificial offering. As they got to the top of the mountain, Isaac**

asked his father where the offering was. Abraham replied, “The Lord will provide a sheep.” They put the wood down, and Abraham had Isaac lay down on the wood, and he raised his knife ready to sacrifice Isaac. The Lord called out his name, “Abraham, Abraham” and then told Abraham not to hurt the boy. Abraham looked over and there in the bushes was a ram.

**Say:** Abraham demonstrated trust in the Lord to do whatever He asked of Abraham, and the Lord blessed him for that. He multiplied his descendents beyond number, like the stars of the sky and God said all the nations would be blessed because Abraham obeyed him.

**Ask:** Is it ever impossible to repent of not waiting and demonstrate trust in the Lord?

**Say:** God is able to forgive anything we do and bless us. Today, people face many hardships when they act outside God’s plan. How much better to avoid the consequences of not waiting than to experience those consequences **BEFORE** we choose to wait on the Lord!

**Ask** a student to read Proverbs 5: 7-14.

**Ask** a student to list the consequences warned of in this passage on a black board or poster board.

**Ask:** Let’s put a “P” beside the physical consequences; an “F” by the financial ones and an “E” by the emotional consequences. Ask students to name some of these. (*Lose strength, die young, financial loss, lost health, groaning.*)

**Ask:** What is this describing? (*HIV/AIDS*).

**Ask:** You know something about HIV/AIDS. What does HIV stand for? (*Human Immunodeficiency Virus.*)

**Share information: This virus destroys white blood cells in the immune system. HIV lives in body fluids such as blood, semen, and vaginal fluids, and it is passed on when the body fluids of a person infected with HIV enters another person's body. A virus cannot reproduce itself unless it is inside a living cell. The HIV cell has a unique protein structure that enables it to attach itself to these white blood cells where it can enter the cell and then destroy it. Once HIV infection occurs and spreads killing these blood cells as it goes, your body can no longer fight even common infections and diseases that a healthy person combats. This causes the condition called AIDS, which stands for...Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. A person with HIV/AIDS commonly dies from pneumonia or TB because their body cannot fight off these opportunistic illnesses. Immunization against HIV is very difficult because the virus changes its structure frequently. There is no cure for HIV/AIDS. Over 24% of people in Southern Africa have HIV.**

**Say: Let us talk about the stages of HIV/AIDS.**

- a. In the asymptomatic phase an HIV+ person may feel fine and appear healthy for years; however, he or she is still contagious. This phase may be short up to 10 years or more. In this phase, one may experience flu-like symptoms such as fever, swelling of the lymph glands, tiredness, or muscle and joint pains, but he or she generally feels well. In the early stages up to three months, a window period may show false negative tests for HIV. This is because the person has not yet developed HIV antibodies. The person has an extremely high concentration of virus in the blood while his/her antibody test may still be negative.**
- b. During the symptomatic phase symptoms appear such as: oral or vaginal thrush, white spots on the side of the tongue, shingles, other skin conditions, fevers and night sweats, diarrhea, weight loss, recurrent bacterial pneumonia, reactivation of tuberculosis, and a reduction in the number of white blood cells. These symptoms may occur much sooner if a person continues sexual activity with multiple partners. Each time a person has sexual intercourse with a HIV positive person, he/she receives more of the virus, which makes it more difficult for them to**

fight off other diseases. This stage can occur within as little as two years of acquiring the virus. Also during this stage there is a poor mental and spiritual outlook affecting the person's ability to cope.

- c. Severe symptomatic phase is next and usually progresses into full-blown AIDS over the next year to 18 months. The symptoms will depend on the type of opportunistic infection or cancer that the person has contracted and will include the following: coughing, fever, diarrhea, fits, headaches, neurological conditions, Kaposi's sarcoma - which is noticeable through purple lumps on the skin, in the mouth, the lymph glands, and various organs, severe tiredness, weakness, and weight loss.
- d. The last stage is the terminal phase. After the last stage, a person diagnosed with AIDS might live 6 to 18 months.

**Ask:** How can you get the HIV virus?

1. Having sex with an infected person. This is the number one way you contract HIV. The vast majority (over 90%) of HIV+ people get the virus through sexual intercourse.
2. Using dirty needles used by infected people to inject drugs. Or through other sharp instruments which involve piercing or cutting so that blood is passed from one person to another – tattooing, ear piercing, circumcision, traditional healing, etc.
3. Blood transfusion – much has been done to make sure the blood supply is pure.
4. Mother to child by birth or from her breast milk- this area has also greatly improved.

**Ask:** Who is at risk?

1. Those having unprotected sex
2. Those having multiple sexual partners
3. Those having sex with someone who has had several other sexual partners

**4. Homosexuals**

**5. Drug users**

**Say: A person who is HIV+ or who has AIDS can find hope and peace in Jesus Christ. God is willing to forgive. BUT, the consequences will remain. Today the world lives with the consequences of the hatred and war between Ishmael's offspring and Isaac's offspring even though Abraham came to the place where God knew Abraham was following him fully.**

**Ask: What about you? Will you say at the end of your life, "How I hated discipline! How my heart spurned correction! I would not obey my teachers or listen to my instructors. I have come to ruin in the midst of the whole assembly."? OR will you choose to wait on God's best for your life and experience all He has for you? Let me pray for you.**

**Close in prayer.**

## **LESSON 9: What Are The Chances? Consequences of Not Waiting, Part II**

**Aim:** To help youth look learn about the types of Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) they can be exposed to through sex outside of a faithful marriage relationship.

**Memory Verse:** Romans 6:1-2: “What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?”

**Materials:** Some candy or sweeties that can be distinguished from one another like different colours or flavors. Designate different colors to represent pregnancy, STDs, or HIV positive status. Some students will get more than one candy.

**Say:** We are going to talk about something that we all want to avoid – the risks that come with sex outside of God’s plan. We will learn about the most common Sexually Transmitted Infections. It is important for you to understand about different types of STIs.

**Say:** Let’s make a list of the types of STIs you have heard about. Have the participants share names and write them down on a board or large piece of paper.

**Ask:** Do you know how many different STIs there are? (*Over 50*) That a lot, isn’t it?

**What do you think are the chances that if you have sex you will get a sexually transmitted infection?** Let several people give an answer and then suggest an average based on what they have told you.

**Say:** Whenever we decide not to follow God’s plan for our lives, we experience consequences. In fact, in Romans, Paul tells us that God shows His anger against our sin.

**Bible Study:** Have someone read Romans 1:18-24

**Ask:** What does this passage tell us God made known to us? (*His power and divine nature.*)

**Say:** So we have no excuse for not following God's plan, because He's shown us how powerful He is, and how holy He is. But we do depart from God's plan.

**Ask:** What does God give us over to then? (*The sinful desires of our hearts.*)

**Say:** And that's when we experience the consequences of our sin. If we follow God's plan, we can avoid those consequences. If we follow God's plan for our relationships and for marriage, we can avoid the consequences of sexual impurity.

**Activity:** Have the participants take a piece of the candy or a sweetie. There will be more sweeties than there are people. Whoever takes the green sweetie only takes one, but everybody else can take a 2<sup>nd</sup> sweetie until all of them are gone (Do not let someone take more than one of the same color). Use the chart at the end of the Bible Study to estimate the number of candies you will need of each color.

**Say:** Let's pretend that everyone in this room has had sex. Remember, we're just pretending so let's not tease or make fun of each other as we go through this exercise.

**Ask** the purples to stand up.

**Say:** These people are pregnant or if they are young men have gotten a girl pregnant.

**Ask:** Are you ready to be mothers and fathers? Can you provide for a child? Can you finish school and care for a baby?

**Ask** the yellows to stand up.



**Say:** These people have contracted some kind of STI.

**Ask** the reds to stand up.

**Ask:** Do you know what you need to do to make sure you don't spread this infection? Do you know what the effect this infection will have on your body? On your ability to have children? On your intimate relationship?

**Say:** These people have contracted HIV.

**Ask:** Were you prepared for this?

**Ask** the one with a green candy to stand up.

**Say:** Out of all of the people having sex, only one was safe. Only this one did not get any disease or get pregnant.

**Ask:** Does that mean that this person had no consequences? (*No*) What consequences might they experience? (*Broken heart, lack of self-control that leads to unfaithfulness, etc.*)

**Say:** I want to share with you information about STIs and HIV. Information is really important in helping us make wise decisions and choices. Feel free to ask questions as we go along.

**Sexually Transmitted Infections** - An STI is an infectious condition that is passed from one person to another during sexual activity or skin to skin contact. For that reason a condom does not protect against most STIs. STIs can be spread anytime body fluids and secretions are exchanged with an infected person, during intercourse or other sexual activities. There are two different types of STIs: viral and bacterial. Bacterial ones can be cured, but the damage cannot be reversed. The symptoms of viral diseases can be treated, but the virus cannot be cured. This is because viruses interact with the person's DNA genetic system and individualize. Let us talk about some of the most common STIs:

- 1. HPV – Human Papilloma Virus is an incurable, highly infectious virus which can cause clusters of warts in and around the genital area. They look like a cluster of cauliflower and, in some reports, have grown as big as a fist. If you get this disease you have it for life. The warts can be removed medically in a painful process but may return. HPV can cause cancer of the cervix and cancer of the penis. Over 90% of women with cervical cancer first had HPV. Death from cervical cancer in women under 35 has doubled in the last 10 years. Over 15% of people in Southern Africa have HPV.**
- 2. Chlamydia is a curable bacterium with treatment. Often, there are no symptoms; you may have it a couple times and not even know it, which is true for 70% of those infected. Some men and women experience painful urination or a discharge. Chlamydia can cause sterility in both men and women. Each time you get this STI, it kills 25% of your reproductive organs. It is also easier to contract it after you have had it before. Almost 16% of people in Southern Africa have Chlamydia.**
- 3. Gonorrhea is a curable bacterium with medicine. Women’s symptoms include pelvic pain, painful urination, or discharge. Men’s symptoms are burning urination and pus from the urethra. This STI is commonly called “The Drip.” If left untreated, gonorrhea can cause sterility among women and urinary tract problems for men. In severe cases, it can lead to crippling arthritis and blindness. A woman with gonorrhea at delivery can cause blindness in the baby. 80% are not aware they are infected in the early stages. Over 17% of people in Southern Africa have Gonorrhea.**
- 4. Syphilis is a curable bacterium, but is the second most dangerous STI next to AIDS because 50% of people do not know they have it until it is in its third or fourth stage. In the first stage, there may be a swollen non-painful ulcer or chancre wherever the organism invaded the body (vagina, penis, lips, and mouth) which will eventually go away. Many think they are**

then fine. The second stage develops changes in the skin, such as a rash, accompanied by a fever, headache and enlarged lymph nodes. In the third and fourth stage, the STI attacks your central nervous system. It can cause brain disorders, heart disease, birth defects, blindness, or insanity, and eventually lead to death if untreated. Although this disease is curable, the damage that results cannot be cured. For every one man who is infected, there are six women infected. Over 8% of people in Southern Africa have Syphilis.

5. **Herpes – incurable virus.** The symptoms of this STI are very painful ulcers or blisters anywhere on the body, but especially prone to the genital area. They are often accompanied with headaches, fever, and other flu-like symptoms. This disease stays with you for life. The blisters will come and go forever. Herpes can cause major urinary tract infections which usually can't be cured as easily as in someone who does not have an STI. Ladies, if you get this disease, you cannot have your child vaginally. Statistics show that 50% of the babies delivered naturally to a mother with herpes will die. Herpes is just as emotionally trying as it is physically devastating because the outbreaks will continue and sometimes worsen over time and will keep you from being intimate with your spouse in order to protect him/her from getting the infection. It's also important to note that you can pass this infection on to someone you are intimate with even if you do not have an outbreak at the time. (75% infected show no symptoms). Approximately 20% of people in Southern Africa have Herpes.

**Say:** There are some common characteristics or themes among STIs that you need to be aware of:

- Most people infected with STIs have no idea that they have them. Sometimes 80% of those infected do not even know that they are! If they cannot tell, do you think that you can? (NO.) Even if they show no signs or symptoms of disease, they can still pass it along to you if you choose to have skin-to-skin contact and/or have sex with them.

- **Did you also know that teenagers are much more susceptible to STI damage because you have a lower level of antibodies? If you begin having sex by the age of 15, statistics say you will contract an STI before you finish high school. Once you have one STI you are more likely to have another one. And you can have more than one at the same time.**

**Say: Some STIs, like Syphilis, Herpes, and HPV can be spread without actually having sexual intercourse. These can be spread during oral/anal sex as well. Herpes and HPV are spread by skin-to-skin contact. That means if you get naked with someone who has herpes blisters or genital warts, even though you do not have intercourse, you could possibly contract herpes or HPV simply by rubbing against the blister or wart without realizing it. The virus enters the skin through an invisible abrasion. One source wrote that, “Both bacterial and viral infections can be passed if openings of your body even come into contact with the mucus or moisture of an infected person’s body. Since there are sometimes sores and secretions outside the genitals, even ‘playing around’ undressed can be dangerous. Syphilis, hepatitis B, scabies, trichomoniasis, and herpes can even be passed through contact with the infected person’s mouth” (Choosing the Best, 1998). There are a couple of other STIs that you might have heard of that I want to talk about. They are not as common, but it’s still important you know about them:**

- 1. PID – Pelvic Inflammatory Disease – curable bacteria. This disease only affects women. The symptoms are the same as Chlamydia and gonorrhea and often seem like menstrual cramps. PID can be life threatening, causing sterility and cancer. The main risk is entopic pregnancy where the fertilized egg implants in the fallopian tubes rather than the uterus.**
- 2. Pubic Lice – commonly known as “Crabs.” This STI is curable and relatives of hair lice, infecting pubic hair. Pubic lice are wingless insects the size of a pinhead. They cannot jump but are transferred from person to person when the pubic areas of both**

people are in close contact. The lice feed by biting into the skin and sucking blood. This STI is extremely itchy.

**Say:** Wow! That’s a lot of information. And, it’s so much that we will talk about HIV next lesson. But like we said earlier, information helps us make wise choices.

**Ask:** After learning all of this about STIs, how many of you would think more seriously about the risks if someone was trying to get you to have sex with them?

**Say:** Given these statistics, I think there is a chance that someone might be sitting here thinking they’re damaged goods, wearing a sign that says “I’ve got an STI.” If we lived during the time before Christ came to the earth as a human, you would not just have a sign, but you’d have to walk around declaring “I’m unclean, I’m unclean” every time you have an outbreak.

Have someone read Leviticus 13:1-3 and 45-46:

**Say:** Reading that in Leviticus made me really thankful that we don’t have to live by the law but if we are in Christ, we live by grace. That means we don’t have to follow rules in order to be right with God, and we don’t have to live by the rules that the Israelites had to keep, but through a relationship with Jesus Christ, we are forgiven and declared “clean”, “pure” and even “holy.”

**Say:** Some people think that because we live in grace, that gives us permission to sin and to do whatever we want, even to be sexually immoral, but like we learned today, even though we live in grace, and we don’t have to follow rules to have a relationship with God, we still have consequences when we sin. But there’s another reason that we don’t want to keep on sinning.

Have someone read Romans 6:1-2

**Ask:** What does this passage tell us is the reasons we should not go on sinning? (*We died to sin*)

**Say:** We are no longer slaves to sin, we have a choice. We are freed from sin and we do not have to let sin reign in us, but can offer ourselves to God as instruments of righteousness (Romans 6:13).

Have the group memorize Romans 6:1-2 – see “How to Memorize Scripture” for suggestions of fun ways to help youth memorize passages of Scripture.

**Say:** So, if you have asked Jesus to forgive your sins and you have asked Him to be your Lord and savior, you are both freed from sin, and since sin doesn’t rule you any longer you don’t have to live by the rules. Instead, you are free to live in righteousness. That’s a wonderful gift from God. If you’ve never experienced the forgiveness that comes from having a relationship with Christ or you not sure that you are part of God’s family but would like to be, please come and talk to me immediately after our prayer time. I would like to show you from the Bible how you can be sure of your relationship with God.

**Closing:** Lead youth to divide into groups of the same gender, three or four to a group. Have them pray for each other and thank God for His Grace.

**Chart for candy distribution:**

| Participants | Purple = pregnant | Yellow = STI | Red = HIV |
|--------------|-------------------|--------------|-----------|
| 6            | 2                 | 2            | 1         |
| 7            | 3                 | 3            | 2         |
| 8            | 3                 | 3            | 2         |
| 9            | 4                 | 4            | 2         |
| 10           | 4                 | 4            | 2         |
| 11           | 4                 | 4            | 3         |
| 12           | 5                 | 5            | 3         |

| <b>Participants</b> | <b>Purple = pregnant</b> | <b>Yellow = STI</b> | <b>Red = HIV</b> |
|---------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 13                  | 5                        | 5                   | 3                |
| 14                  | 6                        | 6                   | 3                |
| 15                  | 6                        | 6                   | 4                |
| 16                  | 6                        | 6                   | 4                |
| 17                  | 7                        | 7                   | 4                |
| 18                  | 7                        | 7                   | 4                |
| 19                  | 8                        | 8                   | 5                |
| 20                  | 8                        | 8                   | 5                |
| 21                  | 8                        | 8                   | 5                |
| 22                  | 9                        | 9                   | 5                |
| 23                  | 9                        | 9                   | 6                |
| 24                  | 10                       | 10                  | 6                |
| 25                  | 10                       | 10                  | 6                |

### STIs in Sub-Saharan Africa

HPV – 15.5%

[http://www.who.int/hpvcentre/statistics/dynamic/ico/country\\_pdf/XFX.pdf?CFID=444177&CFTOKEN=58630489](http://www.who.int/hpvcentre/statistics/dynamic/ico/country_pdf/XFX.pdf?CFID=444177&CFTOKEN=58630489)

Chlamydia – 15.9% <http://www.avert.org/stdstatisticsworldwide.htm>

Gonorrhoea – 17.03% <http://www.avert.org/stdstatisticsworldwide.htm>

Syphilis – 8,3% <http://heapol.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/reprint/16/1/29.pdf>

Herpes – 20%

<http://content.nhiondemand.com/psv/HC2.asp?objID=100624&cType=hc>

HIV – 24.7% -

<http://aids.about.com/od/dataandstatistics/qt/regional.htm>

## **LESSON 10: What if I Never Reach My Dreams?**

**Aim:** To help youth to explore how to discover God’s greater desires for them when he allows their desires to go unfulfilled.

**Words for Life:** Luke 7:23 “Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me.”

**Materials:** Copies of the three stories to be distributed to participants; Bibles for participants.

**Say:** Today we’re going to talk about that question that all of us have at some point – What if I never get married or never have children? For some of us, we have the desire to get married, but we keep waiting and it doesn’t seem like it’s ever going to happen. We don’t want to give up hope, because we know that “All things are possible with the Lord” but we also feel like our lives are on hold and we wonder if we’ll ever get married.

**Say:** Let’s start by looking at the lives of a few people and see what we think should happen in their lives.

Divide the group into 3 groups and give each of them one of the following stories:

**The Story of Ken** – Ken came to know the Lord at an early age. He followed the Lord and surrounded himself with friends committed to God. In his last year of High School, Ken met a young woman he liked very much. He decided to win her heart, so he started going to the same parties she was at, and being around the same people she was with. He didn’t spend much time with his church friends because he was so busy trying to fit into the popular group at school. As the months went on, he began to drink alcohol at the parties he was attending. After many months, he got up the courage to ask the young girl if she would go to a very important school function with him. He asked her and she said no. Later he learned she had said no because she was a Christian and didn’t



want to go with him because he was such a “partier.” Ken repented and turned back to the Lord. He decided that his relationship with the Lord was more important than anything else in his life and while he really wanted to find a woman he could marry, he wanted to follow the Lord and let him determine who and when. He decided that for one year, he would focus on God alone. His relationship with the Lord grew much stronger, and he was more prepared to be in a relationship because he was stronger in his walk with the Lord.

**The Story of Corrie** – Corrie was a young Dutch woman who lived in the Netherlands during the Holocaust. Her family owned a watch shop and she and her sister learned how to repair watches with her father. She had a strong Christian upbringing and she and her family became important members of their community. Many people respected her father, because he demonstrated wisdom only the Lord could give him, and Corrie learned much from him all through childhood. She grew in her knowledge of the Lord and sought to follow God’s ways. As a young woman, Corrie was devoted to the Lord and in her early 20s met a man who she grew to love very much. He was the love of her life and they planned to marry.

**The Story of Lot’s Daughters** – Lot’s family lived in a very wicked city in the early days of the Bible. It was so wicked that God was going to destroy it. Lot was warned to take his family and leave and not look back or they would be destroyed. Lot had two virgin daughters who were engaged to be married. Lot, his wife and daughters all fled, but both girls’ fiancés were not willing to leave. The city was destroyed, but Lot’s wife looked back and she immediately died. The daughters lost their home, friends, mother, and fiancés but they experienced the power of the Lord and were saved.

Ask each group to read the story together and then to answer these questions:

- *Based on your understanding of God, what do you think the outcome was for this person?*
- *What did the Lord do in their life next?*
- *Do you think they get married?*

Let each group share with the whole group.

**Say:** We recently learned the story of Ruth - a wonderful story of God and His redeeming love for us. Because of famine, Naomi, her husband and sons moved from Bethlehem to Moab. While in Moab, Naomi's husband died. Like many African cultures, it was important in Naomi's culture for the family name to continue, so when the time came, the young men married wonderful and kind women. Before her daughters-in-law could have children, both her sons died. Naomi changed her name to Mara which meant bitter.

After the famine, Naomi decided to return to Bethlehem. Naomi lost hope that she would have any more children and even if she did, neither of her daughters-in-law would wait for her children, but instead marry in their own homeland. Ruth refused to leave Naomi and returned to Bethlehem with her.

**Ask:** What do you think are some questions Naomi might have asked the Lord? *(Some of their answers might include: Why me? Have I done something wrong? Is there sin in my life that you would do this to me? How am I supposed to trust you when you destroy my dreams? If you love me why would you do this to me? Are you really God? I thought you could do anything?)*

**Say:** When something happens in our lives we don't understand or don't think we deserve we often question God. We wonder if we've done something wrong and we're being punished. We wonder if he really loves us. We wonder if he's really as powerful as we thought, or if he is good like the Bible says. We doubt. But doubt isn't sin; it's part of the faith process.

**Say:** Naomi's friends were happy to see her, but Naomi told her friends the Lord Almighty had made her bitter. Ruth cared for her by gleaning a barley field. When Ruth told Naomi that it was Boaz's field, Naomi told her that Boaz was their Kinsman Redeemer.

**Ask:** What is a Kinsman Redeemer is? (*After they give some answers tell them.*) In the Old Testament, the law said the nearest relative had the responsibility of redeeming his "kin's" or relative's lost opportunities. If a person was forced into slavery, the closest relative purchased his freedom. If debt threatened their property, the closest relative redeemed it. If a married man died without an heir, the kinsman redeemer married the widow and the first son was considered the heir of the man who died.

**Ask:** Naomi knew the law and she told Ruth that Boaz was their Kinsman Redeemer. Do you think she was getting a glimpse of what the Lord had planned?

**Ask:** Have you ever been in a position like that, where you had no idea why something happened to you, but as time went on you began to see God's plan unfold before your eyes? If someone has a brief story, let him/her share it with the group.

**Say:** Boaz married Ruth and they had a son named Obed. Naomi became a grandmother because Obed was her son's heir because Boaz redeemed the family name for Naomi. Obed was the father of Jesse who was the father of David. If you trace David's family line, do you know who the Bible sites as the last member of the line? (*Jesus*) If God had let Naomi have grandchildren by her own sons, and not through her Kinsman Redeemer, she would have missed out on his bigger dream for her – to be part of the lineage of Christ.

**Ask:** If someone was telling you this story, what would you say about God? (*He is good. He does love each of us. He can do anything. He redeems all things.*)

**Say: Sometimes God allows our dreams to die or takes away our own desires so that we can be part of a bigger plan he has, not just a plan for us, but a plan for the world, like he did for Naomi. We can't always see it when we are in the midst of it, but who wouldn't want to be part of the lineage of Christ? And if God did that for Naomi, don't you think he can do much in your life. If he has allowed a dream to die or hasn't fulfilled a desire you have, maybe it's so you can be part of God's plan as part of what Christ is doing in the world.**

**Say: Remember Ken? Ken waited on the Lord to fulfill his desires. Ken waited and waited and waited over 10 years without meeting one girl he thought the Lord might want for him. Even though he was discouraged at times, he followed the Lord. He desired all the Lord intended for him. God gave him the opportunity for a free mission trip to Kenya. Ken was amazed at the Lord's blessing, and thought that was enough for him. But the Lord had bigger plans. On the trip he met a woman who had recently lost her husband to AIDS and by the end of the mission trip, the Lord had spoken to both of them. They married that year and now have a wonderful son and an HIV/AIDS ministry in the US.**

**Say: Remember Corrie? Corrie had thought she found the "love of her life." In time, her fiancé left her and she never found another. She learned to run her father's business and continued to seek the Lord. During World War II, Corrie and her family provided a hiding place for Jews to escape the Holocaust. Corrie's family was arrested for what they did and put in a concentration camp. But the people they were hiding were not found and they lived. Corrie's family had saved their lives. Corrie was the only member of her family who survived the Holocaust. Corrie wrote books about their experiences and became a well respected Christian author and speaker, speaking in over 60 countries before she went to be with the Lord in 1983.**

**Say: Remember Lot's daughters? After God saved their family, Lot's daughters became discouraged because their new home was**

isolated. They lost hope of marrying, got their father drunk and each slept with him. Both became pregnant and had children, but their lives continued to remain difficult because they disobeyed the Lord's plan.

**Say:** Each of these people had a choice to make when their lives didn't go as they had hoped. They could turn away from God and do things their way or they could wait on the Lord.

**Ask:** Did Ken wait on the Lord? (*He waited*) What happened in Ken's life? (*He got married and got to serve the Lord*).

**Ask:** Did Corrie wait on the Lord? (*She waited*) What happened in Corrie's life? (*She never married but she got to serve the Lord in powerful ways and lives on through her books.*)

**Ask:** Did Lot's daughters wait on the Lord? (*No, they took matters into their own hands*) What happened in their lives? (*They had children by their father and life was difficult*).

**Say:** God knows it's difficult to follow Him in hard times. As I said earlier, it is our nature to doubt when our dreams die, but God desires us to work through our doubt and to have the opportunity to be part of a bigger work he wants to do, which has an impact on the kingdom. In fact, when John doubted, Jesus had a message for him.

Ask someone to read Luke 7:22-23

**Say:** Jesus knew that John needed some evidence of his power, so he told John's disciples to tell him all of the miraculous things they had seen. Then he said "Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me." That's such an interesting statement don't you think. Jesus recognized that there would be times when someone might not understand what He was doing, and be tempted to fall away. But he tells us we are blessed if we do not fall away because of him. When he does something we don't understand, or he

**somehow let's a dream we have die, he doesn't want us to fall away, he doesn't want us to push him away, he wants us to continue to follow him, to believe, and when we do, he says we are blessed.**

Have the group memorize John 7:23 – see “How to Memorize Scripture” for suggestions of fun ways to help youth memorize passages of Scripture.

**Say: If you are in a place where you doubt God, remember, Jesus is your Kinsman Redeemer. He has bought you back from slavery to sin. He has paid your debt when he died on the cross. He wants to lead your life and be even closer to you than a spouse. If you have never asked Jesus to do that for you, to become your Lord and Savior, you can do that right now by praying this prayer with me.**

**Lord Jesus, I know that I have messed up my life, and I need someone to redeem me so that I can have a relationship with God. I really want that. Will you be my Kinsman Redeemer? Will you pay the debt for my sin as you say you will in your word? And will you come now into my heart and life and lead me to a life that allows me to be closer to you than I would be a spouse. Amen.**

**Say: If you prayed and asked Jesus into your heart for the first time, please be sure to let me know before you leave today. I'd like to celebrate with you as you start this new relationship with your Kinsman Redeemer.**

**Closing:** Have groups of three of the same gender pray together and share ways they think they might doubt the Lord.