

Grades 6-8

Session 7

God's Power

Opening Prayer

Start this session with prayer, thanking God for all of the blessings in your life.

God's Power

Read:

- Did you know flashlights weren't invented until 1899? Flashlights are devices you don't appreciate until you need them – when the power goes out or when you are walking outside in the dark. Imagine what it would have been like to live during a time when electricity didn't exist.
- Having access to power completely changed our lives. I'm just curious... raise your hand if you are wearing clean clothes... or at least mostly clean clothes. Tell me if you can relate to this... one person in your family does the laundry, and after it is clean, they give you a pile of clothes to take to your bedroom.
- Then, you wear that pile of clean clothes piece by piece until all of them are dirty and laying in another pile on your floor somewhere.
- Did I get any of that right? It is easier now, more than ever, to wash a load of clothes. For your great-grandparents, it was a much more time-consuming process than it is now with modern-day washing machines.
- In the early 1900s, on Sunday nights, copper tubs would be filled with clothes, soap, and water to soak overnight. Then, the next day, they would add more soap and tubs would be placed over fires and the clothes turned over and over, for hours, until they were clean. At that point, if any

clothing remained dirty, they would rub it on a scrubbing washboard until all of the dirt was removed.

- Next, they would wring out the clothes using a hand-crank machine with two rollers or wring them by hand. Finally, they would hang them out to dry or lay them by a fire for hours until they were dry. That is how most women spent every Monday until... The invention of the washing machine in the 1920s.
- Can you imagine how much life would have changed when it now only took a few hours to do the laundry instead of the entire day? It would have been life-changing!
- Believe it or not, some women refused to use this new fancy washing machine – they kept washing clothes the way they always had. Maybe they thought they could do a better job or they didn't want to take the time to learn how to use a washing machine.
- But I'm trying to make a point... other than just telling you about the invention of the washing machine – although it is pretty fantastic. When we choose not to follow Jesus, we are like the person who had to wash laundry the hard way.
- When we begin a relationship with God, we are given a “washing machine.” We can now live with power. You don't have to use the power God gives you, but do you really want to be like the person who didn't see the value of using a washing machine? Power makes things easier. As a believer, it means that we rely less on our own strength and learn to depend on God.

Read Isaiah 40:29 in your Bible.

Discuss:

- He gives power to the weak and strength to the powerless. Who do you think feels weak and powerless? When have you felt weak and powerless?

Read:

- There are people all around you, and possibly even you, who don't feel like they are making it through their life very easily... because life can be really tough.
- But I want us to think about this for a minute... God's power created the heavens and the earth. When He said, "Let there be light!" the light came to the earth, and He created day and night with one single sentence.
- **That same power is available to you.**
- In the Old Testament, God used Moses to save the Israelites from the Egyptians who were holding them as slaves. When they came to the Red Sea, it seemed that their hope was lost. There was nothing they could do to get across the water on their own.
- But God parted the Red Sea so the Israelites could cross on dry land – His power saved them. When facing the Red Sea, the Israelites could have turned around and returned to slavery because they had no hope.
- Throughout your life, you will face situations that seem impossible, but God's power can save you, even when you are backed into a corner with no way out. Often, we have trouble seeing a way out, but we don't have to see it – we can put our trust in God, knowing that He can see what we can't. He sees the bigger picture and has a good plan for us.
- If you think your homework is too hard or you're nervous about a test, ask God for wisdom and focus. If you feel too tired to finish a sports match, ask God for strength and a strong mind. When you feel lonely, anxious, or afraid, ask God to comfort you and fill you with His peace. God's got your back... trust me!

Overcoming Struggles with God

Read:

- Sometimes we try everything and we're at the end of our rope. We wonder if there's anyone who can save us. The answer is that Jesus **can** save us and **does** save us.
- God wants us to seek His power before we get to the point that we are “at the end of our rope.”
- Listen to this story... Stephanie struggled with lying. In the beginning, it was just a “small” lie, here and there, but it wasn't too long before she found herself lying constantly. You could ask her anything, and you wouldn't get a truthful answer.
- Her friends started to become annoyed when they realized she was saying things that weren't true about herself and other people. Stephanie felt stuck. She went to church on Sundays, hung out with her youth group, and wanted to serve God.
- She tried to stop lying, but she couldn't. What is the answer to Stephanie's problem? **God's power.**
- God's power helps you resist temptation... and not just the temptation to lie. We need God's help if we want to change and become more like Him. Today, you can ask God to give you the power to live your best life.
- When we are weak and our own strength isn't enough, God will strengthen us and guide us. He will give us His power to overcome any obstacle. All we have to do is ask Him.

DISCUSSION

Discuss the following questions with someone or write your answers in your journal.

- Stephanie struggled with lying. What other things do students your age struggle with? What is overwhelming, stressful, or tough for middle schoolers?

- Besides flashlights and washing machines, what are some other cool inventions that have made our lives easier?
- In the story of Moses, we see a great display of God's power when He parts the Red Sea for the Israelites to cross. Can you think of any other examples of God's power in the Bible?
- How can God's power help us overcome struggles in our daily lives?

(Examples: He helps us overcome temptation and make the right choices, helps us know right from wrong, and strengthens us when we need help [tough day, when we feel too tired to do homework or sports, when we're sad, lonely, angry, etc.]

- What are some struggles you or somebody you know has overcome with God's help? Remember, sometimes God works through other people. Has somebody (maybe a friend or family member) helped you overcome a struggle?
- What area of your life do you struggle with the most? Do you struggle to obey your parents? Maybe you don't go to bed on time or don't clean up after yourself? Do you struggle with school, confidence, time management, etc.? What about anxiety, depression, or loneliness?

Take a couple minutes of silence to write about one or several of your struggles and then write a prayer asking God to help you overcome your specific struggles. Pray this prayer on a daily basis and when you're facing these struggles.

Closing Prayer

End with a closing prayer thanking God for helping you through every struggle.