

Grapple Unit: Big, Big God

Grapple Question 2: Will God Make Me a “Jesus Freak”?

May 6th, 2018

Key Faith Foundation: Conforming to the Image of Christ

Key Scriptures: Romans 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 11:1; 1 Peter 2:1-3

Bible basis for teachers

Romans 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 11:1; 1 Peter 2:1-3

Grapple Question 2: Will God Make Me a “Jesus Freak”?

Key Faith Foundation: Conforming to the Image of Christ

To many preteens, the term “Jesus freak” means someone who has no fun, someone who gets teased, or someone no one wants to be around. It can be scary to realize that God might turn kids into Jesus freaks if they have a relationship with him. Use this lesson to help kids understand that God wants to transform them and help them become more like Jesus—someone who hung out with friends, cared about his family, and obeyed God above all else.

In 1 Corinthians 11:1, Paul told his disciples to imitate him, just as he imitated Jesus. Help kids understand that becoming a follower of Jesus means acting and talking like Jesus. Encourage kids to think about what that might look like in their own lives. For example, it might mean being kind to someone who treats them badly, or it might mean talking to someone everyone else ignores.

Paul’s words in Romans 12:1-2 urge us to worship God by offering our bodies as a living sacrifice. Paul wrote that in order to truly worship God, we can’t copy what the world is doing. Instead, we can let God transform us. Ask kids to consider how God has already changed their thoughts and behaviors. Help them recognize that the changes are helping them become more like Jesus.

First Peter 2:1-3 tells us how to become the people God wants us to be. We need to get rid of sins such as deceit, hypocrisy, jealousy, and unkind speech. But God doesn’t ask us to stop having fun or being good friends. God just wants us to get rid of behaviors and attitudes that hurt us and others. Use this passage to help kids talk about things in their own lives that God might want to change. Encourage kids to realize that being like Jesus doesn’t make them freaks—but it *does* make them different. Trying to be like Jesus means doing what’s right no matter what.

understanding preteens

At an age when kids are already highly self-conscious, it’s important they hear the benefits of following Jesus. The life-transformation God offers will make kids stand out in positive ways, as peers wonder how they, too, can experience such joy. Remind kids that following, or imitating, Jesus is a daily commitment with amazing rewards.

the lesson at a glance

LESSON SEQUENCE		WHAT KIDS WILL DO	SUPPLIES
1	grapple community <i>(5 minutes)</i>	Build relationships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DVD player • Christian music • music player • snacks
2	grapple games <i>(10-15 minutes)</i>	Choose two games to play.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a long rope • 2 chairs • 2 small blankets, twin sheets, or towels • several soft, lightweight balls • a playing area with clearly marked boundaries
3	grapple time <i>(10 minutes)</i>	Identify one another's differences and discuss the term "Jesus freaks."	
4	grapple team time <i>(15 minutes)</i>	Discuss how God transforms us as we follow him.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bibles • pencils • copy of the Grapple Team Guide for each person
5	grapple team reports <i>(10 minutes)</i>	Report what they learned from the Bible passage they studied.	
6	grapple prayer <i>(5 minutes)</i>	Choose a prayer option.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reflective surface or small hand mirror
7	grapple dare	Hear the Grapple dare.	

1 grapple community

Play Christian music as kids enjoy snacks and friendship. Give kids this discussion starter as they eat. Say: **List the people in our group alphabetically—by middle names.** Play one of the three-minute countdowns (included on your *Grapple* DVD) to let kids know how much time remains.

2 grapple games

Say: **We're going to play a game, but you'll get to choose. Would you rather play Blanket Volleyball** (see Games Guide), **where you toss balls as a team? Or would you like to play Heads Up** (see Games Guide), **where you have to guess who pushed down your thumb?** Have kids vote on the game they'd like to play. Then lead kids in playing the game.

Say: **Now we'll play another game. Would you rather play Back Artist** (see Games Guide), **which involves drawing pictures on one another? Or would you like to play Everybody's It** (see Games Guide), **a game of Tag where everyone is It at the same time?** Have kids vote on the game they'd like to play. Then lead kids in playing the game.

3 grapple time

Lead everyone in the following activity:

Form groups of four and have the two pairs sit back to back. Name something about each person that's true of the person behind you—but no one else in your group. Here's the deal: You can't use gender, race, or body size.

Tell All: **What was it like to hear your friends talk about things that make you different? Describe a time when these—or other—differences have made you feel left out.**

In Pairs: **Which Describe a time you were excluded because you were a Christian. What effect, if any, did that have on your faith?**

Most of us don't like to be different. We like to fit in at least some of the time. But God is all about transforming us—changing our thinking and our behavior. God wants us to be different.

Is that something we really want? What if God decides we should all wear black robes every day? give up our favorite music? never play video games again?

What if he makes us become...gulp!...“Jesus freaks”?

Tell All: **What's something odd or freaky about some Christians that you hope never describes you? (Don't name names!) Maybe it's how they look...or act...or think. What is it?**

What's “freaky” to some people is cool to others. Don't believe it? Check out your parents' graduation pictures. They actually thought that look was cool...and at the time it was. But

now? It's 100 percent freaky!

In Pairs: **What might someday be considered freaky about you and your Christian friends? Explain.**

Would you want to follow God if you knew you'd always be left out of the popular crowd or that other people thought of you as a freak? And is that what God is trying to do—make you a Jesus freak? Let's grapple with that!

4 grapple team time

Break into Grapple Teams. Encourage Grapple Team leaders to check in with kids about their week. Grapple Team leaders will facilitate discussion, using the Grapple Team Guide at the end of this lesson.

5 grapple team reports

At the end of Grapple Team Time, have kids work with their team to choose one of the options below to report what they discovered.

Option 1: *On-Air*

Pretend you're sports broadcasters as you share what you discovered.

Option 2: *At Sea*

Impersonate pirates as you share what you discovered. Extra points for pretending to be a parrot!

Match Grapple Teams that chose Option 1 with Grapple Teams that chose Option 2. Have teams present their reports. *(Do this one team at a time if you have only two Grapple Teams.)*

6 grapple prayer

Read the Grapple Prayer options. Have the group choose one prayer option that everyone will do. Allow kids time to pray about what they discovered. Then close in prayer.

Option 1: *Posture Prayers*

Assume a posture that reflects how well you think you're conforming to the image of Christ. Talk to God about why you took that posture.

Option 2: *Reflective Prayers*

Stand in front of a reflective surface in your room. As you look at yourself, do you see someone who's conforming to the image of Christ? Talk with God about your answer. (No reflective surface? Pass around a small hand mirror.)

7 grapple dare

Say: **God wants to transform you and change you to become more like Jesus. Jesus hung out with friends, cared about his family, and obeyed God above all else. Being like Jesus doesn't make you a freak—but it does make you different. It makes you focus on things that other people don't even think about, like doing what's right no matter what and following God each day. Here's your Grapple Dare this**

week: I dare you to let God transform you into the image of Jesus, a little more each day. And that's not freaky!

(Find the Parent Page for this lesson on the enhanced DVD. Have each child give a copy to his or her parents. Alternatively, send the file to parents via email.)

grapple team guide

2: Will God Make Me a “Jesus Freak”?

In your Grapple Team, use this guide to grapple with today’s question.

In Pairs: What are some ways to follow Jesus without seeming weird or crazy?

Read 1 Corinthians 11:1.

What does it mean to imitate Christ? What’s the coolest and freakiest thing about Jesus? How can we follow Jesus in the cool things as well as in the freaky things?

Read Romans 12:1-2.

Draw a picture below of how God has already transformed and changed you. In what ways have any of the changes turned you into a freak?

Read 1 Peter 2:1-3.

*In Pairs: What can you discover from these verses about how to become the person God wants you to be?
What specifically does that look like for you? Describe whether any of those changes make you a freak.*

What would you say to a friend who told you that following Jesus means you're a Jesus freak?

grapple team reports

With your team, choose one of the options below to report what you discovered.

Option 1: *On-Air*

Pretend you're sports broadcasters as you share what you discovered.

Option 2: *At Sea*

Impersonate pirates as you share what you discovered. Extra points for pretending to be a parrot!