ACTIVATE: God’s Power

**MS & HS CURRICULUM**

**Connect Groups**

 **June 20, 2021**

**Lesson 37 :** He’s Got It All

**What we want students to learn:** That God has ultimate power over all things and occurrences.

**What we want students to do with what they’ve learned:** To consider whether or not they truly believe that God has power over everything.

**Scripture Focus:** Psalm 24:8; Jeremiah 32:27; Isaiah 55:8-9

**Overview:** God can do anything. Nothing's impossible with God. God is all-powerful. God is almighty. These are some pretty common things you hear in church. They're pretty common things our students and us say about God and His nature. The question is: Do we believe it? Do your students believe God has absolute power over all things and all events? That's the definition of His power that He is over all things. So, do they believe that? In lesson 50 you'll help students understand that God has power over everything and every circumstance. In lesson 51 you'll show students how Jesus embodies that power and uses it for His glory and our good. In lesson 52 you'll help students learn about how God's power plays out in their lives.

**Bible Background**

The *Bible Background* is designed to help you provide some context for the Scripture you’ll be studying. *The Details* gives you background info for each book. *The Setting* informs you of what’s happening in and around the passage. *The Main Point* gives you an overview of how the passage will be used in the lesson.

* ***What do we mean by “context”?*** In every **YM360** Bible Study lesson, you’ll notice we make a point to encourage you to provide the context for the passages you study. By “context” we mean at the very least helping students know *who* wrote the book, *when* it was written, and *why* it was written.

***What’s the big deal?*** When we teach the Bible without giving context, students don’t get a “big picture” understanding of the story of the Bible. But this view is vital to grasping the story of God’s plan of redemption for humankind. As you teach, use the *Bible Background* to help summarize the context.

**The Details**

Psalms

* **Author:** God inspired various authors to write a majority of the Psalms in their era, including seventy-three by David, twelve by Asaph, eleven by the Korahites and two by Solomon. Heman, Ethan, and Moses each wrote one, while the authorship of fifty other Psalms remains unknown.
* **Timeframe:** The Psalms were written during different eras of Israel's history, spanning from 1100 BC (i.e., Psalm 29, 68) to 400 BC (i.e., Psalm 119).
* **Purpose:** The Psalms are inspired by God to poetically reflect humanity’s journey with Him. Each psalm serves a different purpose, such as a personal or communal lament, hymn, song, reflection or declaration. Many of these were set to music and intended to be shared publicly, even when sharing a revealing confession (i.e., Psalm 51).

Jeremiah

* **Author:** Though there has been some disagreement over the years, there is no compelling reason to doubt that the Prophet Jeremiah is the author is indeed the author of the book that shares his name. He was accompanied by his scribe, Baruch.
* **Timeframe:** Best estimates have the book completed sometime around 550 BC.
* **Purpose:** Jeremiah and Baruch wrote the book to capture the turmoil that faced them and to cast a vision for the hopeful future God had in store for Israel.

Isaiah

* **Author:** Isaiah, son of Amoz wrote the book of Isaiah.
* **Timeframe:** The events of Isaiah occurred between 740 and 681 B.C., though some parts of the book would have been constructed at a later date.
* **Purpose:** The purpose of this book was to call the nation of Judah back to God, to warn of coming judgment, and to tell of God’s ultimate salvation through the Messiah.

**The Main Point**

You’ll be using the Psalm 24 and Jeremiah 32 passages to help students understand that God is all-powerful. He has power over all things and all circumstances. Take some time to establish the truth that God is all-powerful. He literally can do anything and everything He wants to do. This truth becomes a little cliché in church circles. We say it without really thinking about its implications. Establish that it’s the truth and talk about its implications and what it means.

You’ll then use Isaiah 55 to help show students that we can trust that God is all-powerful and good, even when we don’t understand what He’s doing. We are finite and can’t see the bigger picture of exactly what God’s doing all the time. Our calling is to trust that His ways are higher than our understanding. Finally, you’ll look at the Genesis 18 passage to help students see that they can trust that God can exert His power in even the most impossible situations, for His glory and our good.

Lesson Plan

The **Lesson Plan** contains three elements: An introductory activity called *The Lead In*; the Bible study section called *The Main Event*; an application-focused segment called *The Last Word.*

**The Lead In**

* **Goal:** To have students begin to think about the fact that God is not controlled by outside forces or circumstances.
* **Set-Up:** If you can, be prepared to show a short clip from YouTube. Search “prank” and find a short video that you can appropriately share with your group. If you are unable, you can skip the video and focus on the discussion questions provided below.

FIRST, show the YouTube clip.

THEN, have the students share their own stories of pranking or being pranked. Steer the conversation and re-direct if necessary. Then, once students have shared, start to reflect on these stories and video. Then ask:

* **Why are these clips and stories so funny? Why is it so fun to scare or surprise someone?**
	+ *Answer:* Because the person being pranked has no clue what is coming, their reactions are over the top, etc.
* **Why can the people pranked be so angry after?**
	+ *Answer:* Because they were trying to do their own thing (like sleep) but were interrupted, the surprise scared them, etc.
* **What does this tell us about ourselves? What does it tell us about how much power or control we have over our own lives?**
	+ *Answers will vary.*

FINALLY, explain to students that these small, funny stories and clips reveal a bigger truth about us. Despite our plans, we cannot control much of anything from a nap to our life plans. Say:

* **There are people, plans, circumstances, and events that interrupt our plans and change our lives. We can make plans, but we cannot guarantee that we will keep them. Let the students know that this is not the case with God. This is what we’ll be talking about in the Main Event.**

**The Main Event**

* **Goal:** The goal here is for the students to understand that God can do all things because God has all the power.
* **Set-Up:** None

FIRST, talk about the nature of power and the ways power is exercised in the world today.

* **What is power? Who are some powerful people in this world?**
	+ *Answer:* Power is the ability toaccomplish what one sets out to accomplish through various means such as force, persuasion, etc. Some powerful people may include celebrities, but, more likely, politicians, such as the President.
* **What are some of the differences in worldly power and God’s power?**
	+ Answers will vary. The goal is to get students thinking in these terms. Help them see that throughout the lesson we will see how God’s power isn’t dependent on outside circumstances or forces. Unlike worldly power, God’s power is total.
* **What about God’s character makes His power different from worldly power?**
	+ Answers will vary. God's power is total. He has the power to accomplish His Will because He controls all things and all circumstances. God's power flows from His love. It is not motivated by selfish desires for domination or more power. He already has all the power.

THEN, explain that it's one thing to talk about God's power. But it's another thing to believe that God is infinitely more powerful than anyone else who has ever lived. But that's the goal of your time in study. Read or have a student read Psalm 24:8. While students are finding the passage, consider providing some of the contexts for the psalms using the Bible Background. Then, ask:

* **Think about how what David knew from Israel’s history could have helped Him say this. What are some examples?**
	+ *Answer:* Throughout the history of Israel, God showed his power over all circumstances and its history. Some examples could include famous stories such as Noah, Abraham, and Sarah (we'll discuss this later), Moses, the Exodus, David, numerous battles, and the list could go on and on. The story of Israel is the story of God using His power to accomplish His purpose through His chosen nation.
* **What in David’s own life would have helped him believe this truth?**
	+ *Answer:* Throughout his life, David engaged in many battles. In each battle, he saw the power of God on display. Ask students to think of examples from the life of David of God’s power at work in difficult circumstances and situations. One of the most common answers will probably be the story of David and Goliath (found in I Samuel 17).
* **In light of our discussion on power, why do you think God would use a lowly, small boy to defeat the Philistines?**
	+ *Answer:* Explain that God’s use of the humble, rather than the strong, points us to Him and His power.

Explain that in all of these instances God showed His power through individuals, circumstances, events, and even nature and creation. God was in control of it all.

NEXT, instruct students to turn to Jeremiah 32:17. While they’re finding it, provide a bit of the context using the Biblical Background. Then, read or have a student read the verse. Then, ask:

* **This verse illustrates God’s power over creation. He created the world and still governs it. Where do you we see God’s power over creation?**
	+ Answers will vary but might include the beauty of creation, the vastness of creation and the details of creation all working together, and so on.

Explain that God doesn’t just order human lives. He orders and sustains all of creation. Say something like:

* **God is concerned for humankind. After all, He sent Jesus here to make peace between Him and us. But the scope of God's power and concern goes way beyond us. He created the entire universe and still sustains it. He does not exercise His power for our happiness. His power over all creation reveals that His greater purpose is to bring glory to Himself. Nothing is too hard for Him.**

Ask:

* God has power over all creation, history, events, and circumstances. **What does this say about us?**
	+ *Answer:*For us, it shows us our worth in God’s eyes (that in the midst of ordering and sustaining *everything*, God has a special place and concern for us) but it also humbles us (that God’s concern goes well beyond us).
* **What does it say about God?**
	+ *Answer:* He is powerful, and His power is fundamentally different and fundamentally greater than any power we know.

THEN, read or have a student read Isaiah 55:8-9. Reiterate to the students the case that has been built so far: we have seen that God's power is complete and that it is good, He has power over our lives and the lives of individuals, He has power over history and all circumstances, and He has power over all of creation. Explain that the conclusions you've drawn are that God's power comes from love and that His power serves a purpose greater than our happiness. Ask:

* **How do these verses from Isaiah illustrate and reinforce the truths that have been discussed so far?**
	+ *Answer:* God’s purposes include us but go beyond us. We, in our finiteness, can only see an extremely small portion of God's unfolding plan. God sees all of the plans before Him all at once and orders everything according to that plan. While God may do something that doesn't make sense to us, everything that happens is according to His plan. Every part of that plan, from joy to suffering, works towards God's goal of glorifying Himself and redeeming His people.

FINALLY, explain that it’s critical that we have faith in God’s power, that He can do above and beyond what we can imagine. But it’s vital that we realize God’s power has a purpose: to glorify Himself and redeem His people. This is why He does all that He does. Ask if there are any comments or questions. Then, transition into The Last Word by saying:

* **Ephesians 3:20-21 offers a nice summary of our discussion. It talks how God's power is beyond our comprehension, and how it has the purpose of bringing glory to Himself for all time: "Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen." Let's see how this practically fleshes out in our lives.**

**The Last Word**

* **Goal:** The goal here is for students to consider whether or not they truly believe that God has power over everything.
* **Set-Up:** None

FIRST, begin to bring together the various application questions from throughout the lesson. The following questions will help students put everything together. From there, students can begin to apply these truths.

Start by focusing a question on God’s power. Encourage them to think back to the beginning of the lesson where we differentiated between human, worldly power and God’s power. Ask something like:

* **How is the power you, your parents, the mayor, the President have so different from the power that God has?**
	+ *Answer:* God’s power is not limited or interrupted by outside forces and circumstances. He can do anything He wills since He has all power.
* **Why is God’s power so much better than worldly power?**
	+ *Answer:* It is better because it comes from a God whose character is all loving and all-powerful. God’s will is for our good and His glory. He has the power to carry this out.

THEN, ask questions that have students think of themselves in light of God’s power. Ask:

* **What does God’s power show us about ourselves?**
	+ *Answer:* It shows us how finite we are and how infinite He is. It should humble us and lead us to worship more.

FINALLY, because of God's power and their position in relation to God's power, have the students explore ways these truths change the way they live. Ask:

* **Does God’s infinite, loving power over everything give you comfort? Why or why not?**
	+ *Answer*: Hopefully, after this lesson, this theological truth does bring comfort knowing that God exercises His power in love for His glory. In the midst of the troubled world, God still has control.
* **How does God’s power give you confidence?**
	+ *Answer:* As tools in His hands, we have confidence that He is working in us and through us to bring others to Himself and to bring Himself glory. We can have confidence enough to take risks for the Kingdom since He is directing all things.

Challenge students with this final question:

* **If this truth does not give you comfort and confidence, ask yourself if you truly believe in this truth?**

Explain that if we have comfort and confidence in God's power, we will go out into the world today, living boldly as Christ-followers. There is nothing that will be too much for us to handle, or too big for us to take. Our thoughts, their actions, their relationships . . . every aspect of our lives will be different because of our confidence in God's power. Challenge them to spend the next few days thinking about this truth.

Then, close in prayer.

* Don’t forget to distribute the devotions to your students this week. If you’re posting them on Instagram, or some other means of electronic distribution, make sure you inform students of when they will be receiving them.
* Use the *Social Media* guide to stay in touch with students via text or Instagram, and to encourage them to follow through with reading their devotions.

**We Want To Hear From You . . .**

* Do you have questions about a lesson?
* Something that worked particularly well you want to share?
* Something that didn’t work you want to bring up?

We value your feedback! Please do not hesitate to email us with your questions, comments, or concerns, at feedback@youthministry360.com.