

I Believe in the Holy Spirit: God's Activity in the World

SESSION THREE LEADER GUIDE

This leader guide is designed to follow each page of the third session: “I Believe in the Holy Spirit: God’s Activity in the World” with background for the leader and helpful references for expanding the learning. This third lesson may be taught as one longer continuous session, such as at a retreat setting, or as separate sessions (approximately one hour) that cover each page of the session. You may wish to have youth view the website, or individual pages, on their own, then gather as a group to discuss and explore the learning. The website is also useful within the classroom as a teaching tool to introduce the material, then youth may revisit it later to reinforce learning at home. While the curriculum offers prompts for guiding conversation and offers direction for teaching the material, it is important to prepare your own answers for questions and notes for discussion. Sharing your personal experience and insight with the group is a valuable resource for these lessons.

OBJECTIVES

At the end of this session, the students will be better able to:

Identify the differences between scientific and theological explorations of how powers and forces work in the world

Express an understanding of the ways in which God is present and active in the world

THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The conversation between faith/religion and science can be difficult to navigate with youth who live in a world where they are bombarded by a great amount of information and opinions. It is important to first set a safe learning environment where differing opinions are respected and confidentiality is secured.

You may also want to consult with parents/guardians prior to

beginning this session to alert them to the concepts taught in this session, and invite them to preview the website. Many adults are unfamiliar with ways to talk about both science and religion, or may have beliefs that are challenged by this learning.

Within any group of youth you will find a wide range of maturity and development levels. In general, adolescent-aged students (12-14) are able to engage in more complex thinking, reason deductively, and are better able to form concepts about the past, present, and future than their elementary counterparts. As adolescence is achieved, they can synthesize values and beliefs with their own experiences to create meaning and understanding for life. This is also a time when a sense of personal identity is being formed, and this extends to their identity as it relates to the concepts of science and faith.

SUPPLIES FOR SESSION ONE

- Computer and access to Internet
- Poster board, markers, and tape

TO BEGIN:

Gather youth and provide an overview of lesson(s) to be covered in I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT: GOD'S ACTIVITY IN THE WORLD session(s). If this lesson is held separately from the previous lesson, review the need for a safe and confidential environment. Ask youth to recall ways for their group to honor one another's opinions and to keep shared ideas in the group. If possible, review these ideas previously listed on a white board, or a computer document and read the completed list. Ask all present, youth and adults, to agree to follow these guidelines for the duration of the learning time together.

PAGE ONE – I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT: GOD'S ACTIVITY IN THE WORLD

Begin the lesson by reviewing the definition of a statement of faith or a creed: A statement or set of formal beliefs, usually

Christian, or a set of guidelines that define how you live.

Ask: How would you describe or define the Holy Spirit? *Allow all answers.*

How would you describe or define natural powers in the world? *Allow all answers.*

Next: Review the information on the first page of lesson three: I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT: GOD'S ACTIVITY IN THE WORLD. Discuss ways that the group has experienced conversations or statements about how God might or might not work in the world. Allow discussion to continue for as long as time allows.

Next: Have the group watch the video clip in the link from the movie "Bruce Almighty."

Discuss with the group why they feel that some Christians and some scientists disagree about the claims of how power and forces work in the world. Be attentive to the need for each group member to honor the thoughts, feelings, and opinions of each other. Allow the discussion to continue for as long as interest is maintained. You may continue on with the lesson to PAGE TWO – THE TWO CLAIMS, or bring the session to a close. If the session will end, encourage students to keep track of any conversations they observe or have experienced with friends or family regarding the claims of how powers and forces work in the world. Encourage students to bring this information back to future sessions.