

**LIFE
LABS**

We love because God first loved us.

1 JOHN 4:19

**Is there
more going
on in the
world than
what we
can see?**


**Jesus
centred
Spirit led
Hope
revealed**

LEADER MATERIAL

LIFE LABS 2026 | TERM 2
SALVOS YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS



TOPIC OUTLINE

The first half of the term is called 'Understanding the spiritual world'.
The second half of the term is called 'Strengthened by the Holy Spirit'.

LIFE LABS PART 1: UNDERSTANDING THE SPIRITUAL WORLD

LIFE LAB 1: How do we know the spiritual world is real? (page 04)

Purpose: The purpose of this session is to help young people consider where they have seen evidence of the spiritual world.

Scripture: The Scripture (Ephesians 6:10b-18) explores the Good News that we don't face the spiritual world alone, and God is more powerful than anything else in the spiritual world.

LIFE LAB 2: What difference does it make to have the Holy Spirit in our lives? (page 09)

Purpose: The purpose of this session is to help young people consider what they have heard about the Holy Spirit.

Scripture: The Scriptures (Ephesians 1:13 & John 14:15-17, 26-27) explore the Good News that when we choose to follow Jesus, the Holy Spirit comes into our lives, bringing love, peace, guidance and wisdom.

LIFE LAB 3: How can we be guided by the Holy Spirit? (page 14)

Purpose: The purpose of this session is to help young people reflect on times they have heard others speak about being led by the Holy Spirit, or moments when they sensed his guidance themselves.

Scripture: The Scripture (Acts 16:6-10) explores the Good News that the Holy Spirit guides us through Scripture and prayer.

LIFE LAB 4: How can we tell if something is spiritually dangerous? (page 18)

Purpose: The purpose of this session is to help young people reflect on times when their gut has told them something is good or harmful.

Scripture: The Scriptures (Matthew 7:15-20 & 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22) explore the Good News that God has given us ways to tell what is spiritually dangerous and what is from God.

PART 2: STRENGTHENED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT

LIFE LAB 5: How can we look after our spiritual health? (page 23)

Purpose: The purpose of this session is to help young people reflect on their priorities in taking care of their spirit, body and mind.

Scripture: The Scripture (1 Timothy 4:7-8) explores the Good News that God cares deeply about our spiritual wellbeing, and can make us spiritually healthy and strong.

LIFE LAB 6: What can we do if we find spiritual things scary? (page 28)

Purpose: The purpose of this session is to help young people consider the reasons they might find the spiritual world scary.

Scripture: The Scriptures (Colossians 2:15 & Psalm 27:1) explore the Good News that we don't need to fear, because Jesus has already won the victory.

LIFE LAB 7: How can we bring light to the world? (page 32)

Purpose: The purpose of this session is to help young people reflect on times they have seen people bring God's goodness and light into the world.

Scripture: The Scriptures (John 8:12 & Matthew 5:15-16) explore the Good News that Jesus – the light of the world – fills us with his light and empowers us to spread that light to others.

LIFE LAB 8: How can we fight against evil? (page 37)

Purpose: The purpose of this session is to help young people consider the feelings and responses they have about evil things that happen in the world.

Scripture: The Scripture (Ephesians 6:10b-18) explores the Good News that God has equipped us with everything we need to fight against darkness and evil.

APPENDIX – ACTIVITY SESSIONS

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY SESSION (page 42)

For the first session of the term, you can take the opportunity to welcome the young people back and introduce them to the theme. Rather than a structured Life Lab session, the material explores some activities you could do that are fun, will connect the young people, and will help introduce the ideas we'll look at in Life Labs. For example, in this session, you can help young people explore the idea of a spiritual battle – through activities like Nerf War, Capture the Flag, Human Battleships or Water Wars.

REFLECTION ACTIVITY SESSION (page 43)

The reflection activity session provides an opportunity to reflect on the topic idea in a session that is less structured than a Life Lab. You can use the ideas to create a fun and social session that will help develop the topics. For example, you can help young people explore the idea of being guided by the Holy Spirit through activities like Treasure Hunt, Silent Commander or Mega Maze.

SPEAKER BRIEF (page 44)

The speaker brief provides the outline of a short Good News message to share with young people. The message will connect with young people's experiences. Using the Scriptures (Ephesians 1:13 and John 14:15-17 & 26-27) we explore the Good News that when we choose to follow Jesus, the Holy Spirit comes into our lives, bringing love, peace, guidance and wisdom.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

At the start of each session, acknowledge the Country and Traditional Owners of the land your group is gathering on. Below is a template you could use.

"Today we meet on _____ Country.

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters from which we've all come or crossed over to arrive here today. We commit ourselves to being voices of reconciliation."

LIFE LABS

1. How do we know the spiritual world is real?

HOW TO RUN A SESSION:

- Read the introduction and play the game
- Do the activity and discuss the questions
- Read the Scripture and discuss the questions
- Read the conclusion and close the session

Adapt this session to suit the needs of your group as required.

SESSION OUTLINE

Purpose: The purpose of this session is to help young people consider where they have seen evidence of the spiritual world, and to reflect on the Good News that we don't face the spiritual world alone, and God is more powerful than anything else in the spiritual world.

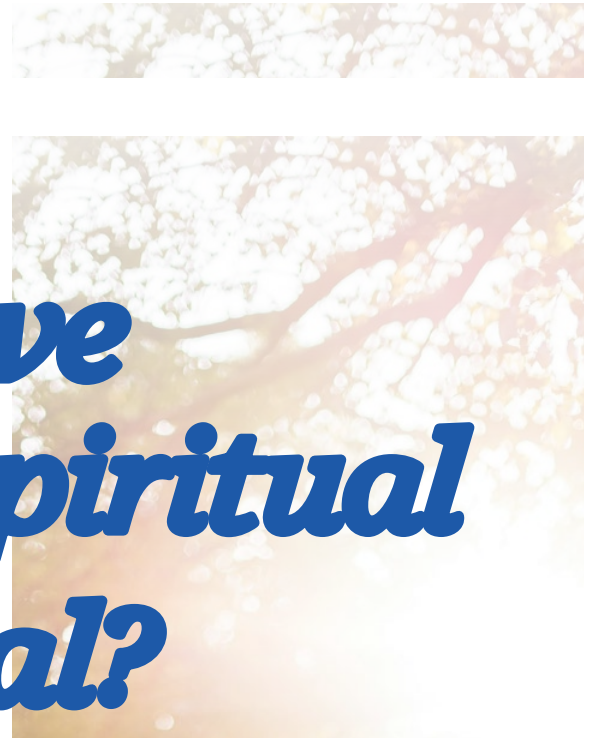
Game: The [Is It Real?](#) game gets young people to experience trying to decide if something is real or not.

Activity: The *Mind Map* activity helps young people to reflect on things that shape our ideas about the spiritual world.

Scripture: The Scripture (Ephesians 6:10b-18) explores the Good News that we don't face the spiritual world alone, and God is more powerful than anything else in the spiritual world.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED FOR THE SESSION:

- ☐ A way to display [PowerPoint slides](#)
- ☐ Butchers' paper
- ☐ Markers



READ THE INTRODUCTION AND PLAY THE GAME

READ THE INTRODUCTION

We come across references to the supernatural everywhere – in shows like *Stranger Things*, games like *Dungeons & Dragons*, and in the books we read and movies we watch. It's not unusual for fantasy stories to feature ghosts, witches and unseen forces.

When we come across these things, we might be confident that they're pure fiction – made up for entertainment. Or we might feel uneasy – like there's something real and powerful behind it all.

When we scroll online, we may see influencers promoting crystals, tarot cards or Ouija boards. Some talk about "speaking things into existence". Some of us might feel drawn to what they're saying. Others might simply be curious. Or we might scroll past quickly, getting a bad feeling or dismissing it as nonsense.

Some of us have experienced the Holy Spirit and believe that he is real, but what about all these other spiritual things?

It's natural for us to wonder: How do we know the spiritual world is real?

As a way to begin thinking about this, let's play the 'Is It Real?' game.

PLAY THE 'IS IT REAL?' GAME

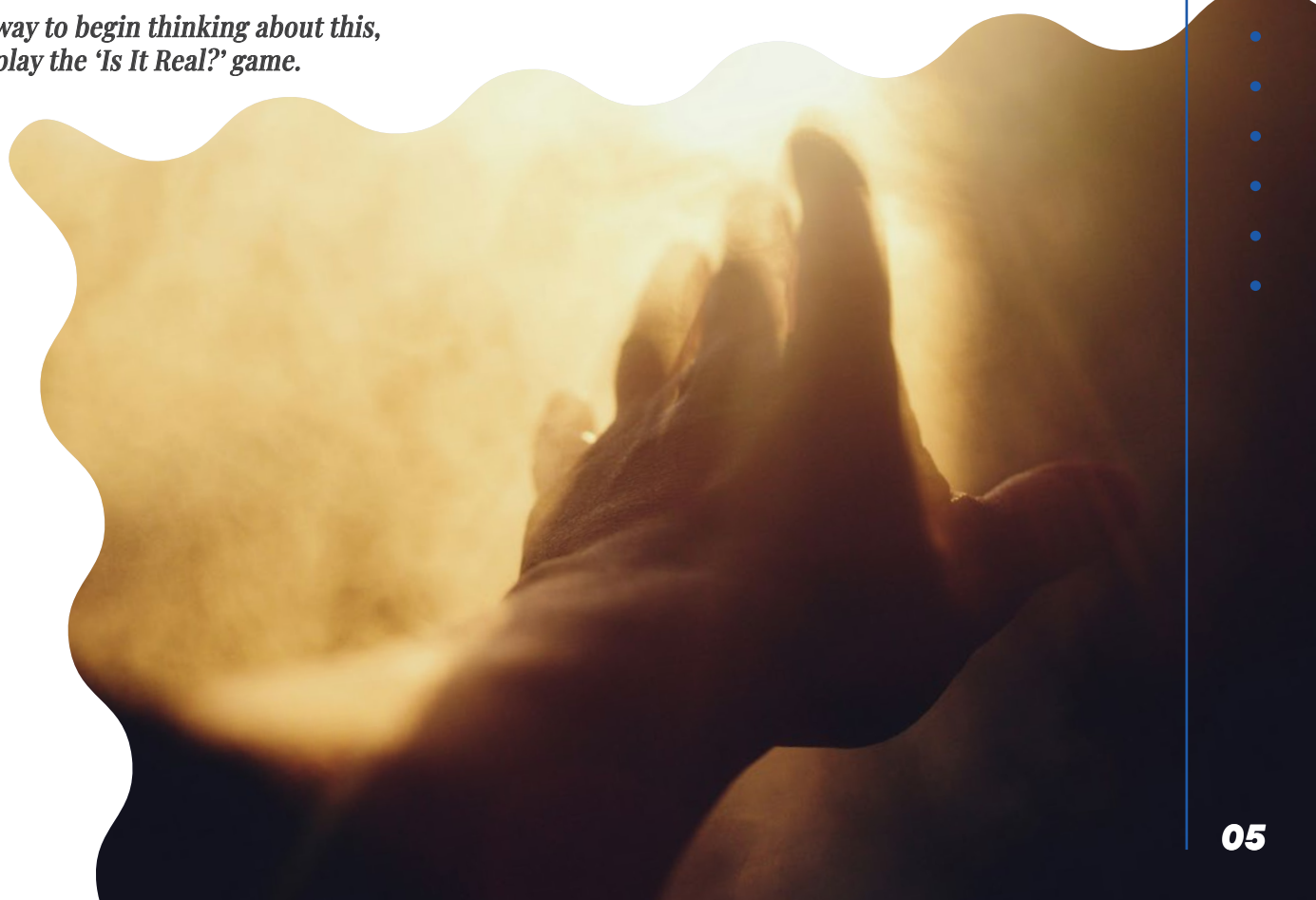
EQUIPMENT:

☐ [PowerPoint slides](#)

- Allocate the left side of the room as NOT REAL and right side of the room as REAL.
- Display the PowerPoint slides.
- After each image is shown, allow group members to go to either side of the room to vote.
- After everyone has voted, show the answer on the next slide.

How did you go with the game? How did it feel to try to work out what was real?

Have you ever questioned whether the spiritual world is real – or which parts are real? What led you to question this?



DO ACTIVITY AND DISCUSS QUESTIONS

LEADERS, WATCH THE PARTICIPANTS FOR:

- what they say to each other
- what they find hard
- what they find easy
- what worked
- what caused conflict

HOW TO DO THE 'MIND MAP' ACTIVITY



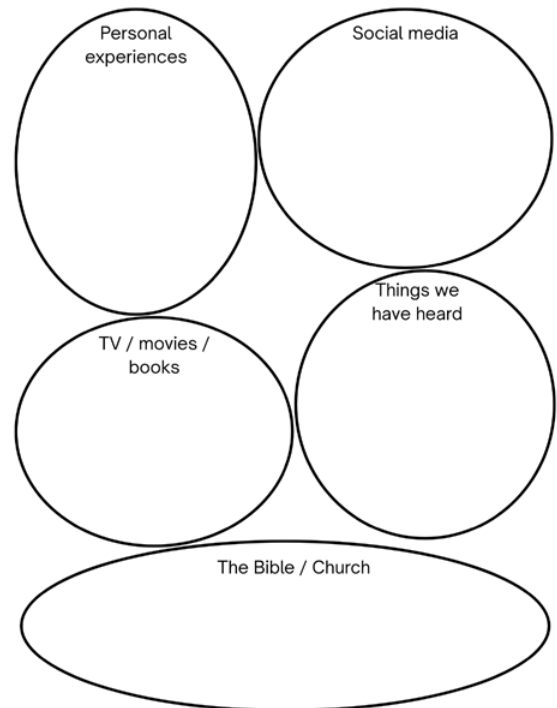
EQUIPMENT:

- ☐ A large sheet of butchers' paper
- ☐ Markers

- Draw a mind map on a large sheet of butchers' paper.
- At the top, write 'What shapes our idea of the spiritual world?'
- Create five circles:
 - Personal experiences
 - Social media
 - TV/movies/books
 - Things we have heard
 - The Bible/church

(See example below.)

What shapes our idea of the spiritual world?



- Everyone in the group works together to brainstorm things in these categories that shape our ideas of the spiritual world.

DISCUSS THE ACTIVITY

How did you go with the activity? Were you surprised by how many ideas we came up with?

Why do you think so much media – including movies and books – focus on spiritual things?

Have you ever engaged with spiritual content and had an especially positive or negative feeling? What happened? Where do you think that came from?

Has anyone experienced the power of the Holy Spirit in their lives? What happened?

READ THE SCRIPTURE AND DISCUSS THE QUESTIONS

THE SPIRITUAL WORLD IS REAL

Ephesians 6:10b-18

“...be strong in the Lord and in his great power. ¹¹ Wear the full armor of God. Wear God’s armor so that you can fight against the devil’s clever tricks. ¹² Our fight is not against people on earth. We are fighting against the rulers and authorities and the powers of this world’s darkness. We are fighting against the spiritual powers of evil in the heavenly places. ¹³ That is why you need to get God’s full armor. Then on the day of evil, you will be able to stand strong. And when you have finished the whole fight, you will still be standing. ¹⁴ So stand strong with the belt of truth tied around your waist, and on your chest wear the protection of right living. ¹⁵ On your feet wear the Good News of peace to help you stand strong. ¹⁶ And also use the shield of faith with which you can stop all the burning arrows that come from the Evil One. ¹⁷ Accept God’s salvation as your helmet. And take the sword of the Spirit—that sword is the teaching of God. ¹⁸ Pray in the Spirit at all times. Pray with all kinds of prayers, and ask for everything you need. To do this you must always be ready. Never give up. Always pray for all of God’s people.”

DISCUSS THESE TOPIC QUESTIONS

What do you think about what we just read? Does anything surprise you? How do you think it might relate to the question, ‘How do we know the spiritual world is real?’

What do you think Paul is trying to tell us when he says our fight is not against “people on earth” but against “spiritual powers of evil”?

What are some practical things we can do to put on the armour of God?

How does it feel to know that we can stand strong in the great power of God?

Notes on the Scripture for facilitators:

- At the time when Paul wrote this letter to the Ephesians, the city of Ephesus was a large city with lots of different religions and cultures. They engaged in a broad range of spiritual practices. They worshipped many gods and believed in things like the power of sacred stones.
- When Paul wrote this letter, he was a prisoner, in the custody of Roman soldiers, who would have been wearing armour. The order in which the pieces of armour are described is the order in which the soldier would normally put them on.
- Paul gives us two key instructions here. First, be strong in the Lord and in his great power”. Second, “put on the full armour of God”. Both are essential. If you take a weak person who can barely stand, and put the best armour on them, they will still be an ineffective soldier. Before we can fight spiritual battles, we must accept Jesus our Saviour and receive his power. Then we can put on the armour of God.

READ THE CONCLUSION AND CLOSE THE SESSION

READ THE CONCLUSION

References to the supernatural are everywhere – in shows, games, stories and movies. We might come across influencers who promote various ‘spiritual’ items or activities.

Some see supernatural occurrences as harmless fantasy, but some of us have had personal spiritual experiences that we find difficult to explain to those who haven’t.

No matter what our experiences have been, the Good News is that we don’t face the spiritual world alone and God is more powerful than anything else in the spiritual world.

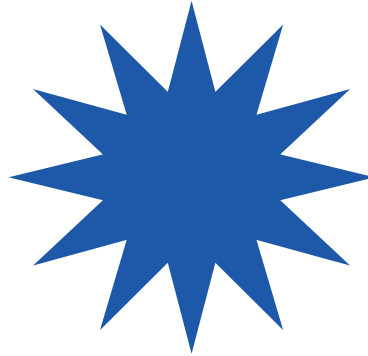
ASK THE GROUP:

- Get each person to share a takeaway from the session.
- Ask if anybody would like prayer for this topic or would like to pray. Then lead the group in prayer.
- Ask if anybody wants to discuss anything further about this topic with a leader or support person.
- Remind them when the next session is.

CLOSE THE SESSION

In the group material (page 5):

“...the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.” — 1 John 4:4b



2. What difference does it make to have the Holy Spirit in our lives?

HOW TO RUN A SESSION:

- Read the introduction and play the game
- Do the activity and discuss the questions
- Read the Scripture and discuss the questions
- Read the conclusion and close the session

Adapt this session to suit the needs of your group as required.

SESSION OUTLINE

Purpose: The purpose of this session is to help young people consider what they have heard about the Holy Spirit and to explore the Good News that when we choose to follow Jesus, the Holy Spirit comes into our lives, bringing love, peace, guidance and wisdom.

Game: The *Power Up Tag* game gets young people to experience receiving power that helps them.

Activity: The *Things the Holy Spirit Does* activity helps young people to reflect on things they have heard about or experienced the Holy Spirit doing.

Scripture: The Scriptures (Ephesians 1:13 and John 14:15-17, 26-27) explore the Good News that when we choose to follow Jesus, the Holy Spirit comes into our lives, bringing love, peace, guidance and wisdom.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED FOR THE SESSION:

- ☐ Butchers' paper
- ☐ Tape or Blu Tack
- ☐ Pens or markers

READ THE INTRODUCTION AND PLAY THE GAME

READ THE INTRODUCTION

If we've been around church for a while, we may have sensed the Holy Spirit. During times of worship or prayer, we might have felt God's love, a strong feeling of peace or just a sense that something spiritual was happening. At times like this, we may feel confident that it is the Holy Spirit or we might not be sure.

Some of us have heard friends talk about their experience of the Holy Spirit – feeling him close, sensing him guiding them or helping them feel God's love. If we haven't felt those things ourselves, we might feel disappointed, confused or even a bit jealous. Is there a way we can experience those things too?

Others of us have felt the Holy Spirit at work in our lives but might wonder if we are experiencing all that the Holy Spirit can bring.

Whether we've been a Christian for as long as we can remember or we are still exploring, it's natural to ask:

What difference does the Holy Spirit make in our lives?

As a way to begin thinking about this, let's play the 'Power Up Tag' game.



PLAY THE 'POWER UP TAG' GAME

- Choose one person to be the tagger.
- Choose one person to be the 'Power Source'.
- Everyone else spreads out around the room.
- If someone gets tagged by the tagger, they must freeze on the spot.
- The only way to unfreeze is if the Power Source runs over and taps them.
- When the Power Source taps them, they shout, "POWER UP!" and they're back in the game.

Optional fun twist:

- After a minute or two, swap who the Power Source is.
- If you want more chaos, add a second tagger.

How did you go with the game? How did it feel when the Power Source helped you?

When, in life, do you wish you had someone giving you extra strength or helping you get unstuck?



DO ACTIVITY AND DISCUSS QUESTIONS

LEADERS, WATCH THE PARTICIPANTS FOR:

- what they say to each other
- what they find hard
- what they find easy
- what worked
- what caused conflict

HOW TO DO THE 'THINGS THE HOLY SPIRIT DOES' ACTIVITY

EQUIPMENT:

- ☐ Butchers' Paper
- ☐ Tape or Blu Tack
- ☐ Pens or markers

- Put three sheets of Butchers' Paper on the wall.
- On sheet 1, write: 'Things we've experienced'
- On sheet 2, write: 'Things others have told us they've experienced'
- On sheet 3, write: 'Things we've read about in the Bible'
- Have group members write up, under each heading, things the Holy Spirit does.
Be mindful to include and encourage any young people who may not have many things to write.
- Use the following prompts only if needed:
Has anyone heard anything about the Holy Spirit
 - bringing peace?
 - helping them feel loved?

- guiding them?
- helping them feel brave?
- giving them words to speak?
- helping them to heal someone?
- helping someone to forgive?

DISCUSS THE ACTIVITY

- How did you go with the activity? Were you surprised by how many different things you came up with?
- What is one aspect of the Holy Spirit that you have experienced in your own life?
- What sorts of things stop people from letting the Holy Spirit into their lives?
- How would you describe what the Holy Spirit does to someone who has never heard of him?

READ THE SCRIPTURE AND DISCUSS THE QUESTIONS

THE PROMISED HOLY SPIRIT

Ephesians 1:13

"It is the same with you. You heard the true message, the Good News about the way God saves you. When you heard that Good News, you believed in Christ. And in Christ, God put his special mark on you by giving you the Holy Spirit that he promised."

OUR HELPER

John 14:15-17 and 26-27

¹⁵ "If you love me, you will do what I command. ¹⁶ I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper to be with you forever. ¹⁷ The Helper is the Spirit of truth. The people of the world cannot accept him, because they don't see him or know him. But you know him. He lives with you, and he will be in you."

²⁶ "But the Helper will teach you everything and cause you to remember all that I told you. This Helper is the Holy Spirit that the Father will send in my name. ²⁷ I leave you peace. It is my own peace I give you. I give you peace in a different way than the world does. So don't be troubled. Don't be afraid."

DISCUSS THESE TOPIC QUESTIONS

What do you think about what we just read? How do you think it might relate to the question ‘What difference does it make to have the Holy Spirit in our lives?’

Why do you think we need to believe in Jesus before receiving the Holy Spirit into our lives?

What do you think it means when it says that he lives in us? What difference do you think this makes?

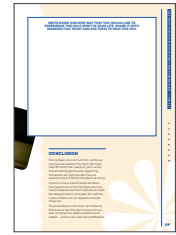
What would it look like to open up more of your life to the Holy Spirit?

Notes on the Scripture for facilitators:

- The ‘special mark’ of the Holy Spirit, referred to in Ephesians 1:13, is an indication that we belong to God and that we have eternal life in him.
- It is the Holy Spirit who enables us to keep the commandments of Jesus, helping us to love Jesus and others in practical ways.
- God’s Spirit helps us to know him, to live in his presence, and to follow the example of Jesus.
- The ancient Greek word for ‘helper’ is *parakletos*. It was sometimes used to refer to an advisor, a legal defender, a mediator, or an intercessor.¹ A helper, in this sense, brings comfort, guidance, understanding and strength.
- When Jesus left Earth, he finished teaching the disciples in person, as their rabbi, but their training was not finished. It would be continued by “the Helper”, “the Holy Spirit.” The Holy Spirit continues to help every believer, reminding us of all Jesus taught and helping us to apply it to our lives today.
- ‘I leave you peace’ or *Shalom* was a common thing to say at a departure in that culture. But Jesus gave this normal good-bye extra deep strength and meaning. Jesus offers a deep peace through the presence of the Holy Spirit.

In the group material (page 09):

A personal application prompt



1 [Enduring Word Bible Commentary John Chapter 14](#)

READ THE CONCLUSION AND CLOSE THE SESSION

READ THE CONCLUSION

If we've been around church for a while, we may have sensed the Holy Spirit. We might have felt God's love, peace, or just a sense that something spiritual was happening. Sometimes, we might wonder if we are experiencing all that the Holy Spirit can bring.

Some of us have heard friends talk about their experience of the Holy Spirit, but if we haven't experienced him ourselves, we might feel disappointed or confused. We might be unsure whether we can experience those things too.

The Good News is that when we choose to follow Jesus, the Holy Spirit comes into our lives, bringing love, peace, guidance and wisdom – and he can make all the difference.

ASK THE GROUP:

- Get each person to share a takeaway from the session.
- Ask if anybody would like prayer for this topic or would like to pray. Then lead the group in prayer.
- Ask if anybody wants to discuss anything further about this topic with a leader or support person.
- Remind them when the next session is.

CLOSE THE SESSION



LIFE LABS

3. *How can we be guided by the Holy Spirit?*

HOW TO RUN A SESSION:

- Read the introduction and play the game
- Do the activity and discuss the questions
- Read the Scripture and discuss the questions
- Read the conclusion and close the session

Adapt this session to suit the needs of your group as required.

SESSION OUTLINE

Purpose: The purpose of this session is to help young people reflect on times they have heard others speak about being led by the Holy Spirit, or moments when they sensed his guidance themselves, and to explore the Good News that the Holy Spirit guides us through Scripture and prayer.

Game: The *Blindfold Walk* game gets young people to experience being led by a voice.

Activity: The *Ways to be guided* activity helps young people to reflect on different ways they can be guided by the Holy Spirit.

Scripture: The Scripture (Acts 16:6-10) explores the Good News that the Holy Spirit guides us through Scripture and prayer.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED FOR THE SESSION:

- ☐ Blindfolds
- ☐ Cones/chairs/markers to create a simple course

READ THE INTRODUCTION AND PLAY THE GAME

READ THE INTRODUCTION

Christians often say that the Holy Spirit guides people. And the idea can sound appealing. Making big decisions and finding our way in life can feel scary and stressful – we might long for someone who loves us, who can help us know which decisions to make, and how to handle tough situations. But we might have questions about how it all works.

When we hear Christians say, “I felt the Spirit leading me” or “God was guiding me in that decision”, it can be hard to picture what they’re talking about. We can find ourselves wondering how they knew the Spirit was





PLAY THE 'BLINDFOLD WALK' GAME

guiding them. Did they see a sign? Hear a voice? Or was it more like a quiet thought or a growing sense that something was right? If we are following Jesus but haven't felt these things, we might worry and wonder if we are missing something.

Some of us have felt inner nudges to speak up, stay silent, apologise, reach out, or walk away. We might feel sure that it's the Holy Spirit or we might have doubts.

Some of us feel the Holy Spirit is guiding us often, but want to hear his voice louder and more often – particularly when it comes to sharing Jesus with others.

How can we be guided by the Holy Spirit?

As a way to begin thinking about this, let's play the 'Blindfold Walk' game.



EQUIPMENT:

- ☐ Enough blindfolds for half the group
- ☐ An open space, free of obstacles
- ☐ Cones/chairs/markers to create a simple course

- Each participant is blindfolded before entering the obstacle course.
- Each blindfolded participant is assigned one guide.
- The guide stands at the end of the course and can only use their voice to give directions (e.g. "Take two steps forward," "Turn left," "Stop").
- Other leaders or participants stand around the sides.
- Their role is to call out random instructions to distract the blindfolded players (e.g. "Go this way!" "Turn around!").
- Important rule: distractors must not touch the players or block their path.
- On "Go!", the blindfolded participants begin moving through the space.
- They must listen carefully and follow only the voice of their assigned guide, ignoring all other voices.
- The first person (or team) to safely reach their guide, or the finish marker, wins.

How did you go with the game? How did it feel to have to listen, among all the voices, for the person who was guiding you?

Who or what guides you in life?

DO ACTIVITY AND DISCUSS QUESTIONS

LEADERS, WATCH THE PARTICIPANTS FOR:

- what they say to each other
- what they find hard
- what they find easy
- what worked
- what caused conflict

HOW TO DO THE 'WAYS TO BE GUIDED' ACTIVITY

- In pairs, choose one of the 'Ways to be guided by the Holy Spirit' from the group material and prepare a very short role play about someone who is guided in that way.
- *N.B. If your group strongly dislikes role plays, ask them to make up a very short story instead.*
- Allow five minutes for pairs to prepare.
- If possible, get each group to choose a different 'way to be guided'.

DISCUSS THE ACTIVITY

*How did you go with the activity?
Did the examples everyone shared
feel relatable? Why/why not?*

*Which of the 'ways' do you feel like you do
most/least often? Why do you think that is?*

*What are some things that get in the way of
us looking for guidance from the Holy Spirit?*

*What is one area of your life that you would
love to have the Holy Spirit's guidance in?*

In the group material
(page 12):

Ways the Holy Spirit
can guide us



READ THE SCRIPTURE AND DISCUSS THE QUESTIONS

THE HOLY SPIRIT GUIDES PAUL

Acts 16:6-10

⁶ “Paul and those with him went through the areas of Phrygia and Galatia because the Holy Spirit did not allow them to tell the Good News in the province of Asia. ⁷ When they reached the border of Mysia, they tried to go on into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not let them go there. ⁸ So they passed by Mysia and went to the city of Troas. ⁹ That night Paul saw a vision. In it, a man from Macedonia came to Paul. The man stood there and begged, ‘Come across to Macedonia and help us.’ ¹⁰ After Paul had seen the vision, we immediately prepared to leave for Macedonia. We understood that God had called us to tell the Good News to those people.”

DISCUSS THESE TOPIC QUESTIONS

What do you think about what we have just read? How do you think it might relate to the question, ‘How can we be guided by the Holy Spirit?’

Why do you think the Holy Spirit didn’t just tell Paul exactly where to go?

When have you felt the Holy Spirit guiding you? How did he guide you?

What is one thing you could do to create more space to listen to the Holy Spirit’s guidance?

Notes on the Scripture for facilitators:

- The Holy Spirit stopped Paul from preaching the Gospel in Asia. We can assume that it was not the right time or Paul wasn’t the right person to start that work yet. In mission, we must listen for the Holy Spirit’s direction so we can move in step with him.
- We don’t know exactly how the Holy Spirit communicated this. It may have been through prophecy, an inner sense, or through circumstances. However it happened, Paul and his companions clearly understood.

- Paul had a clear vision to go to Macedonia and acted on it immediately. God can call people to his mission in unusual ways.²

READ THE CONCLUSION AND CLOSE THE SESSION

READ THE CONCLUSION

Christians often say that the Holy Spirit guides people, helping them know which decisions to make and how to handle tough situations. But we might have questions about how it all works.

When we hear Christians say, “I felt the Spirit leading me,” or “God was guiding me in that decision,” it can be hard to picture what they’re talking about. If we are following Jesus but haven’t felt these things, we might worry about this and wonder if we are missing something.

Some of us feel the Holy Spirit is guiding us, but we might want to hear his voice louder and more often – particularly when it comes to sharing Jesus with others.

The Good News is that the Holy Spirit can guide us in so many ways, including through prayer and reading the Bible. And the more we draw close to him, the more we will sense him guiding us.

ASK THE GROUP:

- Get each person to share a takeaway from the session.
- Ask if anybody would like prayer for this topic or would like to pray. Then lead the group in prayer.
- Ask if anybody wants to discuss anything further about this topic with a leader or support person.
- Remind them when the next session is.

CLOSE THE SESSION

LIFE LABS

4. *How can we tell if something is spiritually dangerous?*

HOW TO RUN A SESSION:

- Read the introduction and play the game
- Do the activity and discuss the questions
- Read the Scripture and discuss the questions
- Read the conclusion and close the session

Adapt this session to suit the needs of your group as required.

SESSION OUTLINE

Purpose: The purpose of this session is to help young people reflect on times when their gut has told them something is good or harmful, and to explore the Good News that God has given us ways to tell what is spiritually dangerous or what is from God.

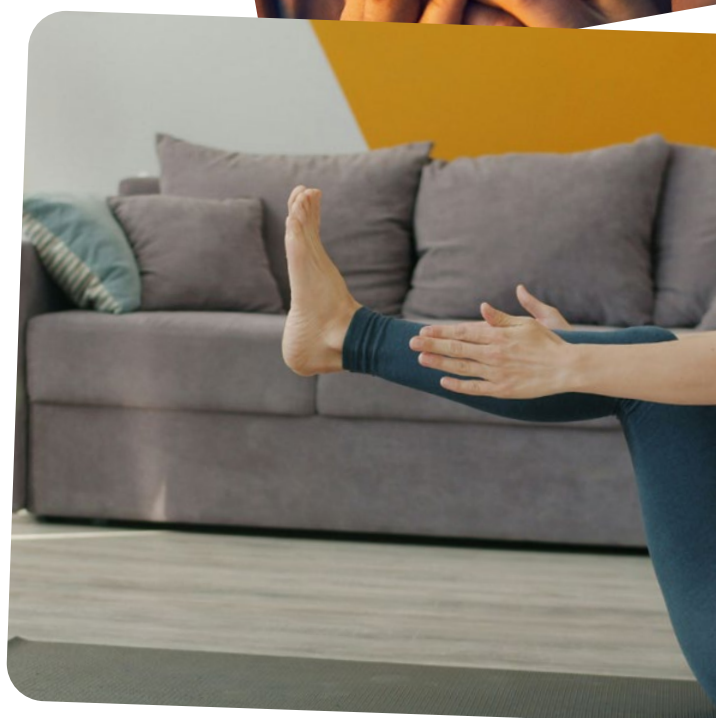
Game: The *Word Match* game gets young people to experience trying to work out what someone is going to say.

Activity: The [Is it Dangerous?](#) activity helps young people to practise how to work out if something is dangerous or safe.

Scripture: The Scriptures (Matthew 7:15-20 and 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22) explore the Good News that God has given us ways to tell what is spiritually dangerous and what is from God.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED FOR THE SESSION:

- ☐ A way to display the PPT slides for the [‘Is it Dangerous?’](#) activity.



READ THE INTRODUCTION AND PLAY THE GAME

READ THE INTRODUCTION

Some of us have dabbled in the supernatural. Some have been exposed to different spiritual ideas or practices, which may have seemed harmless. Some people may have been harmed or manipulated by certain spiritual practices or institutions. And some of us may have had moments – perhaps in social settings, online or at school – when we’ve sensed in our gut the choice we need to make. We may have had an uneasy feeling about a conversation or a game or activity, even though everyone else was going along with it. We might have wondered, “Am I just scared or is this feeling warning me of spiritual danger? If everyone else is fine with it, why do I feel different?”

Many of us have heard warnings about things like witchcraft, seances and Ouija boards, and then some people say that things like yoga can be harmful. Are they being over the top? How do we know if they are right? How do we work out the difference between harmless fun and something that’s spiritually dangerous?

How can we tell if something is spiritually dangerous?

As a way to begin thinking about this, let’s play the ‘Word Match’ game.



PLAY THE ‘WORD MATCH’ GAME

- Get into pairs.
- The pair counts to three and each person says a random word off the top of their heads, at the same time.
- Go again, thinking about the word the other person might say – for example, if the last word someone said was “ruler”, the next round one person might say “king” but the other might say “stapler”. The goal is for both people to say the same word at the same time. Each round the pair should try to get closer to matching each other’s word.
- Continue on, using the previous round’s words as the starting point and trying to think along the same lines so you eventually land on the same word at the same time.
- Swap players and play several rounds.

How did you go with the game? What was it like to try to work out what the other person was going to say?

When have you found it difficult to work out if something was good or bad for you to say or do?

DO ACTIVITY AND DISCUSS QUESTIONS

LEADERS, WATCH THE PARTICIPANTS FOR:

- what they say to each other
- what they find hard
- what they find easy
- what worked
- what caused conflict

HOW TO DO THE 'IS IT DANGEROUS?' ACTIVITY

EQUIPMENT:

- ☐ A way to display the 'Is it Dangerous?' [PPT slides](#)

- Show one image at a time.
- The first person to shout “danger” or “safe” wins a point, if they have adequately explained their reasoning.
- Others in the group can challenge the first answer, by calling out “disagree” and giving their reason. If their explanation is thoughtful and valid, award them a point as well.
- Keep the pace moving so the energy stays high.
- Continue through several images, keeping score if you like.

DISCUSS THE ACTIVITY

- How did you go with the activity? Were there any moments where you weren't sure whether something was safe or dangerous? What made it difficult to decide?
- Did anyone change their mind after hearing someone else's explanation? What influenced you?
- In real life, what clues might help us recognise when something could be spiritually unsafe?
- Who are the trusted people in your life you could talk to if you were unsure about something spiritual?



In the group material (p.17):

Steps for working out if something is dangerous

READ THE SCRIPTURE AND DISCUSS THE QUESTIONS

WHAT PEOPLE DO SHOWS WHO THEY ARE

Matthew 7:15-20

¹⁵ “Be careful of false prophets. They come to you and look gentle like sheep. But they are really dangerous like wolves. ¹⁶ You will know these people because of what they do. Good things don’t come from people who are bad, just as grapes don’t come from thornbushes, and figs don’t come from thorny weeds. ¹⁷ In the same way, every good tree produces good fruit, and bad trees produce bad fruit. ¹⁸ A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot produce good fruit. ¹⁹ Every tree that does not produce good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ You will know these false people by what they do.”

KEEPING WHAT IS GOOD

1 Thessalonians 5:21-22

²¹ “But test everything. Keep what is good,
²² and stay away from everything that is evil.”

DISCUSS THESE TOPIC QUESTIONS

What do you think about what we just read? How do you think it might relate to the question, ‘How can we tell if something is spiritually dangerous?’

What “fruit” – or clues – might show that something is spiritually healthy or unhealthy?

What happens to the tree that produces “bad fruit”? What might you see in someone’s life when they get involved in things that are spiritually dangerous?

1 Thessalonians 5:21 says to “test everything”. If you were trying to work out whether something was good to be involved in, what would you pay attention to?

Notes on the Scripture for facilitators:

- In Matthew 7:15-20 Jesus tells the disciples to ‘be careful’ or watchful for people who present themselves as good but are actually dangerous.
- Paying attention to their fruits includes considering their *manner of living*, the *content of their teaching* (does it align with God’s Word?) and the *effect of their teaching* (are people growing in Jesus?).
- When Paul writes to the Thessalonians, he encourages them to *test all things* (according to the standard of God’s Word and the discernment of the Holy Spirit among the leaders), rejecting anything that has any aspect of evil and holding on only to what is good. This includes evil that may come with a spiritual image.
- They are to shun evil in whatever form it presents itself in.

READ THE CONCLUSION AND CLOSE THE SESSION

READ THE CONCLUSION

Some of us may have dabbled in the supernatural or have been exposed to different spiritual ideas or practices. Some of these could have seemed harmless, but some people may have been harmed by them.

There are times we've sensed in our gut the choice we need to make. We may have had an uneasy feeling and wondered, "Is this feeling warning me of spiritual danger? If everyone else is fine with it, why do I feel different?"

Many of us have heard warnings about spiritual things and think, *Are they being over the top?* We can wonder how to work out the difference between harmless fun and something that's spiritually dangerous.

The Good News is that God has given us ways to tell what is spiritually dangerous and what is from God. And we can trust in his Word and ask the Holy Spirit to show us the way.

ASK THE GROUP:

- Get each person to share a takeaway from the session.
- Ask if anybody would like prayer for this topic or would like to pray. Then lead the group in prayer.
- Ask if anybody wants to discuss anything further about this topic with a leader or support person.
- Remind them when the next session is.



CLOSE THE SESSION

5. How can we look after our spiritual health?

HOW TO RUN A SESSION:

- Read the introduction and play the game
- Do the activity and discuss the questions
- Read the Scripture and discuss the questions
- Read the conclusion and close the session

Adapt this session to suit the needs of your group as required.

SESSION OUTLINE

Purpose: The purpose of this session is to help young people reflect on their priorities in taking care of their spirit, body and mind, and to explore the Good News that God cares deeply about our spiritual wellbeing, and can make us spiritually healthy and strong.

Game: The [Mind/body/spirit race](#) game gets young people to experience thinking about ways that we can look after our body, mind and spirit.

Activity: The *Gingerbread health check* activity helps young people to reflect on ways they are caring for different aspects of their own health and wellbeing.

Scripture: The Scripture (1 Timothy 4:7-8) explores the Good News that God cares deeply about our spiritual wellbeing, and can make us spiritually healthy and strong.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED FOR THE SESSION:

- ☐ Printed '[Mind/body/spirit](#)' cards
- ☐ Coloured textas - enough for each person to have three colours
- ☐ Gingerbread person outline (in group material)



READ THE INTRODUCTION AND PLAY THE GAME

READ THE INTRODUCTION

There are messages everywhere telling us to look after our physical health or do well at school, but we can feel like there's something missing – like, even if we did great in those areas, there would still be an emptiness. If we've been through emotionally painful experiences, we may have realised that having a strong body and mind only takes us so far. We might have had times when we felt connected to God and spiritually strong – calm, peaceful and not alone. We might wish to feel this way more often. All of this can lead us to ask:

How can we look after our spiritual health?

As a way to begin thinking about this, let's play the 'Mind/Body/Spirit' game.



PLAY THE 'MIND/ BODY/ SPIRIT' GAME

EQUIPMENT:

- Two sets of cards (one for each team), each with things we do to look after our health.

Mind:

- Studying for exams
- Watching a YouTube tutorial to learn a new skill
- Solving logic puzzles
- Taking notes in class
- Practising maths problems

Body:

- Wearing sunscreen
- Eating vegetables
- Going to the dentist
- Drinking water
- Lifting weights
- Taking prescribed medication
- Brushing teeth

Spirit:

- Reflecting on words from the Bible
- Praying
- Worshipping
- Confessing sin
- Listening to God
- Being in nature
- Focusing on things we're thankful for

**Reflecting
on words
from the
Bible**

- You will need two teams and two sets of cards. There are three sections of the room – mind, body and spirit.
- One member from each team takes a card from their set and runs it to the section they think it belongs in.
- Once they have put it in the right area, they run back to their group and the next player in their team takes a card and runs it to where it belongs.
- First team to finish wins.

How did you go with the game?

Was it easy to put things into those three categories?

Which of these three types of health do you think people usually focus on? Why?

DO ACTIVITY AND DISCUSS QUESTIONS

LEADERS, WATCH THE PARTICIPANTS FOR:

- what they say to each other
- what they find hard
- what they find easy
- what worked
- what caused conflict

HOW TO DO THE ‘GINGERBREAD HEALTH CHECK’ ACTIVITY

EQUIPMENT:

- ☐ Coloured textas - enough for each person to have three colours
 - ☐ Gingerbread person outline (in group material)
- Choose a colour to represent ‘body’. Write ways you are looking after or strengthening your body.
 - Choose a colour to represent ‘mind’. Write ways you are looking after or strengthening your mind.
 - Choose a colour to represent ‘spirit’. Write ways you are looking after or strengthening your spirit.

DISCUSS THE ACTIVITY

How did you go with the activity? Did you notice anything surprising?

Have you ever tried to improve an area of your health? What happened?

Looking at your picture, which areas would you like to give more attention to?

What are some ways you have tried to grow or strengthen your spirit?

In the group material (page 21):

Definitions of body, mind and spirit and gingerbread person outline



READ THE SCRIPTURE AND DISCUSS THE QUESTIONS

SPIRITUAL WELLBEING

1 Timothy 4:7-8

⁷ “People tell silly stories that don’t agree with God’s truth. Don’t follow what these stories teach. But teach yourself to be devoted to God.” ⁸ Training your body helps you in some ways. But devotion to God helps you in every way. It brings you blessings in this life and in the future life too.”

DISCUSS THESE TOPIC QUESTIONS

What do you think about what we just read? How do you think it might relate to the question, ‘How can we look after our spiritual health?’

When you hear the phrase “teach yourself to be devoted to God”, what do you think this involves?

What kinds of things in your everyday life have helped you grow stronger spiritually?

Paul says devotion to God will bring blessings. What sorts of blessings do you think he is talking about?

Notes on the Scripture for facilitators:

- In Verse 7, Paul warns Timothy that our focus must be on God’s Word, not on the words people come up with, i.e. “silly stories”. If we are putting his Word into practice each day, we are less likely to believe narratives that lead us away from him.
- In Paul’s day, Ancient Greek and Roman culture put a high value on physical exercise. Paul tells Timothy that the same work and commitment that others put towards physical exercise should be put toward the pursuit of godliness.³
- Spiritual development and physical development share some similarities. With each, you only get out what you put in.

READ THE CONCLUSION AND CLOSE THE SESSION

READ THE CONCLUSION

There are messages everywhere telling us to look after our physical health or do well at school, but we can feel like there’s something missing – like, even if we did great in those areas, there would still be an emptiness.

If we’ve been through emotionally painful experiences, we may have realised that having a strong body and mind only takes us so far. How can we keep the other part of us – our spirit – strong too?

We might have had times when we felt connected to God and spiritually strong – calm, peaceful and not alone. We might wish to feel this way more often.

The Good News is that God cares deeply about our spiritual wellbeing and he can make us spiritually healthy and strong. And as we take part in activities that help us feel closer to God, we will grow stronger on the inside – in our spirit.

ASK THE GROUP:

- Get each person to share a takeaway from the session.
- Ask if anybody would like prayer for this topic or would like to pray. Then lead the group in prayer.
- Ask if anybody wants to discuss anything further about this topic with a leader or support person.
- Remind them when the next session is.

CLOSE THE SESSION

³ “The word **godliness** comes from the old English word *Godlikeness*; it means to have the character and attitude of God.” [Enduring Word Bible Commentary 1 Timothy Chapter 4](#)

6. What can we do if we find spiritual things scary?

HOW TO RUN A SESSION:

- Read the introduction and play the game
- Do the activity and discuss the questions
- Read the Scripture and discuss the questions
- Read the conclusion and close the session

Adapt this session to suit the needs of your group as required.

SESSION OUTLINE

Purpose: The purpose of this session is to help young people consider the reasons they might find the spiritual world scary and to reflect on the Good News that we don't need to fear, because Jesus has already won the victory.

Game: The *Fear Factor* game gets young people to experience finding the unknown scary.

Activity: The *Reasons we sometimes fear spiritual things* activity helps young people to reflect on reasons why we might find spiritual things scary.

Scripture: The Scriptures (Colossians 2:15 and Psalm 27:1) explore the Good News that we don't need to fear, because Jesus has already won the victory.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED FOR THE SESSION:

- ☐ Strange feeling objects for the 'Fear Factor' game, e.g.
 - Oobleck
 - A realistic fake spider
 - A bunch of wet paper towels
 - Hand sanitiser
- ☐ Five cardboard boxes with holes in the top big enough for a hand to fit through
- ☐ Two sheets of paper and two pens

READ THE INTRODUCTION AND PLAY THE GAME

READ THE INTRODUCTION

When we think about supernatural things, some of us might feel afraid. Supernatural ideas are often used for entertainment – haunted houses at theme parks, scary movies or ghost stories late at night. These things can stir up real fear in us and might prompt us to pull away from anything spiritual in real life.

Sometimes supernatural images or stories can be hard to shake from our minds – even affecting our dreams. If we've experienced this, we may be afraid of or avoid spiritual things.

When adults warn us about the dangers of dabbling with witchcraft or dark spiritual influences, this can bring up curiosity for some of us. For others, it can spark fear – what is this powerful force they want us to avoid?

We are told that there is a real spiritual world, with light fighting against darkness, but if we don't know a lot about how it all works, the whole thing might feel creepy.

So, what can we do if we find spiritual things scary?

As a way to begin thinking about this, let's play the 'Fear Factor' game.

PLAY THE 'FEAR FACTOR' GAME

EQUIPMENT:

- ☐ Oobleck
- ☐ A realistic fake spider
- ☐ A bunch of wet paper towels
- ☐ Hand sanitiser
- ☐ Five cardboard boxes with holes in the top big enough for a hand to fit through

**Let young people know that participation is optional. Be sensitive to those who may be triggered during this game.*

- Place one item inside each box (one per box). Leave one box empty.
- Line the boxes up at the front of the room.
- Ask for five volunteers.
- Let volunteers know there's no shaking, picking up or tipping the boxes.
- Explain the goal is to keep their hand inside the box for 20 seconds, no matter what they feel.
- One at a time, have each volunteer place their hand in the box and have everyone count down from 20.
- After the 20 seconds, they remove their hand.
- *Optional:* Ask participants to guess what was inside the box.

How did you go with the game?

How did it feel when you didn't know what you were touching?

Why do you think things we can't see often seem more scary?



DO ACTIVITY AND DISCUSS QUESTIONS

LEADERS, WATCH THE PARTICIPANTS FOR:

- what they say to each other
- what they find hard
- what they find easy
- what worked
- what caused conflict

HOW TO DO THE 'REASONS WE SOMETIMES FEAR SPIRITUAL THINGS' ACTIVITY

EQUIPMENT:

- ☐ Two pieces of paper and two pens – one per team
- Get into two groups. Brainstorm reasons we might be afraid of spiritual things.
- Think of up to eight reasons.
- When finished, both teams read out each of their reasons. If an answer is the same as the other team, you get zero points. You get one point for each unique answer.

DISCUSS THE ACTIVITY

*How did you go with the activity?
Was it easy to think of reasons?*

Does anything stand out to you about the reasons you wrote down? Do they have anything in common?

How does fear feel in our bodies and minds?

Do you think fear sometimes stops people from getting close to God? Why/why not?

READ THE SCRIPTURE AND DISCUSS THE QUESTIONS

JESUS WON THE VICTORY

Colossians 2:15

“He defeated the rulers and powers of the spiritual world. With the cross he won the victory over them and led them away, as defeated and powerless prisoners for the whole world to see.”

NO NEED TO FEAR

Psalm 27:1

“Lord, you are my Light and my Savior, so why should I be afraid of anyone? The Lord is where my life is safe, so I will be afraid of no one!”

DISCUSS THESE TOPIC QUESTIONS

What do you think about what we just read? How do you think it might relate to the question, ‘What can we do if we find spiritual things scary?’

What do you think it means that Jesus 'won the victory' and 'defeated' the rulers and powers of the spiritual world?

How does it feel when we remind ourselves that Jesus has already won the victory over all other spiritual powers?

If we feel afraid of something in the supernatural world, what can we do?

Notes on the Scripture for facilitators:

- The philosophy that threatened the Colossian Christians was a mix of Gnosticism, Greek philosophy, local mystery religions, and Jewish mysticism. It was particularly dangerous because it was not obviously sinful, evil or immoral. It seemed reasonable, attractive and highly intelligent.
- Many ancient 'mystery religions' thought of the world as a dangerous place, threatened by spirits or evil spiritual forces. They thought they were protected from these dangerous spiritual forces by either worshipping them or by finding protection under a greater deity or spiritual power that was superior to them.
- By his death and resurrection, Jesus defeated the rulers and powers of the spiritual world. These demonic forces no longer have the same power over those who are followers of Jesus. We have protection in him.
- You might like to also refer to Colossians 2:12.

In the group material (page 26):

What can I do if I find spiritual things scary?



READ THE CONCLUSION AND CLOSE THE SESSION

READ THE CONCLUSION

Some of us feel afraid of supernatural things. Supernatural images or stories can be difficult to shake from our minds and can affect our dreams. Even when they're used for entertainment, supernatural ideas, games and movies can cause real fear in us, and might prompt us to pull away from anything spiritual.

When adults warn us about the dangers of dabbling with witchcraft or dark spiritual influences, some of us have been curious, while others are scared and confused.

When we are told there is a real spiritual world, with light fighting against darkness, we can wonder how it all works, and the whole thing might feel creepy.

The Good News is we don't need to fear the spiritual world, because Jesus has already defeated evil and won the victory, so, when we stick with him, the evil we see in this world can't hurt us.

ASK THE GROUP:

- Get each person to share a takeaway from the session.
- Ask if anybody would like prayer for this topic or would like to pray. Then lead the group in prayer.
- Ask if anybody wants to discuss anything further about this topic with a leader or support person.
- Remind them when the next session is.

CLOSE THE SESSION

**LIFE
LABS**

7. How can we bring light to the world?

HOW TO RUN A SESSION:

- Read the introduction and play the game
- Do the activity and discuss the questions
- Read the Scripture and discuss the questions
- Read the conclusion and close the session

Adapt this session to suit the needs of your group as required.

SESSION OUTLINE

Purpose: The purpose of this session is to help young people reflect on times they have seen people bring God's goodness and light into the world.

Game: The *Glowstick Tag* game gets young people to experience spreading light to others.

Activity: The [Sharing Light](#) activity helps young people to reflect on the different acts people can do to share God's light in the world.

Scripture: The Scriptures (John 8:12 and Matthew 5:15-16) explore the Good News that Jesus – the light of the world – fills us with his light and empowers us to spread that light to others.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED FOR THE SESSION:

- ☐ Glow sticks
- ☐ [Bingo cards](#)
- ☐ Pens
- ☐ *Optional:* small prizes



READ THE INTRODUCTION AND PLAY THE GAME

READ THE INTRODUCTION

When we look at the darkness in our world, we can feel overwhelmed or hopeless. The Bible says God wants us to bring his light into the world – and we might want to – but when the problems are so big, we can feel discouraged and overwhelmed. We may not know where to start.

Some of us may have tried to bring light into the lives of the people around us and have seen amazing things happen! This can inspire us to find new or greater ways to share God's light with the world. Others might have tried and found it difficult. Sometimes people make fun of us, or we find that standing up for the outsider can mean we lose friends.

Sometimes we hear stories about celebrities or outstanding adult leaders bringing change – fighting for justice or raising lots of money for people in need. These examples of people bringing light can inspire us, but they seem empowered to do it: they have talent, fame and confidence. If we don't have those things, can we still bring light to the world? Adults might have told us that we are not capable or smart enough or that we should stay quiet and know our place. Can we still bring light even though we are young?

How can we bring light to the world?

As a way to begin thinking about this, let's play the 'Glowstick Tag' game.

PLAY THE 'GLOWSTICK TAG' GAME

EQUIPMENT:

- ☐ Glowstick bracelets – enough for one per person
- ☐ *Optional:* a small prize for the last person to be tagged

The aim of this game is to spread the light of the glowsticks by tagging people. The last person to be tagged, wins.

- Play a game of tag.
- Choose one person to start as the 'tagger' and give them a glowstick bracelet.
- Explain to the group that when they are tagged they will also receive a glowstick bracelet and become 'taggers'.
- The game ends when the last person has been tagged.
- *Optional:* Give a small prize to the last person tagged.



***How did you go with the game?
How did it feel to see the light
spreading throughout the group?***

***When have you seen an example of someone
bringing light to another person?***

DO ACTIVITY AND DISCUSS QUESTIONS

LEADERS, WATCH THE PARTICIPANTS FOR:

- what they say to each other
- what they find hard
- what they find easy
- what worked
- what caused conflict

HOW TO DO THE 'SHARING LIGHT' ACTIVITY

EQUIPMENT:

- ☐ Printed [bingo-style cards](#) (one per pair)
- ☐ Pens
- ☐ *Optional:* a small prize for the winning pair

- Ask everyone to divide into pairs.
- Give each pair a 'bingo' card and a pen.
- Explain that everyone will work with their partner to write a name for each category on their card.
- Once they have completed their sheet, they need to shout 'Bingo!'
- *Optional:* Give a prize to the winning pair.

DISCUSS THE ACTIVITY

*How did you go with the activity?
Was it easy to think of times when
people shared God's light?*

*When have you tried to share God's
light with others? What happened?*

*What sorts of things stop us from
sharing God's light with others?*

*Why do you think small acts of kindness can
have such a big impact in a dark world?*



In the group material (page 29):

Three ways you can
show God's light this
week



READ THE SCRIPTURE AND DISCUSS THE QUESTIONS

JESUS IS THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

John 8:12b

“...I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never live in darkness. They will have the light that gives life.”

YOU ARE LIKE SALT AND LIGHT

Matthew 5:15-16

¹⁵ “People don’t hide a lamp under a bowl. They put it on a lampstand. Then the light shines for everyone in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, you should be a light for other people. Live so that they will see the good things you do and praise your Father in heaven.”

DISCUSS THESE TOPIC QUESTIONS

What do you think about what we just read? How do you think it might relate to the question, ‘How can we bring light to the world?’

What do these verses say about where spiritual ‘light’ comes from or goes to?

When have you experienced the light of Jesus in your life? How did it feel?

When do you find it difficult or easy to share the light of Jesus with others?

Notes on the Scripture for facilitators:

- To the Jews, ‘light’ was a symbol and reminder of the Exodus. God, through Moses, saved them from slavery by sending the pillar of fire to guide them through the darkness. In John 8:12, Jesus applied this symbol to himself, indicating that he would be the one to guide them through the darkness of the world.
- Jesus is the light of the world and brings light to those who follow him. When we follow him closely, we walk in that light. As followers of Jesus, we are not only light-receivers, but also light-givers. We have a responsibility to think about ourselves as well as those around us, because we shine the light of Jesus for them.
- Sharing the light of Jesus isn’t just about telling people about Jesus – it’s also about

showing it through our actions: bringing, love, goodness, restoration, generosity, encouragement and hope to people, for this life and forever.

- The purpose of light is to illuminate and expose what is there. We shine the light of Jesus, not to draw attention to ourselves but to draw attention to him. If light is hidden or covered up – like being hidden under a bowl – it is no longer useful. In fact, when a flame is covered over, it will soon be starved of oxygen and will go out.
- When someone puts a lamp on a lampstand, we are intentionally putting it in a place where it can shine brightly. In a similar way, we should look for ways to let our light shine in greater ways.
- As we think about these verses in terms of spiritual warfare, we are reminded that living in the light of Jesus helps us to clearly see through the darkness of evil. We can see the dangers that might otherwise be hidden, and fight them more effectively.



READ THE CONCLUSION AND CLOSE THE SESSION

READ THE CONCLUSION

When we look at the darkness in our world, we can feel overwhelmed or hopeless. We might want to bring the light of Jesus into the world, but we can feel overwhelmed, and not know where to start.

Some of us might have brought light to the people in our lives and have seen amazing things happen! Others might have tried and found it difficult.

We might have heard inspiring stories about celebrities or outstanding adult leaders bringing change but, may wonder if we could ever make a change or bring light to our world.

The Good News is that Jesus is the light of the world – he fills us with his light and empowers us to share his light with others, right where we are in life today.

ASK THE GROUP:

- Get each person to share a takeaway from the session.
- Ask if anybody would like prayer for this topic or would like to pray. Then lead the group in prayer.
- Ask if anybody wants to discuss anything further about this topic with a leader or support person.
 - Remind them when the next session is.

CLOSE THE SESSION



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- Read the introduction and play the game
- Do the activity and discuss the questions
- Read the Scripture and discuss the questions
- Read the conclusion and close the session

Adapt this session to suit the needs of your group as required.

Purpose: The purpose of this session is to help young people consider the feelings and responses they have about evil things that happen in the world, and to reflect on the Good News that God has equipped us with everything we need to fight against darkness and evil.

Game: The *Cardboard Warriors* game gets young people to experience preparing to fight against an enemy.

Activity: The [Act it Out](#) activity helps young people to reflect on how other people have fought against evil.

Scripture: The Scripture (Ephesians 6:10b-18) explores the Good News that God has equipped us with everything we need to fight against darkness and evil.

- ☐ Lots of cardboard (enough to cover two young people in a strong suit of 'armour')
- ☐ Eight rolls of cheap packing tape
- ☐ Printed copy of the [stories handout](#), cut into strips with one story per strip of paper

READ THE INTRODUCTION AND PLAY THE GAME

READ THE INTRODUCTION

We don't need to look far to see examples of evil in the world: from racism to religious persecution to terrorism to industrialisation causing irreparable harm to the environment for selfish gain. Even in our own lives, we might have met people who are extremely nasty.

Some of us might want to look away – to pretend the evil isn't there. It can be upsetting and overwhelming, so this response is understandable. The Bible says we are meant to stand up against injustice – but how can we fight evil when it seems so all-consuming?

Others of us might feel really angry and keen to fight injustice, but we might question whether we can really make a difference. How can young people fight evil forces that are so powerful and strong?

Then there's the safety issue. Adults who care about us often remind us to 'stay away' from evil people or dark situations – to stay out of trouble. We know they want to keep us safe, but how can we fight against evil if we look the other way?

How can we fight against evil?

As a way to begin thinking about this, let's play the 'Cardboard Warriors' game.

PLAY THE 'CARDBOARD WARRIORS' GAME

EQUIPMENT:

- ☐ Lots of cardboard (enough to cover two young people in a strong suit of 'armour')
- ☐ Eight rolls of cheap packing tape

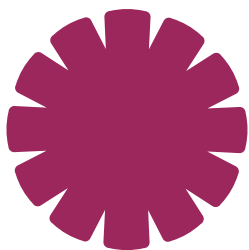
- Ask for two volunteers to be 'warriors'. (Choose two people of similar stature, as they will be 'fighting' each other.)
- Divide the group into two teams, allocating one warrior to each group.
- Each team stands in a different corner of the room, leaving a large space in the middle of the room to be used as the 'battle zone'.
- Teams have 5-10 minutes, using only cardboard and tape, to create their warrior's armour. The teams need to help cover their warrior in as much armour as possible (legs, torso, arms, helmet, shield, sword, etc.)
- Wherever possible, to minimise physical contact, team members should hand armour pieces to their warrior to put on themselves. Team members should check with their warrior before helping apply armour to their body.

Leaders: Keep a close eye on teams and step in if anything looks uncomfortable or inappropriate.

- Once warriors have their armour on it's time to fight! The aim is to rip the armour off the other warrior while keeping their own armour intact.
- Encourage team members to cheer for their warrior.
- The battle stage should go for approximately five minutes.
- At the end of the battle, the winning team is the one whose warrior has the most armour left intact.

How did you go with the game? Did you feel confident your warrior could beat the other team's warrior?

How does it feel when we try to fight against evil?



DO ACTIVITY AND DISCUSS QUESTIONS

LEADERS, WATCH THE PARTICIPANTS FOR:

- what they say to each other
- what they find hard
- what they find easy
- what worked
- what caused conflict

HOW TO DO THE ‘ACT IT OUT’ ACTIVITY

EQUIPMENT:

- ☐ Printed copy of the [stories handout](#), cut into strips with one story per strip of paper
- Ask group members to get into pairs.
- Give each pair one of the stories from the handout.
- Give pairs five minutes to read the story and choose a way to present it to the group (they could tell it in their own words or act it out or even use drawings/ pictures).

In the group material (page 33):

One thing I will remember from Life Labs this term...



DISCUSS THE ACTIVITY

How did you go with the activity? What was it like to hear the stories?

In what ways can you relate to one or more people from the stories?

Are there things from the stories that you could see yourself doing? Why/why not?

What do you think stops us from fighting against evil?

READ THE SCRIPTURE AND DISCUSS THE QUESTIONS

FIGHTING AGAINST EVIL

Ephesians 6:10b-18

“...be strong in the Lord and in his great power. ¹¹ Wear the full armor of God. Wear God’s armor so that you can fight against the devil’s clever tricks. ¹² Our fight is not against people on earth. We are fighting against the rulers and authorities and the powers of this world’s darkness. We are fighting against the spiritual powers of evil in the heavenly places. ¹³ That is why you need to get God’s full armor. Then on the day of evil, you will be able to stand strong. And when you have finished the whole fight, you will still be standing. ¹⁴ So stand strong with the belt of truth tied around your waist, and on your chest wear the protection of right living. ¹⁵ On your feet wear the Good News of peace to help you stand strong. ¹⁶ And also use the shield of faith with which you can stop all the burning arrows that come from the Evil One. ¹⁷ Accept God’s salvation as your helmet. And take the sword of the Spirit – that sword is the teaching of God. ¹⁸ Pray in the Spirit at all times. Pray with all kinds of prayers, and ask for everything you need. To do this you must always be ready. Never give up. Always pray for all of God’s people.”

DISCUSS THESE TOPIC QUESTIONS

What do you think about what we just read? How do you think it might relate to the question, ‘How can we fight against evil?’

Paul mentions twice that we need to put on the full armour of God when we are fighting against evil, not just parts of it. Why do you think this matters?

Can anyone think of a time when they felt like the Holy Spirit helped them stand up against injustice or evil? What happened?

As a group, what is one way we could fight or take a stand against evil?

Notes on the Scripture for facilitators:

- We can fight spiritual battles when we understand our identity as followers of Jesus and when we rely on God’s strength. Jesus already won the battle, and when we believe that, we can have confidence to claim God’s strength and fight.
- If we want to fight spiritual battles, we need to recognise our enemies. We are not fighting against people or ideas. We are fighting against the spiritual powers of evil. We know there is a limit to their power and they cannot keep us from God’s love (Romans 8:38). We also know that Jesus is the head over all spiritual powers (Colossians 2:10) and that their powers will end (1 Corinthians 15:24).
- Spiritual arrows can take the form of thoughts, feelings, fears and lies. Faith, with the strength of God, turns them back.
- You might like to remind your group that we don’t fight the battle alone – we fight alongside one another.
- When Paul talks about “the sword of the Spirit” he is referring to God’s Word. When we know it, understand it and speak it, it can help us to recognise and fight against evil.



READ THE CONCLUSION AND CLOSE THE SESSION

READ THE CONCLUSION

We don't need to look far to see examples of evil in the world, such as racism, religious persecution, terrorism, environmental harm and even nasty people we have met.

Sometimes we want to just look away, because the evil in our world can be overwhelming. Or we might feel angry and keen to fight injustice but might question whether we can really make a difference. And how do we fight when we are told to stay safe and even to look the other way? How do we follow the Bible's teaching to stand up against injustice?

The Good News is that God has equipped us with everything we need to fight against darkness and evil in the world, and when we submit to him, put on his armour and pray, he will make the way for us to stand against evil. And we need not worry, Jesus has already won the victory!

ASK THE GROUP:

- Get each person to share a takeaway from the session.
- Ask if anybody would like prayer for this topic or would like to pray. Then lead the group in prayer.
- Ask if anybody wants to discuss anything further about this topic with a leader or support person.
- Remind them when the next session is.

CLOSE THE SESSION



INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY SESSION – A SPIRITUAL BATTLE

The Introductory Activity session provides an opportunity to introduce the topic of the term in a less structured session than a Life Lab. You can use the ideas to create a fun and social session that will help introduce the concepts. For example, in this session, you can help young people explore the idea of a spiritual battle – through activities like Nerf War, Capture the Flag, Human Battleships or Water Wars.

INTRODUCTION:

Through the Life Labs sessions this term we will look the idea that we are in a spiritual battle.

WHAT YOU COULD DO:

You could use this session to explore the idea of being in a battle. Here are some ideas that would make sense for the term:

☐ Nerf War

Two teams battle using Nerf Guns. Players must work together, communicate and protect one another from getting shot by the other team.

You can use shields and other protective equipment. Once you're shot, you're out.

☐ Capture the Flag

Two teams compete to capture the opposing flag while defending their own territory.

☐ Human Battleships

Set up a life-sized battleship board game with masking tape and a room divider. Two teams take turns calling out coordinates to "hit" the opposing side. To make it more entertaining, once someone's coordinate has been hit, that person must make a dramatic dying sound. The most dramatic sound wins a prize.

☐ Water Wars

Using super soakers, water balloons and other water-play equipment, set up a dodgeball style game where you can't cross the line in the middle.

Make it harder by shortening the playing field as you go.

You could also have a rule where it's a free playing field for 10 seconds (i.e. no divider) then you must return to your side immediately.

DISCUSSION:

Take the opportunity to explore young people's experiences of the topic before we spend the next few sessions on it. You can ask questions like:

- Have you ever had an experience you would describe as spiritual? What was it?
- What do you think people mean when they talk about spiritual battles?
- Where have you seen light or goodness fighting against darkness or evil?

REFLECTION ACTIVITY SESSION – THE HOLY SPIRIT GUIDES US

The Reflection Activity session provides an opportunity to reflect on the topic idea in a less structured session than a Life Lab. You can use the ideas to create a fun and social session that will help reflect on the concepts of the term. For example, for this topic, you can help young people explore the idea of being guided by the Holy Spirit through activities like Treasure Hunt, Silent Commander and Mega Maze.

INTRODUCTION:

This term we've explored the Good News that the Holy Spirit can guide us through difficult times. This concluding activity session is a way to further explore the idea that the Holy Spirit can guide us when we allow him the space to move in and through our lives.

WHAT YOU COULD DO:

You could use this session to help your group reflect on the topics explored this term. Here are some ideas that would be fun to incorporate into your end of term celebration.

DISCUSSION:

Take the opportunity to explore with young people their experiences of the topic in informal ways. You could ask questions like:

- Have you ever felt prompted to do something kind or brave out of nowhere?
- Why do you think the Holy Spirit wants to guide us?
- How do you think we can get better at knowing how the Holy Spirit is leading us?

☐ Treasure Hunt

Get into two teams. Write some clues and directions to reach a hidden treasure for each team. Make it harder by having riddles and information specific to your context.

☐ Silent Commander

Split the group into two. Write some directions. One player from each team gives directions without using their voice, and the team must pay close attention to follow correctly. The first team to get it right wins.

☐ Mega Maze

Set up a maze using large obstacles. Recreate the maze on some paper with a clear path through. Have one person blindfolded and another guide them through the maze.

SPEAKER BRIEF – WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES IT MAKE TO HAVE THE HOLY SPIRIT IN OUR LIVES?

MESSAGE:

The purpose of this session is to help young people consider what they have heard about the Holy Spirit and to explore the Good News that when we choose to follow Jesus, the Holy Spirit comes into our lives, bringing love, peace, guidance and wisdom.

LIVED EXPERIENCE OF YOUNG PEOPLE:

- Young people may have heard about the Holy Spirit but might not really know what he does. If they've been around church for a while, they've probably heard the Holy Spirit mentioned in prayers and worship songs.
- Some young people may have heard people talking about the Holy Spirit "coming into our hearts" or "changing us" but might wonder how he does this and what it means.
- If young people have heard people talk about the Holy Spirit giving them "peace that doesn't make sense" they might wonder if the Holy Spirit's peace is available to them. They might also have heard people talking about feeling God's love in a powerful way and wonder if this, too, is from the Holy Spirit.
- Some might have never heard of the Holy Spirit, while others may have been Christians for a long time and have experienced the Holy Spirit for themselves.

PERSONAL REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- As a teenager, what was the role of the Holy Spirit in your life? Did you know him, not know him, or were you in relationship with him?
- If you knew the Holy Spirit as a teenager, what things did he show you or lead you to? How easy or difficult was it to hear and obey him?
- As a young person, did you personally experience the Holy Spirit's love, peace, guidance and wisdom? What impact did that have on other areas of your life?

SCRIPTURES:

Ephesians 1:13

"It is the same with you. You heard the true message, the Good News about the way God saves you. When you heard that Good News, you believed in Christ. And in Christ, God put his special mark on you by giving you the Holy Spirit that he promised."

John 14:15-17 and 26-27

"If you love me, you will do what I command. ¹⁶ I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper to be with you forever. ¹⁷ The Helper is the Spirit of truth. The people of the world cannot accept him, because they don't see him or know him. But you know him. He lives with you, and he will be in you.

²⁶ But the Helper will teach you everything and cause you to remember all that I told you. This Helper is the Holy Spirit that the Father will send in my name. ²⁷ I leave you peace. It is my own peace I give you. I give you peace in a different way than the world does. So don't be troubled. Don't be afraid."

SCRIPTURE POINTS:

- The “special mark” of the Holy Spirit, referred to in Ephesians 1:13, shows that we belong to God and we have eternal life in him.
- It is the Holy Spirit who helps us to keep the commandments of Jesus – to love Jesus and others in practical ways.
- God’s Spirit helps us to know God, to live in his presence and follow the example of Jesus.
- “The ancient Greek word for ‘helper’ is *parakletos*. It was sometimes used to refer to an advisor, a legal defender, a mediator, or an intercessor.”⁴ A helper, in this sense, brings comfort, guidance, understanding and strength.
- When Jesus left Earth, he finished teaching the disciples in person, as their rabbi, but their training was not finished. It would be continued by “the Helper”, “the Holy Spirit.” The Holy Spirit continues to help every believer, reminding us of all Jesus taught and helping us to apply it to our lives today.
- “I leave you peace” or “*Shalom*” was a common thing to say at a departure in that culture. But Jesus gave this normal goodbye extra deep strength and meaning. Jesus offers a deep peace through the presence of the Holy Spirit.

PERSONAL REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- What does it look like in your life to be ‘marked’ by the Holy Spirit?
- When have you seen the Holy Spirit in the role of “Helper” in your life or in the lives of others?
- What difference does it make to have the Holy Spirit in your life? What has he taught you or helped you to remember from the Word at a time you really needed it?

THE GOOD NEWS MESSAGE:

Some young people may have heard about the Holy Spirit, but don’t really know who he is, or the peace and love he brings. Others may have experienced the Holy Spirit and have seen the difference he makes in their lives. Some have never heard of the Holy Spirit or may not think he is available to them. The Good News is that when we choose to follow Jesus, the Holy Spirit comes into our lives, bringing love, peace, guidance and wisdom.

RESPONSE OPTIONS:

- For young people who aren’t followers of Jesus, this is an invitation. God loves all of us, whatever our background or situation. All we need to do is believe that God sent Jesus to save us, and that he sent the Holy Spirit to help us in our lives today. Reaching out to God may be something these young people have thought about – something they want or need. The Holy Spirit’s love, peace, guidance and wisdom may be just what they are looking for.
- For young people who are followers of Jesus and may be struggling, this is a message of encouragement: the Holy Spirit has been sent by God to be their “Helper” in their everyday experiences. As they reach out and let him lead them, they will see a marked difference in their lives. The Holy Spirit will bring them love, peace, guidance and wisdom, and will empower them as they follow Jesus.
- For young people who know the Holy Spirit and experience his strength, love and peace in their daily lives, this message is a reminder that they probably have friends who don’t know him or are unsure about his role in their lives. Those who know the Holy Spirit can ask him to guide them and give them the wisdom to know how to reach out to their friends. They can show their friends that the Holy Spirit is available today to help, guide and empower everyone who chooses to follow Jesus. They can pray for their friends and see the difference the Holy Spirit makes in their lives.



LIFE LABS



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted,
are taken from the Easy-to-Read Version (ERV).
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