

## **Online Activities 1Q 2017 Seekers for Jesus**

### Lesson 1

Why does God deserve all praise?

God is the Creator and Sustainer of all life. That means He made everything that has ever lived or lives now or will ever live. If God stopped caring about the world, life would cease immediately. Life is protected by His continued concern for His creation. His creativity in making life and His care for all the life He created are only two reasons that God deserves all praise. Following the entrance of sin into the world, His loving effort to give us a good relationship with Him again is another reason to give Him all praise. What other examples can you think of?

### Lesson 2

How does your life give praise to God?

Sometimes you might think of pastors, deacons, or other church leaders as being the only full-time Christians. The truth is that every Christian is called to be full-time. Your life can give praise to God even when you're doing nothing special. Obeying your parents the first time they ask you to help around the house or to do your homework; welcoming the new student at school or eating with a classmate that others ignore or tease; trying your best in your classwork and extracurricular activities—all of these are ways that you can praise God. How you use the gifts He gave you and how you treat others are great ways your life can praise God. How are you praising God with your life? How can you praise Him more in your daily activities?

### Lesson 3

In what ways does God provide for His creation?

God created everything in the world, and He knows how to take care of it. He maintains the earth at the perfect distance from the sun so that the earth doesn't get too hot or too cold. He sends the rain and the sun to help crops grow; He cares for the animals, both domestic and wild. God also sees the needs of people, those who believe in Him and those who do not. Though there is much need in the world, this is not the result of God's lack of caring, but instead, people's disobedience to His laws that require us to take good care of one another and of His creation. What can you thank God for today?

#### Lesson 4

In what ways does creation reveal God's glory?

Have you ever stood in awe while watching a beautiful sunset? Or maybe you went swimming in the ocean and realized how very big it is and how small you were by comparison. The natural world around us can, in big and small ways, reveal God's glory. Any time you marvel at the beauty of this world, His glory is revealed. Studying science can help reveal His glory in nature—it's amazing how ecosystems work or even how the human body functions. Without God, these things would not work at all! When God created the world and everything in it, He didn't take shortcuts. He didn't wait for the night before some deadline to rush through His work. He took great care creating a good world so that we could look around us and be reassured that He is a good God and is capable of taking care of us, no matter what troubles we face.

#### Lesson 5

How does creation praise God?

The fundamental way that creation praises God is by doing whatever He created each aspect to do. Animals who hunt or graze praise Him when they are healthy and part of a balanced ecosystem. Trees praise Him when they grow strong and provide shelter for creatures, clean the air in the world, and hold soil in place. Every bit of the healthy creation praises God and points to Him as the Creator of them all. Isn't it fun to think of the animal calls as praising Him as well? The honking of geese and the whistling of chickadees, the howls of coyotes and roars of lions, the songs of whales and chirps of dolphins—all these animal sounds and more were orchestrated by the Lord and offer praise to Him for their being.

#### Lesson 6

Why don't human differences bother God?

People were created in the image of God, but what does God look like? Ancient Israel was forbidden to make images of God because they would imagine Him all wrong. No image could do justice to who God really is because people are not physically created in God's image. Men do not look more like God than women do because God is not a man or a woman. A woman with very dark skin does not look more like God than a woman with very fair skin because God does not have skin of any color. More importantly, however, God is not bothered by human differences because He created those differences! He loves each and every person He created. Though people might dislike each other based on their differences, God loves every single person He made. Each person in the world has the opportunity to learn about God's love and show it to the world in their own ways. How can you celebrate the differences that God created?

## Lesson 7

How is obeying the Law as a way to salvation a form of bondage?

The people of Israel learned early on that they weren't very good at keeping laws. Although fear of punishment could motivate them for a while, if punishment didn't come right away, the people would go on doing what they wanted rather than following the Law. Even when they tried very hard to follow the Law, each person was flawed because of sin and would still break laws. In short, no one can keep the laws perfectly, so anyone who tries to keep laws and be right with God will end up exhausted by his or her own efforts. Keeping the laws becomes a never-ending cycle of breaking a law, repenting, trying harder, and then repeating the cycle of disobedience. Thus a person keeping the laws is a slave to the laws, trying to keep them, but never succeeding.

## Lesson 8

What kind of race were the Galatians running?

The Galatians were in a spiritual race, obeying the truth that Paul had taught them. Unfortunately, they got distracted by false teachers and forgot to continue running. The race that they ran is the same race Christians run today. We are running towards God when we accept that Jesus is Lord, and try to learn about Him and keep the commands He gave us. Two ways to stay focused on the race so that we don't give up are studying the Bible and praying. These two activities help us stay connected to God so that if someone tries to teach us something false, we already know better than to believe a lie.

## Lesson 9

How do actions show what is in your heart?

What you do on a regular basis shows what you really care about. For instance, if you say your favorite hobby is to read, but you spend all your free time playing video games, is reading really your favorite hobby? If you say you like to try new foods, but anytime a new ingredient shows up in your food you pick it out, do you really like to try new foods? How you act shows what you think and believe. If you say you love someone, but you do not show that love in your actions, do you really love that person? Pay attention to what you are doing because your actions will help you learn what you really value even better than your words do.

## Lesson 10

In what ways has God shown His love towards us?

Two key ways God has shown His love is by creating a good world for us to live in and by providing a way for us to make our relationship with Him whole again. In the beginning, the creation was not finished until God had created people in His own image. From the first days of humans, He has loved us in a special way, and He shows that love even to this day through His care for our needs and His continued care for the world. Sadly, our relationship with God was broken in the Garden of Eden. That's why He sent Jesus to die for our sins, so that we can learn how to live lives that are pleasing to God and one day spend eternity with Him in heaven. How have you seen God's love in your own life?

## Lesson 11

### What is grace?

Grace is the opportunity to heal our relationship with God through His work. We cannot heal that relationship through our own efforts. Grace is a gift no one can earn from God. We experience grace when we realize that God has welcomed us into His family after we accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior. Because grace cannot be earned, we do not have to worry about being good enough to come to Jesus. We do not have to despair when we do not stop sinning the moment we come to faith. Instead, we understand that God's grace covers all our mistakes and gives us second chances.

## Lesson 12

### How are you staying connected to Jesus?

There are many ways to stay connected to Jesus. Some can be very private, like studying your Bible, praying, or taking quiet time to just be in His presence. Others are very public, like going to a Bible study, praying with other Christians, or going to worship services. Christians also stay connected to Jesus by doing service with their churches and in their communities to remember how He served. It's important to try to be like Him by loving our neighbors and even our enemies. So how are you staying connected to Jesus? What other ways can you stay connected to Jesus?

## Lesson 13

### What does repentance mean?

Have you ever said "I'm sorry", but you didn't really mean it? Apologies can be given without really meaning anything. This is not repentance. Repentance is not just saying "sorry", and it's not just feeling bad, either. Repentance means changing how you speak and act because you came to understand that what you said and did was wrong. If you repented from bullying a classmate, for instance, you would not just say "sorry" to that classmate. You would also stop bullying that person and try to heal your relationship with that person. So repentance can start with feeling bad and it should include saying "sorry", but it is much more than either of those two things alone. Is there anything that you need to repent of today?