

# God With Us Part 1 – Life in the Garden

Part One has nine topics. Each topic is covered in two or three sessions (19 sessions in total)



**1. Light Conquers Darkness (Gen 1:1-5):** God's light will always overcome darkness. It did so during creation and it will always do so in our own lives. Gen 1:1-5 is acted out. An object lesson where youth try to reach their destiny blindfolded (in darkness), and then again with blindfold removed illustrates the power of God's light in our lives as we pursue our destiny in life.

**2. The Power of Words (Gen 1:6-13):** God's words have the power to create. We are made in his image, therefore our words are powerful to create & destroy. A paper heart is used to demonstrate how negative words destroy (heart is torn) and positive words (heart taped back together). We review the impact of negative words in our lives and how to address them.

**3. God's Creation Speaks (Gen 1:14-24):** The Bible tells us that heaven and earth declare God's glory and handiwork. In this lesson we explore how we first knew God and learn the stories of young people in other parts of the world who discovered our Triune Creator God through creation. As an exercise, youth will find parts of creation around them (leaves, flowers, rocks, etc.) and teach the class what that piece of creation tells us about God.



**4. Unique & Special – Made in God's Image (Gen 1:26-31, Gen 2:7)** God used words to create land, vegetation, animals, etc. But for mankind, he bent down and formed man out of dust with his hands (Psalm 119:73, Job 10:9); he breathed His very breath of life into us. We are special and unique – no one else is like us. Object lessons include a mirror, comparing our hands with others in the class and a story about how God used an ordinary boy to save a life.



**5. Self Esteem and the Father's Heart:** Although God made us in His image and gave us a destiny, there are life situations that tear down our self-esteem. Here we explore the definition of high & low self-esteem and discuss what we like and do not like about ourselves. A questionnaire helps us understand the good things that God prepared for us to do. Scripture is used to build self-esteem, and an audio of The Father's Love-Letter is played in English or Swahili. Often we see youth brought to tears as they understand how deeply loved they are by the Father.



**6. A Helper For Adam (Gen 2:15-25):** Eve is called a "helpmate" by God. This word (ezer) is used 16 times in the Old Testament. Each time, it is used to mean vital, life-saving help from God. We often think of the term "helper" to mean "servant". But God meant for Adam & Eve to be vitally important in each other's lives. An exercise where pairs of youth pull each other up from sitting to standing is used to demonstrate this. Qualities of a good helper are explored.

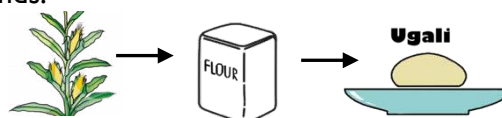


**7. Friendship Formation:** Adam & Eve were husband & wife, but they were also true friends. In this lesson we explore the qualities of a good friend. Different types of friendships are defined (acquaintance, casual, close, boy-girl, friendship with mentors). What does it mean to be friends with God? A personal inventory is taken by each youth in terms of the qualities they possess, and do not possess that would make them good friends.

**8. Caring for Creation – Adding Value:**

**Genesis 1:26-31** What did God mean when

He told Adam and Eve to rule over creation and subdue it? In this lesson we explore the difference between ungodly ruling (exploitation) and godly ruling (stewardship). God intended us to add value to His creation. This truth is applied to the foundational principles of business.



**9. Hearing God's Voice (Our Spirit).** God breathed His spirit into us to bring us life, and so that our spirit could speak / listen to His spirit. In this lesson we explore the trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), and our own beings (flesh, soul and spirit). Guidelines for hearing God's voice are outlined, and youth engage in a practical session of listening for God's voice.

## God With Us Part 2 – The Fall

Part Two has eleven topics. Each topic is covered in two-four sessions (28 sessions in total).

- 10. God Gives Us a Choice** (Gen. 2:8-9, 15-17 & Gen 3:1-13) Adam & Eve had a choice between two trees: One was life and one was the knowledge of good and evil. God wants us to CHOOSE to serve Him.
- 11. Who Was the Snake?** (Gen 3:1-13; Ezekiel 29, Isaiah 14) The story of Lucifer, and how he entered is explained, The youth learn about the nature of Satan, and his deceptiveness (angel of light).
- 12. The TRUTH about Lies** (Gen 2:8-9, 15-17 & Gen 3:1-13) The most believable lies have a bit of truth in them. This lesson explores the way that Satan, or the snake, twisted God's truth to deceive Eve.
- 13. Resisting Peer Pressure:** Adam & Eve gave into the snake. How can we avoid resisting peer pressure today? This is a four-part lesson that includes the stories of Shadrach, Meshack and Abednego and of Peter denying Jesus. Tips for resisting peer pressure and seeking God in times of stress are outlined.
- 14. When We Sin** (Gen 2:8-9, 15-17 & Gen 3:1-13): What happens when we sin? This four-part lesson describes how sin breaks relationship with ourselves (we no longer like ourselves and cover up), with God (we hide) and with each other (we blame). The importance of confessing sin is underscored.
- 15. The Curse and the Promise** (Genesis 3:14-15): God declared the consequences of sin to Adam and Eve. The differences between consequences and punishment are explored. But all of God's consequences are meant to draw us back to Him. The snake was cursed, but a redeemer was promised.
- 16. Suffering and Fruitfulness** (Genesis 3:16): God told Eve that He would make her pains in childbearing very severe. He established a principle: that He brings sweet fruit into our lives when we are willing to endure suffering.
- 17. Helping, Competing and Marriage** (Genesis 3:16) What does it mean that Eve's desire would be for her husband and her husband would rule over her? It means that both sides (Adam & Eve) will want control, and this is the source of much conflict in marriage today. In this lesson we explore the challenges in friendship and marriage. Youth are given the chance to share challenges they see in their parents' marriage or other marriages, to role play, and to come up with helpful solutions to deal with conflict.
- 18. Work: Curse or Blessing?** (Genesis 3:17-19) God established work as a blessing before the fall (Gen 2:15). We were created to work, but because of Adam & Eve's choice to sin, our work now comes with toil and sweat. God cursed the ground – He did not curse work. We were created to work. Work brings blessing and farming in particular was part of God's plan from the beginning.
- 19. The Covering** (Genesis 3:20-24) The story of the Fall (illustrated by a broken branch or egg) is reviewed. The price of sin is explained (without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sin, Heb 9:22b). When God covered Adam & Eve with animal skins, blood was shed (demonstrated through red paint and a picture of a lamb.) The foreshadowing of the great sacrifice paid by Jesus Christ for our sins is explained.
- 20. Forgiveness:** God's mercy was so great that He forgave us our sins and paid the greatest price of all: His dear son Jesus who died on the cross and rose again to redeem us. In the same way we must learn to forgive. Unforgiveness holds us in bondage. Forgiveness sets us free to receive God's blessings. Practical steps to real heart forgiveness are taught, and youth are given a chance to practically go through these steps to forgive someone who has hurt them.

**God With Us Part 3 – Life in God's Kingdom:** This volume is a work in progress. We cover some of the men who are known for their faith (from Hebrews 11) such as Abel and Noah. We also look at "Who Is Church?", Decision making, and how challenges in life can make us stronger -