

# BEYOND: OVERVIEW

## Day One

**Daily Theme:** Launch Pad

**Promise Point:** God's works are beyond my understanding.

**Memory Verse:** God's voice thunders in marvelous ways; he does great things beyond our understanding. – Job 37:5

## Day Two

**Daily Theme:** Mission Control

**Promise Point:** God's Word stands firm beyond time.

**Memory Verse:** Your word, Lord, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens. – Psalm 119:89

## Day Three

**Daily Theme:** Touch Down

**Promise Point:** God's light shines beyond my darkness.

**Memory Verse:** The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. – John 1:5

## Day Four

**Daily Theme:** Course Correction

**Promise Point:** God's love reaches beyond my sin.

**Memory Verse:** At that time I will gather you; at that time I will bring you home. – Zephaniah 3:20a

## Day Five

**Daily Theme:** CAPCOM

**Promise Point:** God is working beyond what I can see.

**Memory Verse:** He is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them. – Hebrews 7:25

## Day Six

**Daily Theme:** Reentry

**Promise Point:** God strengthens beyond my abilities.

**Memory Verse:** Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky as you hold firmly to the word of life. – Philippians 2:15-16

# Day Three Take Ten

Once there was a big, strong, college football player, “tough guy” on camp staff who would NOT walk alone at night through the woods to get back to his cabin. Why? Because he was afraid of the dark! Now, this may seem silly for a 21-year-old tough guy, but since he was from Chicago, he had never really been in the dark because the city lights are on all the time. At camp, dark was too dark. Quiet was too quiet. It made him uncomfortable.

**How do you feel in the dark? Is there another situation where you feel super weird and would rather not be alone - maybe on the water, in your basement, at someone's house, on stage, or in a group of new people? Why does having a flashlight or a friend make things less scary? Who is someone that makes you feel better when you're nervous?**

One of the most famous mysterious dark places is the “dark side of the moon.” We know that the moon is a sphere, but we only see the face that reflects the sun from our viewpoint on Earth. As of 2022, only 24 people have ever been to the other side, where the Earth is completely out of sight and out of communication range.

The fourth person to orbit the moon (and the first to do it alone!) was astronaut Michael Collins on the Apollo 11 mission in 1969. Michael Collins was the command module pilot of the mission during which Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin became the first people to walk on the surface of the moon. At the right moment, the command module and the lunar excursion module separated, taking Armstrong and Aldrin to make history while Collins made one orbit around the moon and came back to rendezvous with them for the trip home.

**How would you feel if two of your friends were going to do some sort of incredible first-time-EVER experience that would make them WORLD famous for YEARS and your role was to stay in the car, take a lap around the parking lot, and come back to pick them up? Jealous? Sad? A little angry?**

In an interview for the 2007 documentary “In the Shadow of the Moon,” Michael Collins says sincerely, “I feel very lucky!” Instead of being mad about missing out on an opportunity, for the 55 minutes he was completely alone on the other side of the moon, he was focused on the importance of getting his crewmates safely back into the ship for their return flight to Earth.

**How do you think focusing on the bigger mission helped Collins control his emotions? How do you handle when someone else hits the winning home run on your baseball team after you strike out or when someone else gets the lead in the play where your character doesn't even talk? How could focusing on the bigger mission make you a better teammate or friend?**

Read Joshua 1:1-9. This moment happens after Moses led God's people through the parted Red Sea and out of slavery in Egypt. Here, it is time to claim the Promised Land under their new leader, Joshua. **How many times does this passage say "be strong and courageous"? Why do you think Joshua would need this reminder? Look at verses 5 & 9 – what would it mean to hear God promise "I will never leave you nor forsake you" and "I will be with you wherever you go"? How do you think the bigger mission of fulfilling God's plan of deliverance helped Joshua to step up into his new role?**

Read Psalm 139:7-12, then say a prayer thanking God that you are never alone.

*Optional: GO BEYOND: Look again at Joshua 1:8. Here, God reminds Joshua to keep the Book of the Law at the front of his mind – the same Book that caused King Josiah to turn the kingdom upside down in yesterday's story. **What does it say will happen if Joshua stays focused? How can focusing on the Word of God help you when you are called to do something new or go somewhere scary?***

Promise Point: God's light shines beyond my darkness.

Today's Memory Verse: The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." - John 1:5

# Day Three Object Lesson

## Supplies:

- nametags, staff members
  - o Tip: #1 should probably be a boy, so the name tag placing doesn't get too awkward

## Set Up:

- Write different nicknames on name tags that reflect things about Staff #1 (see *example scenario in italics*)
  - o can be true or silly as long as Staff #1 is okay with being called that the rest of the week!

## Activity:

- Staff #1 walks in wearing normal nametag, introduces self to [Lesson Leader], shares personal fact
  - o *Leader: Hi, I'm Kate.*
  - o *Staff #1: Hey, nice to meet you, I'm Mike.*
  - o *Leader: Oh, cool, my grandpa's name is Mike!*
  - o *Staff #1: Really? I'm actually named after MY Grandpa Mike! I'm the only boy grandkid after like 12 girl cousins!*
- Staff #2 approaches, calls #1 by a slightly different name, slaps 2<sup>nd</sup> nametag on #1's chest
  - o *Staff #2: Heyyyyy! Michelito! How's it going?*
  - o *Leader: Wait, what? I thought your name was Mike.*
  - o *Staff #1: It is. Michelito means "Little Mike."*
  - o *Staff #2: Yeah, we're in the same jazz band at college and there's another Mike who plays trumpet, too, and it was getting confusing*
  - o *Staff #1: The other guy is like 6'4", though, so he's "Big Mike" and I just became Michelito*
- Staff #3 – puts another name tag on #1, greets, explains (*Slugger – homerun record for high school baseball team*)
- Staff #4 - another name tag, greets, explains (*Rex – does a GREAT dinosaur impression (make Mike prove it)*)
- Staff #5 - another name tag, greets, explains (*Champ – won pizza eating contest during staff training, just kinda stuck*)
- Staff # 6 another name tag, greets, explains (*Doc – studying to enter medical school*)
- Continues until nicknames/nametags run out and Staff #1 is covered in stickers

## Application:

- Each name reveals a little more about who [Mike] is (*huge family, jazz band trumpet player, baseball star, dinosaur impression, loves pizza, wants to be a doctor*)
- Names of Jesus reveal pieces of Who He is
  - Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Prince of Peace
  - Savior, Redeemer, Great High Priest, Lamb of God
  - **Word of Life**
    - 1 John 1:1
  - Solid Rock
    - Worth holding firm to!
  - Messiah, Christ, Lion of Judah
  - Way, Truth, & Life
  - Emmanuel
    - God with us! Never alone
  - King of kings, Lord of lords
  - **Bright Morning Star**
  - Alpha & Omega, etc.
  - **Light of the World**
    - Light in our darkness!

Promise Point: God's light shines beyond my darkness

Today's Memory Verse: The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it. – John 1:5

# Day Three Small Group: Touch Down

## **\*\*Helpful Hints\*\***

As you open this Small Group by talking about what it feels like to come home from a long trip, look out for signs of homesickness, especially in younger campers. Perhaps focus on the bittersweet feelings astronauts have when they touch down because there is literally nothing on Earth that compares to being in space (and how we have so many cool things left to do this week at camp that it might be hard to leave Day Six?).

Depending on individual experiences and comfort levels, your group may end up sharing some pretty personal stories or struggles today as we discuss the dark areas of our lives. Remind campers to respect the “safe space” of the cabin (a.k.a. not telling everyone during free time about someone’s past mistakes, family trouble, or medical history). Be prepared to redirect if you sense campers oversharing or (perhaps unintentionally) “one up-ing” or “out-trauma-ing” each other. The point of acknowledging the darkness is to receive the Light. Focus on Christ shining into the dark places and that fact that darkness cannot overcome.

Be careful if/when you talk about your own hard times. It’s important for campers to know that you’re real and that life with Jesus isn’t doesn’t mean everything is perfect, just remember to maintain appropriate boundaries when sharing personal experience.

**Pray for wisdom to guide conversations, answer questions, and respond to red flags that may arise. Talk to leadership staff if you are uncomfortable or need help processing anything that is revealed!**

### Promise Point:

- God’s light shines beyond my darkness.

### Memory Verse:

- The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. – John 1:5

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## INTRODUCTION

- Recap object lesson
  - o **Do you have a nickname? Who gave it to you? What does it say about you?**
    - Share one of your own!

- **What is your favorite name of Jesus? What does it say about Who He is?**
- Recap yesterday
  - Promise Point: God's Word stands firm beyond time.
  - Memory Verse: Psalm 119:89
- Theme intro
  - **What do you think of when you hear the phrase "Touch Down"?**
  - This time, "touch down" is not about football, but rather about the moment a crew touches down on Earth after being in space.
  - **How do you feel when you get home from a long trip?**
  - **What do you miss when you're away from home?**
  - **What is the first thing you will do when you get home Day Six?**
  - *Fun fact: because of the lack of gravity, showering in space is impossible – the water would go everywhere! Astronauts have to clean themselves by simply using wet washcloths. After spending 340 days (the American record for longest space mission) on the International Space Station in 2015-2016, Scott Kelly MISSED being immersed in liquid water. The first thing he did when he got back to his house was to jump in the swimming pool, fully clothed!*

## SPACE

- The phrase "touch down" is also used when a spacecraft touches down on land that is not part of Earth. Unmanned robotic probes and rovers have landed on asteroids, comets, others planets' moons, and other planets (Mercury, Venus, and Mars). There is currently a huge push in the NASA program to have humans touch down on Mars within the next few years!
- The most famous touch down in the history of space exploration is the Apollo 11 moon landing. In a speech asking for funding from the United States Congress in May 1961, President John F. Kennedy issued a public challenge stating, "I believe that this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to the earth."
  - **Have you ever been challenged to do something you knew you COULD do, but weren't quite sure HOW to do it? What did you do? How did you feel?**
  - Tell a story about a time when you faced an intimidating task with a looming deadline.
- With the end of the 1960s decade quickly approaching, in July 1969 (with other missions scheduled for September and November, just in case!), the Apollo 11 crew of Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin, and Michael Collins lifted off on the first successful launch intending to land a man on the moon.

- After a 240,000 mile flight, the command module and the LEM nicknamed “Eagle” separated. With less than thirty seconds of fuel left before having to abort their mission, the famous radio call was broadcast to the whole world – “The Eagle has landed.”
  - o Tell a quick story about something that **\*\*ALMOST\*\*** didn’t happen, but at the last second, everything worked out (could be a buzzer-beater basketball shot to win the game, turning in a paper as the professor was walking to his car for the day, or something more serious)
  - o The first successful launch to attempt a moon landing was also the first successful moon landing. **Have you ever experienced success on the first try? What was it like?**
  - o The Apollo program had 10 missions before Apollo 11. YEARS of research, testing, and training went into this historic moment. **What behind-the-scenes work did it take before your moment of victory? Could you have been as successful without this background?**
- *Optional, if campers ask: The Apollo program had 17 missions. Apollo 1 caught on fire (killing three astronauts) before leaving the ground in 1967 (this is why Apollo 11 was the “first successful launch” intended to land on the moon, not the “first attempt”). Because of the Apollo 1 tragedy, Apollo 2-6 were unmanned launches.*
- *Between 1968 and 1972, there were nine manned lunar missions. Apollo 7 & 9 orbited the earth as manned test flights. Apollo 8 & 10 orbited the moon but didn’t land. Apollo 13 had the famous “problem” (more on that tomorrow!). Apollo 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, & 17 successfully landed and returned. As of 2020, the 12 men that walked on the moon in those six landings are the only humans to ever stand on land that is not on this planet!*

## DISCUSSION

- As the first human to ever set foot somewhere that ISN’T Earth, Neil Armstrong had the pressure of capturing the moment for the world. When he came off the Eagle’s ladder and onto the surface of the moon, he famously remarked, “That’s one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind.”
  - o **Can you think of some other seemingly small moments that have changed the course of the world? Or of your family/life?** (*Christopher Columbus taking a wrong turn on the way to India, the apple falling on Isaac Newton, your parents meeting for the first time because your dad randomly chose to go to a different coffee shop and your mom was working that day, falling in love with photography because you went to*



*the art room to find your friend who forgot to return your cell phone charger they borrowed)*

- While the Apollo 11 touch down was amazing, there's an even more incredible moment that was an even more giant leap for the good of mankind. Let's read Luke 1:26-38.
  - o **How did Mary respond to the huge task the angel told her about? How do you think she felt?**
  - o **How was Mary's acceptance of her personal mission a giant leap for the whole world?**
  - o *Optional, if you read the NIV 2011 translation of this story: Look back at v.37: "For no word from God will ever fail." **What does this mean? How does this connect with what we talked about yesterday?***
- Read or have a volunteer read Luke 2:1-16.
  - o *Optional, if time allows: **What's your favorite thing about Christmas? Does your family have any funny traditions?***
- What we just read, Luke 1 & 2, is the story of the most important "touch down" in all eternity. With "one small step," Armstrong, Aldrin, and Collins stepped into the history books. With one small baby, the Lord of the Universe stepped into time.
- Read or have a volunteer read John 1:1-3.
  - o **Who is "the Word"? (JESUS!)**
  - o **What does this passage tell us about Jesus?** *(Jesus has always been God, has always existed, was part of creation - didn't just show up at Christmas)*
  - o **Have you ever thought about Jesus being part of Creation?**
- Read or have a volunteer read John 1:14. The eternal God touched down on Earth in human form!
  - o **How does it make you feel to know that the Lord of the universe was a real, actual human?**
- Read or have volunteers read John 1:5 and 1 John 1:5.
  - o **What do these verses have in common?**
  - o **What kind of darkness is in this world? What kind of darkness have you experienced?** *(by circumstance, by your own choice, by someone else's choice, as a witness)*
  - o **How can we be sure the darkness cannot overcome the light?**
- Read or have a volunteer read John 8:12.
  - o **How can Jesus, the Light of the World, overcome the darkness we face?**
  - o **What are some ways you have experienced the light in the world?**

- Tell a story about a dark time you were going through until the light of Jesus came shining through.

## REFLECTION

**\*\*TO BE ANSWERED SILENTLY IN BOOKLETS\*\***

- **What is your favorite name of Jesus? Why?** (*Savior, Lord, Emmanuel, Redeemer, Prince of Peace, Word of Life, King of Kings, Good Shepherd, Bright Morning Star, Lion of Judah - ask cabin leader for more examples*)
- **Why is it important that Jesus touched down on the Earth as a real human?**
- **What dark area of your life do you need Jesus' light to shine into?**
- **In what dark area of the world (or your town, or your school, or your family) do you feel Jesus asking you to be a light?**
- **How can you hold firm (or help someone hold firm) to the light on dark days?**

## WRAP UP

- Jesus touched down on this earth to reach into our darkness, to reach BEYOND our darkness, to **defeat** darkness!
- Jesus is the light of the world, and He can never be overcome by any darkness, no matter how dark, scary, or painful it may be. Even better, no darkness can separate us from Him – nothing can!
- Read Romans 8:35 & 37-39. We are “more than conquerors.” We are BEYOND victorious “through Him who loved us.”
- Promise Point: God's light shines beyond my darkness
- Today's Memory Verse: The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it. – John 1:5
- Pray in thanksgiving for the light of Christ that shines into the darkest places of our lives.

# Day Three Chapel: Touch Down

Main Text: Luke 2:21-40

- ~ Mary & Joseph take baby Jesus to the temple, Simeon & Anna prophesy

Object Lesson: Water

- ~ Glass of water, glass of hot water (steaming!), glass of ice

Promise Point:

- ~ God's light shines beyond my darkness

Memory Verse:

- ~ The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it. – John 1:5
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## OBJECT LESSON: Water, Ice, Steam

- ~ Water = God the Father
  - o Gives & sustains life
    - Father is Creator, life-giver
- ~ Ice = God the Son (Jesus)
  - o Solid, can touch, can hold onto
    - Jesus was truly human, actually here, physical body
- ~ Steam = God the Spirit
  - o Can more feel than see, can harness as power (trains, ships, etc)
    - Can feel/hear Holy Spirit, power can move us
- ~ Obviously different, but which one is water?
  - o ALL OF THEM!
  - o None is LESS water than another
  - o None has never NOT been water
- ~ The Trinity! Distinct but not separate – which one is God?
  - o ALL OF THEM!
  - o None is LESS God than another
  - o None has never NOT been God
    - Jesus has ALWAYS been God
      - Didn't just show up at Christmas
      - Was present at Creation, was part of it (*John 1:1-3, today's Small Group*)
      - Eternal, but stepped into time as human (touch down!)

## SCRIPTURE/APPLICATION

- ~ Luke 2:21-24 – Jewish traditions
  - o Jesus was REALLY part of a family, part of a culture, part of this world

- Luke 2:25-35 – Simeon
  - vv.25-27 – Holy Spirit on him, revealed to him, moved him
    - Holy Spirit has always been God, always been present, didn't just show up at Pentecost
  - vv.29-32 – THIS IS THE ONE!
    - "The Eagle has landed!"
      - Personal story option A: tell about the glorious moment you received the very thing you had been waiting for
    - v.32 "a light for revelation to the Gentiles"
      - Isaiah 9:2
      - Shining for the whole world, not just chosen ones
      - Touch down brings unity
  
- Luke 2:36-38 – Anna
  - Spoke about the child "to all who had been waiting" (v.38)
    - July 1969 – when Apollo 11 touched down (on the moon, today's Small Group), the worldwide response was "We did it!"
      - Not NASA did it, not the Americans did it, **WE**
      - Victory for everyone in the world
        - Touch down brought unity
    - Access to something we had been waiting for, working toward, didn't think was possible
      - Anna, Simeon, Jews waiting for Messiah
      - Personal story, option B: tell about the moment you realized the thing you had been dreaming about was actually coming true and you couldn't keep the secret/good news to yourself
  
- Luke 2:39-40 – the Child grew
  - Lots of firsts in space program
    - First satellite, first human, first American, first orbit, first spacewalk, etc
  - Real firsts in Jesus' life because he was a real human
    - First steps, first foods, first day of school
  
- Shooting Stars
  - Meteor = space debris with a visible path through the atmosphere
  - Meteorite = space debris that actually hits the earth (touch down)
  - Can buy pieces of meteorites on EBay for hundreds/thousands/hundreds of thousands of dollars
    - Personal story option: tell about receiving a special gift that you were overwhelmed to physically hold (*bonus points if it was*

*something like a guitar played by your favorite musician or shoes your favorite basketball player actually wore, etc)*

- Idea of holding something from space inspires awe
- Imagine Simeon holding THE ONE from Heaven
  - The Eternal One touched down – Colossians 1:15

## WRAP UP

- Things could've been different...
  - Every rocket launch sequence has many abort options – shut off engines while on the ground, return to launch site, land elsewhere in the world, orbit once then return
  - Jesus could've not come, could've changed His mind, could've not gone to the cross
    - In motion since Genesis 3 – had to restore broken relationship
    - In motion since before the beginning? (Revelation 13:8 – “...the Lamb who was slain from the creation of the world.”)
- ...but they're not!
  - Because He DID touch down - He came, lived, died, rose
  - Jesus left glory to be here – reached into the darkness of this hard, scary world
  - Didn't stay but was (and IS) with us!
    - Darkness CANNOT overcome – may seem lonely, dark, scary, but His presence is light
      - 1 John 1:5, John 8:12
      - Ephesians 4:10 (GNT) “So the one who came down is the same one who went up, above and beyond the heavens, to fill the whole universe with his presence.”
        - Didn't stay in this world, but was with us here so we can be with Him there
      - 2 Corinthians 4:6 – God Who made light in the beginning fills us with light in Christ
- Promise Point: God's light shines beyond my darkness
- Today's Memory Verse: The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it. – John 1:5

# Day Four Take Ten

**What's the biggest adventure you've ever been on? What's the biggest adventure you dream of going on? What intrigues you about doing that?**

When you think of space travel, it's easy to focus on the incredible, amazing, huge (out of this world - literally!) adventure! Floating around in zero gravity, walking on another planet, seeing Earth from a whole new perspective, making groundbreaking scientific discoveries – it's the ultimate exploration experience!

**What would be the coolest part about being an astronaut?**

Buuuuuut, then there's the stuff they don't advertise. There's a good chance you'll have to leave your family in Texas and live in quarantine in Russia before launch. Every minute of your day is planned. You will experience bone loss, headaches, and motion sickness. You have to poop in a vacuum, you can't take a shower, and there's a super high chance you'll puke if you burp. Oh, and if something goes wrong and you die during a spacewalk, your crewmates will have to just cut you loose and leave you there.

Whoa. **Knowing all this, is it still worth it?**

Paul (a missionary to the early churches - we'll talk about him more in Small Group!) had to go through a lot as he traveled and taught about Jesus. Look at 2 Corinthians 11:23-28. Whoa. But just a few chapters earlier, we see where Paul writes "...our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all." (2 Cor. 4:17)

**How do you think Paul is able to call being beaten and shipwrecked "light and momentary troubles?" After all this, what made it worth it?**

**Do you know anyone who always seems to stay positive, even when they are going through really tough stuff? What do you think keeps them going?**

**When you think about following Jesus, does it seem like a great adventure? How do you think people who follow Jesus deal with hard times? Does following Jesus seem risky, dangerous, or difficult? Is it worth it?**

Read Romans 8:18, then say a prayer asking Jesus to give you courage to do hard things for the sake of His glory.

*Optional: GO BEYOND: Read Psalm 130. **Have you ever cried out to God from the depths?** Here it says, "I wait for the Lord, more than watchmen wait for the morning." **Have you ever found light from God after a "dark night" in your life? How does this go along with what we talked about yesterday? Look at verse 5 and think back to Day Two – why is "in his word" a good place to "put my hope"?***

Promise Point: God's love reaches beyond my sin.

Today's Memory Verse: At that time I will gather you; at that time I will bring you home. – Zephaniah 3:20a

# Day Four Object Lesson

## Supplies:

- ~ Bathroom scale, Velcro, picture of Earth, 3 volunteers
- ~ 3 sets of pictures: our moon, our sun, Mercury, Venus, Jupiter, space (black sky with stars)
- ~ Staff member who doesn't mind telling their weight
- ~ Higher/Lower game set – long strip with numbers in these increments: 0 50  
100 150 200 250 300 350 400 450 500 550 600 650  
700 750 800 850 900 950 1,000 2,000 3,000 4,000 5,000 6,000  
7,000 8,000 9,000 10,000

## Set Up:

- ~ Cut each set of pictures into circles and label them with their names (*in different colored Sharpie to clearly see whose disc it is? Red set, blue set, black set?*), put small pieces of Velcro on the back
- ~ Make higher/lower game set with Velcro strip along number line
- ~ Calculate Staff Member's weight in/on various places (do beforehand to save time)

### How to find

(for example, if staff weighs 200 lb)

- |  |           |
|--|-----------|
| ○ Earth = weight x 1 (actual earth weight)   | 200 lbs   |
| ○ Space = weight x 0 (no gravity, no weight) | 0 lbs     |
| ○ Moon = weight x 0.166                      | 33.2 lbs  |
| ○ Mercury = weight x 0.38                    | 76 lbs    |
| ○ Venus = weight x 0.91                      | 182 lbs   |
| ○ Jupiter = weight x 2.14                    | 428 lbs   |
| ○ Sun = weight x 28                          | 5,600 lbs |

## Activity:

- ~ Have Staff #1 step on scale, announce weight to audience, attach Earth picture at correct spot
- ~ Give 3 volunteers each a set of pictures and instruct them to stick each disc along the line to guess Staff's weight on different planets/places
- ~ Volunteers each get a turn, audience yelling suggestions of which way to move ("Price is Right" style)
- ~ Reveal correct answers

## Application:

- ~ Course correction – when headed in wrong direction, need to (turn around and) go the other way
  - Lots of voices telling us which way to go

- How do we know who to listen to?
- Weight of sin
  - Weight isn't a real thing, just mass x gravity
  - Sin is heavy, no matter what/where/who – sin causes separation from God
    - BUT God sent Jesus to reach beyond my sin and heal this separation!

Promise Point: God's love reaches beyond my sin.

Today's Memory Verse: At that time I will gather you; at that time I will bring you home. – Zephaniah 3:20a



# Day Four Small Group: Course Correction

## **\*\*Helpful Hints\*\***

We will be using the phrase “coming home” a lot today. Be especially aware of homesick campers and remind them that we still have tons of fun stuff to do at camp this week!

On the other hand, for some campers, home might not be the best/happiest/safest place. Be clear that nothing about our home in Heaven is scary or bad, and that the awful things we deal with here are NOT of God, but that they exist because we live in a world that is broken by sin.

Today, we’ll consider the darkness that can come because of our own choices. Again, please assure/remind campers that the pain of abuse or neglect (because of other peoples’ choices) is NOT of God and NOT their fault.

Tonight at chapel/campfire, the speaker will present the Gospel message and offer an opportunity to respond. Please be in prayer for your campers and for wisdom in what to say to those who have doubts/questions.

### Promise Point:

- ~ God’s love reaches beyond my sin.

### Memory Verse:

- ~ At that time I will gather you; at that time I will bring you home. – Zephaniah 3:20a

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## INTRODUCTION

- ~ Recap object lesson
  - o Higher/lower
  - o Change direction
  - o Weight of sin
- ~ Recap yesterday
  - o Promise Point: God’s light shines beyond my darkness.
  - o Verse: John 1:5
- ~ Theme intro
  - o **What do you think of when you hear the phrase “Course Correction”?**
  - o How do you feel when someone tells you what to do?

## SPACE

- ~ Simply put, Mission Control orders course corrections when the course of a spacecraft needs to be corrected. Because there is no atmosphere in space, once rockets reach orbit, engines are shut down completely and momentum carries the ship and the crew. The slightest variation in direction can put astronauts

thousands of miles from where they need to be, possibly on the path to eminent danger.

- Tell a story about a time when you were on the wrong path and a friend/family member/Jesus stepped in to turn you around.

- When people think about a rocket launch, many imagine the Space Shuttle. (see picture) Used from 1981-2011, these famous spacecrafts had external boosters that fell to the sea after they burned out and the world's first reusable spaceship that launched like a rocket and landed like an airplane.



- Between the cockpit and the tail of the ship was a cargo bay for the mission payload – science experiments to be carried out in space, pieces of the International Space Station when it was under construction, and satellites to be launched for science/military/communication purposes. Over the course of thirty years, astronauts on the 135 Space Shuttle missions made HUGE contributions to the world we now live in.
- Buuuuuut there were serious problems with the shuttles (*just like in today's Take Ten, everything's not all wonderful*). There were known mechanical and engineering issues and there was no escape pod or ejector seats for the crew if something went wrong.
  - **Even knowing the dangers, why do you think NASA chose to launch the Shuttles?**
  - **Have you ever done something dangerous or risky on purpose, even if you knew what could potentially go wrong? Why?**
  - Share a(n appropriate) story about a time when you chose to do something you knew you shouldn't.

## DISCUSSION

- One of the most amazing sights in space is a supernova. This incredible phenomenon is a brilliant, beautiful explosion.....but it actually signals the death of a star.
  - **What are some things that seem cool, amazing, or fun but are really just a bright flash before a major consequence?**

- Sometimes after a star explodes, it collapses in on itself and the gravity of its mass is so strong that not even light can escape, creating what we know as a black hole.
  - o **What are some things (temptations) that seem to have a strong pull on people?**
- Yesterday, we talked about some of the dark times we've been through. Unfortunately, some of the darkness we experience is our own fault. Sin is when we choose to do something that goes against God and separates us from Him.
  - o **How can someone know if what they're doing is sin?**
  - o **Why is being separated from God like being in the dark?**
- Read or have a volunteer read 1 John 1:5-9.
  - o **What does this passage say about how to come back into the light?**
- Remind campers of yesterday's memory verse – Jesus, the Word of Life, the Light of the World, shines in the darkness and cannot be overcome. Even when the darkness is of our own making/choosing, there is still hope, forgiveness, love, grace, mercy and LIGHT in Christ!
- Read or have a volunteer read 1 Corinthians 10:12-13. Unlike a black hole, we CAN escape from the things that pull us!
  - o **How can we break away from temptation?**
  - o **How can we avoid temptation/dangerous situations in the first place?**
- When space crews need a course correction, they turn to Mission Control to find out exactly what they need to do. For us to turn our lives around, we have to turn to the Word (Jesus) and the word (Bible).
- Read or have a volunteer read Acts 7:55-8:3
  - o **Based on this passage, what do you think of Saul?**
- Read or have a couple volunteers read Acts 9:1-22.
  - o Wow - talk about a course correction!
  - o Tell a story about someone (possibly yourself?) who had their life completely turned around by a personal encounter with Jesus.
- Saul went on to become the man we know as Paul (*Acts 13:9*), a missionary to the early church and the author of several books of the New Testament! When a heart is changed, ways are changed, and the world can be changed!

## REFLECTION

**\*\*TO BE ANSWERED SILENTLY IN BOOKLETS\*\***

- **Do you like to do dangerous things or are you more of a rule follower?**
- Course corrections in space are done by burning one or more engines for small bursts of time (a few minutes or even just seconds!) to turn the ship slightly into a safer or better direction. **What are some small steps you can take to make a course correction in your life?**
- **In what areas have you been holding firm to bad habits, pride, or sin? Are you ready to let go and be directed on God's path?**
- Read 2 Corinthians 5:17. **Do you believe that you can have a whole new life in Jesus Christ?** Talk to any staff member at any time if you have questions about this or are ready to make a commitment!

## WRAP UP

- Ephesians 5:8 says, "...you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord..."
  - It's not just that we were IN darkness, but that we WERE darkness.
  - At the same time, it's not just that we are IN the light, but that we ARE light! We are part of it!
    - Jesus doesn't just reach into our darkness, He pulls us into His light!
- Often course corrections (in space) happen as crews prepare for reentry – the direction or angle of flight is adjusted so that the astronauts can make it home safely. This is exactly what God does for us – out of love BEYOND measure, He gave His Son to die on the cross and take away our sins and pull us out of darkness so that we can live forever with Him.
- Promise Point: God's love reaches beyond my sin.
- Today's Memory Verse: At that time I will gather you; at that time I will bring you home. – Zephaniah 3:20a
- Pray for open hearts as the Gospel is presented this evening and for willing hearts to hear Jesus' voice of correction.

# Day Four Chapel: Course Correction

Main Text: Luke 15:11-32

- ~ The Parable of the Prodigal Son

Object Lesson: Junk Pile

- ~ Plastic tubing, duct tape, large chunk of foam, cardboard, ziplock bags, a pair of socks, bungee cords, phone book or thick operating manual

Promise Point:

- ~ God's love reaches beyond my sin.

Memory Verse:

- ~ At that time I will gather you; at that time I will bring you home. – Zephaniah 3:20a
- 

## OBJECT LESSON: Junk Pile

- ~ Rummage through pile, could be fun to make something out of this stuff
  - o Alien? Spaceship?
- ~ What if we had to use this to save a life? What if we had to use this to save three lives 200,000 miles away?
  - o Apollo 13 – April 1970 – “Houston, we’ve had a problem”
    - [https://www.nasa.gov/mission\\_pages/apollo/missions/apollo13.html](https://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/apollo/missions/apollo13.html)
    - Jim Lovell, Jack Swigert, Fred Haise on the way to the moon
    - Oxygen tank explosion 55 hours into flight – electricity, light, water supplies lost, oxygen depleting
    - Didn’t know how to get them home
      - Decided to use LEM as “lifeboat”
  - o “Failure is not an option”
    - Personal story, option A: Tell about a time when you didn’t know what to do, but you HAD to do SOMETHING, at least just to say you tried
    - LEM was supposed to house two men for two days, not three men for four days
    - Too much carbon dioxide (from exhaling)
      - MCC crew on the ground had to build a filter from items the crew had with them in space
        - o Items like this! Socks, tubes, the cover of the flight manual, plastic bags, bungee cords, duct tape
        - o Personal story, option B: Tell about a time when you made the best of the limited resources you had and it worked out

- Personal story, option C: Tell about a time when you were stranded far from home, but you had people working on a solution for you behind the scenes

## SCRIPTURE/APPLICATION

- Luke 15: 11-13 – Launch
  - Younger son set off for a different world
  - Distanced self from family
- Luke 15:14-19 – Houston, we’ve had a problem
  - Money ran out, famine in the land
  - Tried to solve problem himself
  - Realized he couldn’t do it alone
- Luke 15:20-24 – Reentry
  - Course correction – turned around and went back home
  - Father came out to meet him
    - God is WAITING (v.20) for us with patience and love beyond degree
  - ANYONE can come home
    - Doesn’t matter what you’ve done
    - Father didn’t ask for an apology, for an explanation, for his money back
  - v.22 – put a ring on his finger
    - make a fist - you HAVE to open your hand to receive a ring on your finger (can’t hold onto anything - past, mistakes, fear, etc)
      - Father wants to welcome, give gifts (can’t be holding firm to pride, sin, doubt, etc)
  - servant v. son
    - Son hoped to be hired hand (v. 19, 21)
    - Father reclaim as son (v.24)
      - Full restoration, not conditional, no probationary period
    - Galatians 4:7, Romans 8:14-17
- Luke 15:25-31 – older brother
  - ANYONE can come home – even if you’re “already there”
    - Don’t have to be a great sinner to have a great Savior
      - Father WENT OUT to both brothers (vv. 20 & 28)
      - God reaches BEYOND our sin, darkness, pride – HE pursues US
    - Older brother has been with father, but doesn’t recognize blessings
      - Are we serving out of joy or obligation?
      - If we already know Christ, are we fully surrendered?

- *Optional: Junk pile: foam – seems small, light, caused Columbia disaster that killed 7 astronauts in 2003*
  - *Sin is sin, and sin is dangerous*
  - *Small things can cause big separation*
- “NASA’s greatest moment”
  - Alan Bean, the fourth man ever to walk on the moon (Apollo 12 mission, November 1969), said in an interview that Apollo 13 was “NASA’s greatest moment”
    - He was a member of the third-ever class of astronauts (selected by NASA in 1963), so he saw a LOT of “firsts”
    - Didn’t choose Apollo 11, Skylab, missions he was part of, other huge “successes”
  - MCC ground team working on a solution during the problem
    - Romans 5:8
  - God is always working to BRING US HOME (Today’s Memory Verse: Zephaniah 3:20a)

## **GOSPEL/INVITATION**

- We are all sinners, separated from God
- The only way to be reconciled to God is through the perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross
- When we confess Christ as Lord, we are forgiven, redeemed, saved
  - Doesn’t matter what you’ve done or how far you’ve gone
  - God WANTS you to come home
  - God’s love reaches beyond our sins
- Acts 3:19 – repent and turn – course correction!
  - When you’re going the wrong way, you have to turn around
  - Have to call on Father to solve the problem

## **WRAP UP**

- Promise Point: God’s love reaches beyond my sin.
- Today’s Memory Verse: At that time I will gather you; at that time I will bring you home. – Zephaniah 3:20a
- Remind campers they can talk to any staff at any time with questions