

Lesson One: Head Knowledge vs. Heart Knowledge (Middle School/High School)

Lesson Theme

Knowing God goes way beyond knowing about God. Having an intimate relationship with God through spiritual disciplines is the first step toward living a life that pleases God—exhibiting the fruit of the spirit and conquering the cycle of sin in our lives.

Theme Verse

“His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.” (2 Peter 1:3 NIV)

“Everything that goes into a life of pleasing God has been miraculously given to us by getting to know, personally and intimately, the One who invited us to God.” (2 Peter 1:3 The Message)

Inductive Bible Discussion Guide

Brief Explanation

- This discussion guide is designed for just that... discussion. When I lead discussion group Bible studies, I do not have answers anywhere in the material, nor do I use a leader's guide with all the answers written in.
- This is INTENTIONAL! I believe that the discipleship process should be an encounter with God, not just listening to someone else tell you what words to write down to fill in the blanks.
- Our goal is to help you facilitate discovery learning for your students. As the questions are asked, every participant (including the leader) is required to search God's Word to discover the appropriate morsel of truth. When facilitators are 'armed' with all the answers, they are less likely to allow the time needed for individuals to process the question and formulate an answer.
- Don't be afraid of silence! That discovery process is the key to the success or failure of this process. It is in those moments of silence that we stop teaching and the Holy Spirit takes over!
- We cannot forget what Jesus said in John 16:13: *“when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth.”*
- A “Lesson Commentary” has been included with this packet. We encourage you to study the material contained in the commentary, but do not try to teach (aka lecture) your group from that material. Let it serve as a source of information for you to draw upon to help give context and perspective to the group discussion.
- For a deeper look at the issues presented herein, please look at the "Judges – Teacher's Guide" or listen to the corresponding sermons (www.templerogers.org/obe/judges_resources/)
- For a deeper discussion of how to lead an inductive style, Bible discussion group, please download the “Leading Small Group Bible Studies” resource by clicking [HERE](#).

Ice-Breaker Options

OPTION #1: WHO DO YOU KNOW?

- Using printed photos (or a slide show on a tablet), show pictures of famous/recognizable people and ask the students these questions: “Do you know this person? What can you tell me about them?”
- After doing this for several (8-10) people, ask them the same questions in reference to God/Jesus Christ.
- Then say, “Based on the answers you gave, would you say that you know about God? Or would you say that you know Him personally?”
- “There are a lot of people that we know that we really do not know personally. We can know all about them, but still not know them. You can know all about God and still not know Him. This is the difference between **HEAD KNOWLEDGE** and **HEART KNOWLEDGE**.”
- [Download the “Who Do You Know” Power Point Presentation at: www.templerogers.org/ministries/obe/judges_resources/.]

OPTION #2: TO DO LIST

- **For Adults...**

“Have you ever told your child to do something and then—an hour later when you ask if it is completed—your child tells you, “I forgot.” Do you remember the level of frustration you felt as a result? Quickly, in your mind, you recount all the times he/she has used this excuse. You are indecisive as to which lecture you will respond with but you are certain that a lecture is forthcoming in the very near future. You struggle to understand how it is that the brilliant child in front of you—one who can remember the most obscure details about movies, games and pop culture—cannot remember to do a simple task that you mentioned just one hour earlier! Why?”
- **For Students...**

“Have your parents ever told you to do something and then—an hour later when they ask if you did it—you have no idea what they asked you to do in the first place? You rack your brain trying to

remember what it was, but to no avail. You prepare yourself for one of your parents' classic lectures about how you never listen; and how that you can remember all sorts of stupid details about video games and movies, but cannot remember to do a simple task. They want to know why... so why?"

- The goal of this exercise is not for the students to defend their actions, but for them to see possible reasons for their oblivion.
- Their inability to remember the task was because the task was not as important to them as it was to their parent(s).

OPTION 3: CREATIVE ACTIVITY – JOURNALS

- During the first lesson, give each student a notebook for taking notes this week at camp (**download here**). Allow the students to use decorative duct tape to cover/decorate the covers.
- Another option would be to purchase ordinary notebooks and allow the students to use decorative duct tape to cover/decorate them.
- Another option is that teachers might consider providing 'cool' notebooks (ring binders, journals, etc.) for them to use in their personal, quiet time during camp. If you choose to buy binders, you can use the note-taking template to fill the binders (**download here**).
- Pre-teen and teen girls are good at multi-tasking and can be working on them as the lesson is taught. If you are teaching boys, use your own judgment! 😊

OPTION 4: OBJECT LESSON – KNOWLEDGE VS. WISDOM

- All year long students have been sitting in class gaining knowledge, but knowing to do right isn't enough.
- Steps in the Object Lesson
 - Bring a sponge and a squirt gun to your class.
 - Tell the kids, "The water represents the knowledge you have been given during school and you are the sponge."
 - Squirt the water on the sponge and let it soak in.

- Explain that we are like the sponge. We sit in school, in church, and we ‘soak up’ lots of facts, but the facts themselves aren’t enough—we need wisdom.
- “Wisdom is the practical application of knowledge.”
- Ask the students to tell you one of the 10 Commandments. A sample answer would be, “Thou shalt not covet.”
- “When you can recite the Commandments, that’s knowledge.”
- “Wisdom is when I have the opportunity to covet something and I CHOOSE not to! Wisdom is knowing what is right and choosing to do it!”
- Next, take the sponge and begin to squeeze it. As you squeeze it, tell the kids: “When we are under pressure, the knowledge within us makes us wise when we choose to do right.”

Discussion Guide

Remembering and Forgetting

There is great spiritual significance associated with the terms “remembering” and “forgetting” in the Bible. Read Psalm 25:6 and Isaiah 64:9. Is it possible for God to forget something? Or is it possible for God to fail to remember something?

What does the Bible mean here when it asks God to remember or forget?

Read Judges 3:7. What does the Bible mean when it says “the people of Israel... forgot the LORD their God?”

Significant Events

What are some significant events that have happened in the world in your lifetime? How have those events affected your day-to-day activities?

Did the “9/11 Attacks” have an effect on your life? What about the attack on Pearl Harbor?

In the story of Judges, seventy years have gone by since the Exodus. God’s deliverance of the Israelites was no longer fresh on their minds—it was as if they had forgotten God.

Knowledge of God

What are some of the truths you know that the Bible teaches? Do you always obey these truths? Why not?

What’s the difference in knowing something in your *head* and in knowing something with your *heart*?

Illustration –

Jonathan Edwards from his sermon *Divine and Supernatural Light* has a great illustration to make this point using honey. He says, “your mind can know honey is sweet, people can tell you it’s sweet, you’ve read books about it, etc. but if you haven’t actually tasted it, you know with your head, but not with your heart. When you actually taste it, you experience it for yourself, you know it in a full way, and you can know it in your heart.”

Have something unusual for them to taste – tell them what it tastes like, or have one of them describe it, then let them sample it.

Godly Character Traits

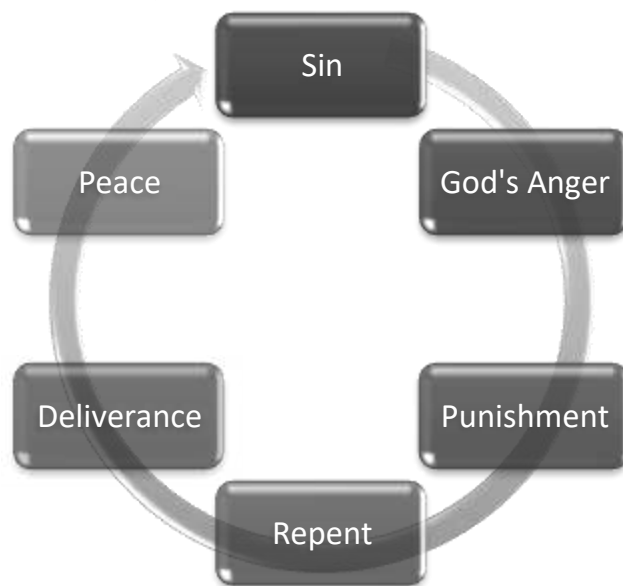
Read 2 Peter 1:5-9. In verse 9, Peter says that anyone who does not have these qualities has forgotten that Jesus cleansed them of their sins. What qualities is he referring to? (verses 5-7)

Why is it important for these qualities to be growing in you? (verse 8)

Cycle of Sin

Read Judges 3:7-11. What did God do to turn the Israelites back to Him?

What are the steps in the cycle of sin?



Have you seen this same kind of pattern in your own life?

What can a believer do to counteract this cycle of sin and 'remember' God in his day-to-day life?

- Romans 12:1-2 – Explore the Word
- Hebrews 10:24-25 – Experience Community
- Galatians 5:16-25 – Empowered by the Spirit

What will you do to transform your head knowledge into heart knowledge?

- Read my Bible.
- Get involved in a local church and youth group.
- Live according to God's Word rather than my desires.

Activity Sheets/Coloring Pages

- Download the Lesson 1 – Activity Sheets Packet for coloring sheets and other activities for your students!

SOAP Journaling

- Make a copy of Activity Sheet 1.2 for each student. [Be sure to print these pages back-to-back so that they will function as a small booklet—or like a church bulletin.]
- At the end of the group discussion, introduce the concept of SOAP Journaling. Instructions on how to SOAP Journal are included on the cover page of this booklet.
- Challenge students to SOAP the first entry during TODAY'S quiet time after lunch and bring it back to class this afternoon. Be sure to follow up with them on this to see if they have any questions. "We cannot EXPECT something if we do not INSPECT it!" This sample journal is designed to be used each day of camp during 'Quiet Time.'

Lesson Commentary

Judges 3:7-11

In the first two chapters of Judges, the author informs us that Joshua—Moses’ successor who led the children of Israel out of the wilderness and into the Promised Land—has died (Judges 2:8-9). These chapters tell of a few successes (Judges 1:1-26), but the emphasis seems to be on the failures of the Israelites to drive the idol worshiping nations out of the Promised Land as God commanded (Judges 1:27-2:3). It quickly becomes clear that there is a problem with sin and disobedience among the Israelites. Notice the description found in Judges 2:10-13:

¹⁰ And all that generation also were gathered to their fathers. And there arose **another generation** after them **who did not know the Lord or the work that he had done for Israel.**

¹¹ And the people of Israel **did what was evil in the sight of the Lord** and served the Baals.

¹² And they **abandoned the Lord**, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt. They **went after other gods**, from among the gods of the peoples who were around them, and bowed down to them. And they provoked the Lord to anger. ¹³ They **abandoned the Lord** and served the Baals and the Ashtaroth. (Emphasis added)

How is it possible that this next generation “did not know the Lord or the work that he had done for Israel”?

When the Bible says they “did not know the Lord,” it didn’t necessarily mean that they didn’t know anything about God and His works among His people, but that these things were no longer important in their day-to-day lives. I’m sure that the stories of the Exodus, the crossings of the Red Sea and the Jordan, and the falling wall that surrounded Jericho were being passed on from generation to generation; but the impact of these stories faded with the passing of each generation. In short, they had not embraced the ‘gospel’ as their story! They had forgotten the work of God in delivering them out of slavery and into the Promised Land.

Aren’t we guilty of this too? How many times have you seen a banner that says, “We will never forget!”? Why do they make those banners? It’s because we too easily forget! Feelings fade and grief is eventually replaced with everyday life. Here are some modern examples of events that have shaped our nation:

- September 11 terrorists attacks (2001)
- Explosion of the Space Shuttle Challenger (1986)
- Assassination of President Kennedy (1963)
- Aerial attack on Pearl Harbor (1941)

Each of these events had a profound effect upon our nation, but as time moves on, it is easy to forget the impact that was felt in the aftermath of each event. It was over 70 years ago when the US Naval Base Pearl Harbor was attacked by the Japanese. Similarly, there was a period of more than 70 years between the Exodus and the beginning of the period of the Judges.

The mighty work of God’s deliverance of the Israelites was no longer fresh on their minds—it was as if they had forgotten God.

When the people did what was evil in the sight of the Lord and forgot Him, did they really forget God? Or does this mean something else?

When the Bible says that “the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD” (Judges 3:7a), it is describing a two-fold process that is explained in the next portion of verse 7. It says, “They forgot the LORD their God and served the Baals and the Asheroth.” In other words, in God’s eyes, to do evil is to live in such a way to disregard God and worship false gods instead. There is great spiritual significance associated with the terms “remembering” and “forgetting” in the Bible. Timothy Keller explains:

When people in the Old Testament asked God to ‘remember... your great mercy and love’ (Psalm 25:6) or to ‘not remember our sins’ (Isaiah 64:9), they did not believe that God could literally forget what he is like, or what someone has done! What does it mean, then, to ‘forget’ or ‘remember’? When God is asked: ‘Remember your great mercy and love,’ he is being asked to act according to his character. When someone asks God to ‘remember not [my] sins,’ he or she is asking that God would not act on what he knows.

Therefore, to say that the Israelites ‘forgot’ God is to say that they no longer were controlled by what they knew... Though they knew who God was and what he wanted, those things were not real to them.¹

What’s the difference between knowing something in your ‘head’ and knowing something with your ‘heart’?

Knowing with your head is acknowledging intellectually that something is true. Knowing with your heart is when that truth penetrates our soul and transforms us from the inside out. The Israelites were in need of regular spiritual renewal because the truth about God was known only in their heads—not their hearts.

¹ Keller 41-42.

When we give more attention to ‘other things’ than the truths about God, we will become desensitized to God’s Word and work in our lives. These other things—our personal idols—will become more real to us than God Himself. When this happens, we may know God in our heads, but our hearts will have ‘forgotten’ Him.

How can we keep from ‘forgetting’ God? How can we transform head knowledge into heart knowledge?

In 2 Peter 1:9, Peter explained that a lack of heart knowledge comes from forgetting that our sins have been cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ. Because of Christ’s sacrificial death on the cross, we are no longer under the power of sin—we have been set free from sin’s power over us because of our position in Him (Romans 6:1-14). Peter gives us some practical advice on how to make this happen on a day-to-day basis. In 2 Peter 1:5-8, he says:

*⁵ For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your **faith** with virtue, and **virtue** with **knowledge**, ⁶ and knowledge with **self-control**, and self-control with **steadfastness**, and steadfastness with **godliness**, ⁷ and godliness with **brotherly affection**, and brotherly affection with **love**. ⁸ For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, **they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.***

Peter explained that these godly character traits will keep a person from “being ineffective or unfruitful.” But noticed what he says in verse 9...

*⁹ For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that **he is blind**, having **forgotten** that he was **cleansed from his former sins.***

Peter does not say that a person lacks these character traits because they did not try hard enough! He says that this person has “forgotten” who he is!

We need to be reminded of who we are in Christ as a result of his grace and mercy! That is why Peter says that he “intend[s] always to remind you of these qualities, though you know them and are established in the truth that you have” (2 Peter 1:12).

“Peter is saying that, if the forgiveness and salvation of Christ is real to you, you will live it out in your character and life. You need to be reminded of what you already know; you need these truths to work in your heart as well as being understood in your head.”²

² Keller 42-43.

What did God do to turn the Israelites back to Him in Judges 3:7-11?

In Judges 3:7, as we have already discussed, the Israelites did what was evil in the sight of the Lord by disregarding His instructions for their day-to-day lives and worshiping the idols of the people they failed to drive out of the Promised Land. God responded to their disobedience in a very specific way that becomes a repeating pattern throughout this book. Notice this pattern in Judges 3:7-12.

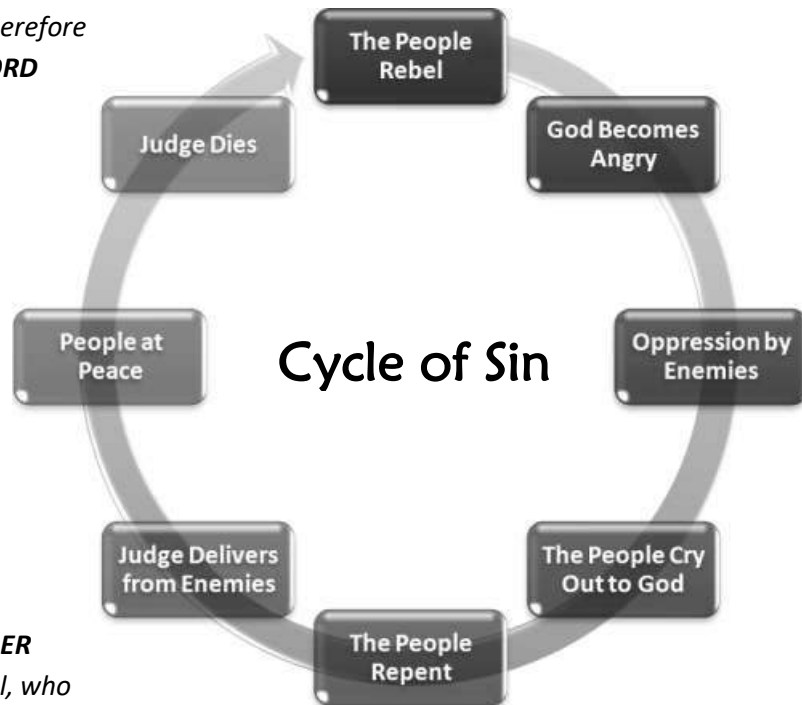
⁷ And the people of Israel **DID WHAT WAS EVIL** in the sight of the LORD. They forgot the LORD their God and served the Baals and the Asheroth. ⁸ Therefore the **ANGER OF THE LORD**

was kindled against Israel, and **HE SOLD THEM** into the hand of Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia. And the people of Israel served Cushan-rishathaim eight years. ⁹ But when **THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL CRIED OUT TO THE LORD**, the LORD

RAISED UP A DELIVERER for the people of Israel, who saved them, Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother. ¹⁰ The Spirit of the LORD was upon him, and he judged Israel. He went out to war, and the LORD gave Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand. And his hand prevailed over Cushan-rishathaim. ¹¹ So **THE LAND HAD REST** forty years. Then **OTHNIEL THE SON OF KENAZ DIED**. ¹² And the people of Israel **AGAIN DID WHAT WAS EVIL** in the sight of the LORD...

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In verse 7, the people rebelled against God. In verse 8, God became angry with them and allowed the Mesopotamians to rule over them. In verse 9, God sent a deliver to them when they cried out for help. In verse 9, God raises up a deliverer. In verse 10, God empowers the deliverer—Othniel—with His Spirit and gave the Mesopotamians into the hands of the Israelites. In verse 11, the people experience peace until the death of God’s deliverer. Then in verse 12, they once again rebelled against God.