

in all things

PRE-GATHERING BIBLE STUDY #2

GOD CLEANSSES AND BRINGS NEW LIFE IN THE STORY OF ALL THINGS

MATERIALS:

- Bibles (participants will be asked to write in their Bibles)
- Pens/Pencils
- Dixie Cups
- Water
- 1 Participant Guide per student

GOALS:

1. This study will show participants how God uses water to cleanse and to bring new life repeatedly in the Bible (We call repeating big ideas like these, “Biblical Themes.”).
2. Through reading and re-reading the Scriptures, this study will help participants see God’s desire to work through water to cleanse and bring new life to them and all things.

LEADER NOTE: Throughout the Bible, which tells us the story of all things, God frequently cleanses and brings new life through the means of water. We use water a lot in too, even today! We brush our teeth, wash our hands, drink it for hydration, and even use it for cleaning our toilets. In the flood account in Genesis, God uses water as a means to cleanse the world from sin and evil, while also bringing about new life for humanity.

**Before introducing this next study, take some time to recap what you and your group have learned from reading and re-reading the stories from the first Pre-Gathering Bible study. The hope is that all of these Bible studies connect together and help participants start piecing together various parts of the story of all things. **

INTRODUCTION:

Open in prayer.

Game— Splash Zone

1. Have your group gather in a circle. Choose one student to be in the middle. Give them a Dixie cup with a SMALL amount of water.
2. Give the group a category and have the student in the middle choose something from that category, but not say it out loud. (Example: Give the category of “cereal.” The student in the middle would choose a kind of cereal but not share it with the rest of the group.)
3. Go around the circle and have each student say something in the category you chose. If someone’s answer matches what the student in the middle chose, the person in the middle gets to splash the



person on the outside with water from the cup.

4. Have the person who got splashed and the student in the middle switch places, and play again with a new category.

LESSON

ASK: How do we use water in our day?

ASK: How would your life be different if you didn't have water?

Share some images of water (an oasis in the desert, a calm ocean, white water rapids, etc.)

- What stories in the Bible do you think of when you imagine water? (Noah and the ark, the Red Sea, woman at the well, Jesus washing disciples' feet, Jesus healing the blind man, God provided water in the wilderness, etc.)

SAY: Together, we are going to look at the story of Noah and the Flood.

Read **Genesis 6:5-8**

1. What do these verses reveal about humanity?
2. What do these verses reveal about God's character?
3. How do you think water will be used in the rest of the story? (or what do you know already?)

Read **Genesis 7:17-8:1**

1. How was water used?
2. What do these verses reveal about God's character?
3. Why is it significant that God remembers Noah?

Read **1 Peter 3:18-22**

1. How is this passage connected to the story of Noah and the Flood?
2. How is the story of the Flood your story?

LEADER NOTE: If there are any students in your group who have not been baptized, or have questions about baptism, encourage them and their parents to talk to your pastor.

Say: Let's take what we just learned about and put it into practice! As you read these stories of water, draw a water droplet in your Bible to remind you of how God is working through water.



LEADER NOTE: For each of the Pre-Gathering Bible studies, there will be a new icon representing that biblical theme. (If you want to see all of the icons, refer back to the first Pre-Gathering Bible study.) It is our goal for students to use the different icons throughout their Bible to see these themes in the Story of All Things. By the end of the Gathering, they will have a total of seven icons to help them see various aspects of the Story of All Things playing out all over the Bible.

- Assign smaller groups one of the following passages where water plays a significant part in the story. Choose from these options:
 - God provides water at Marah – Exodus 15:22-27
 - Jesus and the woman at the well – John 4
 - Jesus heals a blind man – John 9
 - Jesus washes the disciples’ feet – John 13
- Have the students answer these questions:
 - How do you see water in this story?
 - What is God doing with the water?
 - How is God’s character revealed through His actions?

LEADER NOTE: This would be a great time to split students into their family groups for the Gathering to continue building those relationships with their Adult leaders. A goal to have for your group before the last Pre-Gathering Bible study is to have students facilitate these conversations in their family groups.

- Come back together and have a quick recap of each story. As students are sharing their thoughts, use the language below to reinforce the importance of the students place in the Story of All Things.
 - In the story of God providing water at Marah (Exodus 15:22-27), **God brings life** to His people.
 - This is your story. This is the story of all things. As Psalm 1 revealed, God uses the water of His Word (and the water with His Word in your baptism) to nourish you and sustain you in the faith.
 - In the story of the woman at the well, **Jesus transforms** her life in offering her the living water that quenches all thirst.
 - This is your story. This is the story of all things. In the waters of your baptism, Jesus as the living water flows in and through you that “wells up to eternal life”.
 - In the story of Jesus healing a blind man, **Jesus cleanses** the blindness from him so that he can see and be healed.
 - This is your story. This is the story of all things. In the waters of baptism, your sickness of sin was healed because Christ’s death crucified all sickness.
 - In the story of washing the disciple’s feet, **Jesus cleanses** the dirt from their body in service.
 - This is your story. This is the story of all things. In the waters of your baptism, you are washed by Christ and connected to Him, “If I do not wash you, you have no share in Me.” (John 13:8)

APPLICATION:

- All of these stories show that through water, God cleanses and brings new life. In what way do we receive this same cleansing and new life? JESUS! Yes! Because Jesus is in all things and holds all things together (Col. 1:17). Jesus’ death and resurrection cleanses us of our sin (creates faith). Jesus’ death and resurrection brings us new life (transforms).
- Read Colossians 2:12-14. God uses the water in our baptism to do all of those things too! It is God using the water and His Word to bring about this new life, so that we are also included in the story of all things! We as a part of God’s family are a part of the story of all things.

CALL TO ACTION:

- Between now and the next Pre-Gathering Bible study you do, read the story of the Exodus in Exodus 14:1-31 at least twice. While you’re reading, think about the questions you used during the study:
 - How do you see water in this story?
 - What is God doing with the water?

- o How is God's character revealed through His actions?

LEADER NOTE: The reason that we chose the Exodus story for your students to read for the Call to Action is to set up the Biblical theme of God's redemption in the next Pre-Gathering Study.

- Find someone else in your church (that is older than you!) and read this Bible story together and go through those three questions together.
 - o Example: Find some groups of church ahead of time that would be willing to help your youth group with this, make an announcement in church that some youth will be doing this after a service and are looking for people to stay and help.
- Together with your youth group, take care of a plant between now and when you leave for the Gathering! Notice how it water helps it to grow and create new life.