

How Do I Switch Daddies?

SMALL GROUP LESSON



Lesson Objective:

In the last lesson, students were challenged to decide who it is they represent, or image. Some of your students may still be struggling with whether or not God is their real daddy. Other students may have reconnected with their Daddy in a special way, making a renewed commitment to represent God better. This lesson will especially help those who are struggling to understand how they can switch daddies and why they need to do so if they wish to enter God's Kingdom. For those who have come to recognize God as their real daddy, this lesson will affirm their decision.

Set Up Info:

Supplies Needed:

1. Computer or internet connection to watch the YouTube video.
External speaker would be an added bonus as parts of the clips are hard to hear.
2. A ball
3. A copy of the Group Activity worksheet
4. Bibles so you can look up the Scripture story (or copy the ones below)
5. A passion to see students transformed in their thinking about who we were created to be – our identity.

Instructive Prep:

Did you know that change is one of the most difficult tasks for people? Even when folks are faced with life and death, most are unwilling to alter their lifestyles. The same is true spiritually. By far the most life-altering decision a person will ever make is a decision to make God their daddy. Here's why: God designed humans to reflect his glory in all the earth – much like the moon reflects a portion of the sun's light. They were to perform the *function* of God.

But, as we all know, Genesis 3 threw a not-so-small chink into God's created order. One of the fallouts of Adam and Eve's decision, and all who are descended from them, is that sin has inverted the soul. It has bent the soul inward whereas it was meant to be in direct fellowship with God. This inversion makes it all the more difficult for us to admit our faults and submit ourselves to God's authority. We're predisposed to think, "It's all about me." When we make God our Daddy, we are saying, "It's all about You!" We die to ourselves in order to live for him. And in God's paradoxical economy, we discover that, in dying to our old way of life, we're actually able to live life to the fullest (Matthew 16:24-25; John 10:10; Galatians 2:20).

This session is designed to investigate not only how we can make God our daddy but also why we need to do so if we wish to enter God's Kingdom. The *why* is just as important as the *how*. If students know the *how* but do not grasp the *why*, then they are more likely fall away from the faith instead of fighting the good fight. Be encouraged, friend, the gospel is infinite. We will never exhaust its beauty or treasure! Let us not become bored with the Age-old Story. Rather, let it be new everyday (Lamentations 3:22-23).

The progression of these studies is four-fold: *learn, feel, do and what next*. We want students to learn something new, connect at an emotional level to some degree, and participate in doing something during study that brings them to a point of decision. Finally, the *what next* focuses on a change of attitude and/or behavior, which you will find in the challenge of the Life Application section. Remember, the goal is a complete transformation in kids' lives (i.e. spiritual, emotional, mental, and behavioral), so the application section based on God's truth is really the crux of the time together! Have fun and lead well.

INTRO:

Many remember well the name Heath Ledger. His last movie, "The Dark Knight" (2008), may have won him many prestigious awards, but he paid for them with his life. He died on January 22, 2008, from a toxic combination of prescription medicine he was taking for sleep problems. He was an incredible actor for sure, and his loss is a tragedy, but long before he played the infamous joker, he played the role of another knight, who "changed his stars" and went from rags to riches in his 2001 film, "A Knight's Tale."

INTRO STORY:

A Knight's Tale is the story of William Thatcher (Heath Ledger) who, despite being born a peasant, dreams of one day becoming a jousting champion. However, in the 14th century, only nobles were able to compete in jousting tournaments. Thatcher catches a break when the noble knight he was serving kicks the bucket in the middle of a tournament. So he disguises himself as the dead man and wins the tournament. The taste of victory compels Thatcher to continue his charade; he's determined to "change his stars." With one month to refine his skills, he trains with his comrades, Roland and Wat. A chance meeting on a dirt road with Geoffrey Chaucer turns out to be another turn of good fortune. Chaucer agrees to forge the patents of nobility to "prove" his royalty for future jousting tournaments. His one month of intensive training pays dividends as he takes the jousting circuit by storm. With each victory, he continues to pass himself off as someone he is not.

One of the key scenes in the movie takes place during one of those smaller tournaments. William is slotted to joust Prince Edward of Wales, who is riding under another name in order to compete. Typical protocol was to yield, or withdraw, rather than risk injuring British royalty. Thus Count Ahdemar, William's eventual rival, does exactly this in his bout with the Prince. William, however, tilts with Edward, beating him and winning the tournament. Curiously, William's courage to ride against the Prince earns him Edward's respect and admiration. Prince Edward will later repay William for his act of honorable and knightly courage.

William rises to quick stardom. His successes bring him to the final match of the World Championship tournament where he must face his nemesis Ahdemar. But five minutes before the fight, William's dubious persona (identity) comes to light. He's been found a fraud. Rather than running, he decides to face the music. He's forced to forfeit and is arrested shortly thereafter.

It seems William's stars have not changed; his fate doomed. But, in a startling turn of events, with the crowd hurling insults and vegetables and William locked in the stocks, Prince Edward emerges from the crowd. He frees William and announces to everyone that William is descended from an ancient royal line. He then knights him Sir William and reinstates him in the tournament. Sir William goes on to defeat Count Ahdemar in a remarkable, yet predictable, come-from-behind victory.

The scene you're about to see captures the drama when William's identity goes from peasant to nobleman. As you watch, do not let the obvious pass you by: William is a peasant and there is *nothing* he can do alter that fact. Prince Edward, the son of King Edward, intervenes on the condemned man's behalf. The son, under the full

authority of his father, declares him innocent and bestows upon him a new identity of nobility. In the same way, Jesus, the only Son of the Father, willingly chose death on a cross and, on behalf of condemned humanity, did for us what we could not. Jesus became sin and bore the brunt of God's wrath for sin and died for us. Three days later he conquered death by his resurrection. He lives by the Father's side never again to taste Satan's sting. When we bow before him, he imparts his innocence and righteousness to us. He changes our identity from being enemies of God to friends with God (see Romans 5:10). In so doing, he undoes the work of the Satan in Genesis 3. Praise God!

Now, with that as the intro, enjoy this incredible transformation!

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2oICLx0Tog8>

Intro Questions:

1. Think back to when you were a child. What were some of your dreams? What did you want to be when you grew up?
2. How do you typically respond to adverse situations? Tell us about a time when your back was against the wall. How did you react?

PERSONAL REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

Take a ball and give it to one student. They can pass or toss it to another student to begin the discussion on question one. After answering, each person gets to pass it to someone who hasn't answered. Do the same randomness through all the questions.

1. William tried to play the part of someone he was not. Do you think it was right for William to lie about his identity? Have you ever lied about your identity? If so, in what ways?
2. How did the "stars change" for William? What part did he play in the transformation from peasant to nobleman – if any at all? (Hint: all he had to do was respond to the Prince's invitation and bow before him.)
3. Why did the "stars change" when a Prince Edward intervened for William? Could someone else from the crowd have helped William? Why or why not?
4. What would have happened to William if the Prince had not stepped up to the plate? What would happen to us if the Prince of Peace (Jesus) does not enter into the scene of our lives?

5. What was the only way William would be able to enter the championship stadium? What is the only way we will be able to enter God's Kingdom?
6. Write your own questions:

CENTRAL BIBLE PASSAGES:

The following passages are intended to be a representative sample of how and why someone must believe in and follow Jesus Christ in order to 'switch daddies' and enter God's Kingdom. This list is not exhaustive by any means.

John 3:3-6, 14-21

Jesus and Nicodemus

¹⁴As Moses lifted up the bronze snake on a pole in the desert, in the same way the Son of Man must be lifted up, ¹⁵so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. ¹⁶For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not die but have eternal life. ¹⁷For God did not send his Son into the world to be its judge, but to be its savior.

¹⁸Those who believe in the Son are not judged; but those who do not believe have already been judged, because they have not believed in God's only Son. ¹⁹This is how the judgment works: the light has come into the world, but people love the darkness rather than the light, because their deeds are evil. ²⁰Those who do evil things hate the light and will not come to the light, because they do not want their evil deeds to be shown up. ²¹But those who do what is true come to the light in order that the light may show that what they did was in obedience to God.

1 John 5:10-13

¹⁰So those who believe in the Son of God have this testimony in their own heart; but those who do not believe God, have made a liar of him, because they have not believed what God has said about his Son. ¹¹The testimony is this: God has given us eternal life, and this life has its source in his Son. ¹²*Whoever has the Son has this life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.* ¹³I am writing this to you so that you may know that you have eternal life—you that believe in the Son of God.

Romans 10:9-13

⁹If you confess that Jesus is Lord and believe that God raised him from death, you will be saved. ¹⁰For it is by our faith that we are put right with God; it is by our confession that we are saved. ¹¹The scripture says, "Whoever believes in him will not be disappointed." ¹²This includes everyone, because there is no difference between Jews and Gentiles; God is the same Lord of all and richly blesses all who call to him. ¹³As the scripture says, "*Everyone who calls out to the Lord for help will be saved.*"

Revelation 21:1-2, 27

¹Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth. The first heaven and the first earth disappeared, and the sea vanished. ²And I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared and ready, like a bride dressed to meet her husband. ...²⁷But *nothing that is impure* will enter the city, nor anyone who does shameful things or tells lies. Only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of the living will enter the city.

Acts 2:37-38

³⁷When the people heard this, they were deeply troubled and said to Peter and the other apostles, "What shall we do, brothers?"
³⁸Peter said to them, Each one of you must *turn away from your sins* and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, so that your sins will be forgiven; and you will receive God's gift, the Holy Spirit.

Philippians 2:10-11

¹⁰And so, in honor of the name of Jesus all beings in heaven, on earth, and in the world below will fall on their knees, ¹¹and all will openly proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

LIFE APPLICATION:

1. Bow before the Prince of Peace and let him bestow upon you a new identity in God's sight. Offer a prayer like the one suggested here:

Lord Jesus, I believe your words to Nicodemus – that I have to be reborn spiritually (switching identities) to see you in your kingdom. I know that salvation from sin can only come through a total rebirth through the Holy Spirit. Send that Spirit into my life that I might come alive to Christ. I am choosing this day to align myself with you. Give me the grace to reflect the image of my real daddy and to represent you well to all who know me. Thank you! Amen.

2. Sign an accountability covenant among the group members. The contract will give permission for the group members to admonish each other if they do not represent, or image, God well in a public setting. Be sure that everyone does this in a loving and kind way! Allow room for grace and love always.

Note: A sample has been provided for you, but feel free to create your own using this as a guide.

3. Have every person share at least three things they learned about their identity as a result of this study. Encourage them to meet together with their chaplain to let them know what they've discovered.
4. Write your own challenge:

GROUP ACTIVITY

ACCOUNTABILITY COVENANT

Proverbs 27:17

People learn from one another, just as iron sharpens iron.

Galatians 6:1-2 (GNT)

¹My friends, if someone is caught in any kind of wrongdoing, those of you who are spiritual should set him right; but you must do it in a gentle way. And keep an eye on yourselves, so that you will not be tempted, too. ²Help carry one another's burdens, and in this way you will obey the law of Christ.

We hereby commit, as a people who have chosen to align ourselves with Jesus Christ, to represent, or image, him well to our parents, peers, and other public figures (i.e. teachers, coaches, uniformed military personnel, etc.). Should I fail in any regard to uphold the image of Jesus, I give my permission to allow another member of this group to point out my error. I understand that if I am receiving this instruction that I will humbly listen before responding. Should I be the one offering the instruction, I will commit to deliver the rebuke with love and grace, realizing that I myself am imperfect and in need of God's mercy.

NAMES OF GROUP MEMBERS:

DATE:

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____
- 6. _____
- 7. _____
- 8. _____