

SILENCE & FASTING

Creating space in our noisy lives creates space for God.

Lesson Plan

Prepare For It
(Teacher prep,
before class)



Get To It
(Begin the lesson)



Dig Into It
(The meat of the
Bible lesson)



Make It Real
(Hands-on activity)



Own It
(Lesson wrap-up,
review, & challenge)



COLLIDE WITH THE WORD

*Physical training is good, but training for godliness is much better, promising benefits in this life and in the life to come.
[1 Timothy 4:8, NLT]*

PREPARE FOR IT ↕

This time is for you to prepare for the week's lesson—heart, soul, mind, and strength. Read, contemplate, and pray.

The next four lessons will help lay the groundwork for your preteens to develop a healthy spiritual life through four spiritual disciplines. Throughout this unit we will highlight silence and fasting, prayer, scripture reading, and worship as essential aspects of a full and abundant life lived for God. The key to teaching this unit and each individual lesson is to seek out the ways in which you incorporate these disciplines into your own life. Only then can you teach them authentically to your students. Our hope is that this unit will help you clarify and communicate the disciplines you practice to a new generation seeking to follow after the heart of God.

*Check out the words in **BOLD** throughout the lesson. This is suggested conversation for you to use with preteens. Remember to use your own words and to speak naturally.*



Watch a short training video about this lesson. Access it on the WordAction Publishing YouTube channel (Collide Life and Service playlist) or at bitly.com/lifeandservice.

Related Topics

Fasting
Silence
Spiritual Disciplines

Primary Texts

1 Kings 19:1-13a
Psalm 27:14
Isaiah 40:28-31
Matthew 6:16-18

Grab It

- Bibles
- *Crashbooks* (always grab pens and colored pencils)
- *Crashcards* (on DVD, send these home with parents)
- *Collide DVD*
- DVD player
- no. 2 pencils
- erasers
- scissors
- various types of balls (tennis balls, ping-pong balls, etc.)
- access to YouTube, opt.

GET TO IT

Dive into the lesson and encourage conversation.



Grab It

Crashbooks

Collide DVD

DVD player

pens or colored pencils

access to YouTube, opt.

MEMORIZE IT

View It: Play the *Collide with the Word* video for this unit. Access it on the DVD, on the WordAction Publishing YouTube channel, or at bitly.com/collidewiththeword. You will watch this video each week during the unit.

Collide with the Word: Pass out the *Crashbooks* and fun pens or colored pencils. Have preteens turn to page 4 and do the memory verse activity. They will cross out every other letter to reveal the missing words.

Silence

1. Set the chairs up so they are facing each other. Divide the classroom into two teams, one on each side. Tell them they are going to do battle to see which team can be the quietest.
2. **You can do anything you want (within reason) to make the other team laugh, as long as you stay in your seat.**
3. Have the class vote on which team was the quietest, or bring in another adult to make that decision.
4. **You guys did a great job of being silent. That silence was almost deafening. Today we are going to look at silence and how important it is to find quiet time to better encounter God.**

DIG INTO IT

The meat of the Bible lesson: where you and your students will discover the BIG POINTS and what God has to say

Big Point #1: Silence before God helps us focus on Him.

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1. Pass out the *Crashbooks*, no. 2 pencils, and erasers. **Turn to page 5. Color all over the page with your pencil.** Give them about 2 minutes to color.
2. **Using your eraser, erase the word SILENCE from the page.**
3. **Life has lots of things competing for our attention. Today we are going to learn the importance of taking time for silence.**



Grab It

Bibles

Crashbooks

no. 2 pencils

erasers

What Does God Say About It?

1. For this storytelling portion, you're going to tell an interactive story. The story is found in **1 Kings 19:1-13a**. It is important to be fairly familiar with the Bible story so you can help students as needed.
2. Choose one kid to be Elijah. Instruct him or her to act out the story. Have the other students give sound effects as needed. Let them come up with noises for the wind, earthquake, and fire.
3. Begin telling the story, either by reading it directly from the Bible or by using a shortened version. Tell it one more time. Then give students the chance to retell the story to each other.
4. **Why did God send the wind, earthquake, and fire before He passed by? How do you think Elijah knew that God was in the silence?**
5. **Sometimes God speaks when things seem chaotic in our lives. Sometimes it takes quiet times in our lives to hear from God.**

Big Point #2: *Fasting is giving up something in order to re-focus on God.*



Grab It

Bibles
Crashbooks
pens or colored
pencils
scissors

1. Have students turn to page 7 in their *Crashbooks*. (They will work on page 6 later.)
2. On the left side of the page have them make a list of everything they spend time on—hobbies, sports, church activities, social media apps, gaming systems, phones, etc.

What Does God Say About It?

1. Pass out Bibles and have the class turn to **Matthew 6:16-18**. Choose a couple of them to read it out loud at least twice. **What is fasting?** (*Giving up something for a time, usually food, in order to pray and focus on God, Faith Words for Kids*, Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2011)
2. In Jesus' day the religious folks would fast in order to focus on God. But some of their practices drew a lot of attention to themselves, almost as if they wanted people to admire their religious dedication. Jesus isn't commanding us to not fast; He's commanding us to not show it off. It's a spiritual discipline between a person and God.
3. Fasting isn't always just giving up food or a meal. It can be giving up an activity or some sort of habit that isn't necessary to our Christian life.
4. Look back at the list you made on page 7. What things are really important to you? What are some things you could give up, for a time, to re-focus on God and prayer?
5. Direct students to page 8. On this page, in the left column, they will write things they can do to replace some of the activities (at least some of the time) from page 7 to focus more on God.
6. Come up with ideas as a class. It might be that instead of texting friends in the morning, they read a devotion. Or it might mean taking one day a week to provide free babysitting for a neighbor rather than watch TV.
7. Look over these fasting options. For any you want to try this week, cut along the dotted line and fold along the solid line. Instead of doing the thing listed on page 7, do the thing listed on page 8. You may not give up that habit completely, but maybe you can re-dedicate part of the time you would normally spend on it. Choose something important to you. Make it a true sacrifice.
8. Fasting is one of the ways in which we make space for God in our daily lives. Sometimes when we fast from something, we find our lives are better without it, and we eventually reduce or eliminate that thing from our lives. Ultimately, fasting and taking time for silence leave space for us to listen for the voice of God in our lives.

Big Point #3: *Listening to God provides strength to live holy lives.*

1. Have preteens pair up and turn to page 6 in their *Crashbooks*. **On this page are some words of advice.**
2. **Exchange books with your partner. Write a piece of advice in your partner's book.** Have everyone memorize the words of advice they wrote, and then close their eyes.
3. **When I count to three, say your advice out loud. At the same time, listen for your partner's voice and try to pick out what they said.** Count to three. Do this portion of the activity a couple of times.
4. **What did you hear your partner say?** Have them exchange their books back so they can see the advice their partner wrote. **What would have made listening to your partner's voice easier?**



Grab It

Bibles
Crashbooks
pens or colored
pencils

5. God has great things in store for us and has amazing things He wants us to hear, but we are often distracted by everything around us.

What Does God Say About It?

1. Pass out Bibles. Have two students read **Isaiah 40:28-31** and **Psalms 27:14** out loud. Discuss,
 - What does the Bible say about how we gain strength without growing weary?
 - Who does God want to renew? What are we supposed to do while we wait for Him?
2. If listening to God and waiting on Him is how we know His best for us, then it must be pretty important.

MAKE IT REAL: TOO MANY TO HANDLE

A hands-on activity to solidify the lesson

1. Being silent before God is really about letting go of all the things in life that pull us away from a healthy relationship with Him.
2. Ask for a volunteer who is really good at playing catch. Have him or her stand at the front of the classroom. Bring out the balls you brought (ping-pong balls, tennis balls, balloons, balls from the church gym, a mixture, etc.). You will probably need at least 10 balls.
3. Tell the class, **When I say “Go,” start naming activities and hobbies a preteen might do.** Tell the volunteer, **When each activity is named, I’m going to throw a ball for you to catch.**
4. When he or she begins dropping a lot of balls, or is incapable of catching more, name “hearing from God” for the last activity, and toss a final ball.
5. Sometimes hearing from God becomes difficult because of the things we allow to take up space in our lives. Silence before God really is about letting go of the things that distract us from listening to Him.

Grab It

various types of balls (tennis balls, ping-pong balls, etc.)

OWN IT

Wrap up the lesson and challenge students to OWN the theme in everyday life.

1. Pass out the *Crashbooks*. Have students turn back to page 7. **What might you be able to fast from this week? When can you set aside time to be silent? Pray that God will help you focus on Him.**
2. Cut off an entire strip from your *Crashbook*—what you want to fast from, and what you want to replace your time with. This doesn’t mean you have to stop watching TV each day. It just means you might give up some of the time you would normally spend on that, to focus on God instead.



Grab It

Crashbooks
Crashcards, one per family
Collide DVD
scissors

Here’s your challenge:

1. Share with your parents or friends what you are going to fast from this week so you can be held accountable.
2. During or after your fasting time, write down what you learned, what you heard from God, or a prayer you prayed.

Send home the *Crashcards* for this week, found on the DVD. This is a short discussion question or activity parents can do with their preteens to reinforce the lesson.