

Parent's Guide



Trek Youth Leaders

Dear Trek Leader:

We believe that being a youth leader is one of the most challenging roles in all of church ministry. You are so often the most under-trained, under-equipped and under-resourced leader in the entire church. Yet the stakes for your ministry are incredibly high!

We realize you have limited interaction with the students in your ministry. At best, you get somewhere around three hours with these kids each week. Yet in many people's minds, you bear the burden for the spiritual development of the students in your care. But we must make no mistake – Scripture makes it clear that it's primarily the parent's role to shepherd their kids and be their spiritual leaders.

If you're reading this, it's likely that you've engaged 24-7 Ministries™ to help reach and teach your students, using Trek® for middle-school ministry. But until now there's been nothing for the parents of your kids.

In the pages that follow, you'll find *Parent's Guide* – a discussion guide designed to help bring Trek home. It includes information about **Compass Points** and **Bible Studies**, and was written specifically to help involve parents in the ministry you're doing with their kids. We hope you find this guide helpful in building bridges to parents in your ministry. (Use the following letter, if you'd like, to introduce the *Parent's Guide* when you first send it home.)

Keep building the links between you, the parents and the students. This unity is the best hope we have that today's teenagers are being trained and disciplined to know, love and serve the Lord Jesus Christ. We know this isn't always easy, but we're here to help.

Praying for you,

The 24-7 Ministries Team

Parent's Guide is a production of 24-7 Ministries and Awana® at Home™



www.24-7ministries.org

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Parent's Guide



Trek Parents

Dear Parents:

We know that being a parent is not an easy task. And being a parent of a middle schooler is, at times, particularly daunting. Yet despite the stress you face, Scripture makes it clear that it's your job as parents to shepherd your kids and be their spiritual leaders.

Your church is using 24-7 Ministries™ to help teach and reach your teenager with Trek® (24-7's middle-school curriculum). Yet we know that Trek is just a single tool in an entire boxful of resources to help today's youth be spiritual champions — the most important of which is you!

Because we value the part you play in the spiritual development of your teenager, we've put together *Parent's Guide* — a discussion guide designed to help you engage in dialogue with your middle schooler. In essence, Trek is being used at your church, and *Parent's Guide* is designed to bring Trek home.

We hope you find this guide helpful. And we encourage you to work alongside your church youth leaders to ensure today's teenagers are being trained and disciplined to know, love and serve the Lord Jesus Christ. We know this isn't always easy, but we're here to help.

Praying for you,

The 24-7 Ministries Team

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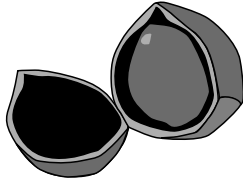


Parent's Guide

Trek Billboard Series: *FAQs*



Lesson 2:1 – Where Did God Come From?



In a Nutshell

God is sovereign over His creation.

Memory Verses

Compass Point – Job 36:26

Bible Study – Psalm 77:19; Job 36:26; Genesis 1:1-2

Summary

Compass Point – God exists outside of time. He has no beginning and no end. He was, is and always will be. God is eternal.

After God designed days, years and seasons, He created people and put them into time. Unlike God, every person has a beginning and an ending.

Where will you go once your life is over? Hell is a real place for people who do not trust Jesus Christ for their salvation. However, if you do trust Jesus Christ to take the punishment for your sin, you can have eternal life in heaven.

Bible Study – Where did God come from? This study shows the students that God was never created. He was, is and always will be. The lesson uses Genesis and Job to drive this point home.

Genesis tells us that God started everything – He is the Creator. In Job, God showed His sovereignty by telling Job that He (God) was in control of everything that exists. Job needed to learn to trust God.



Creation



God

The Next Step

Find other verses that show God's sovereignty over creation. Then take a walk with your son and discuss how God has ordered the very ground you are walking on. God has also ordered and keeps the grass growing, the flowers blooming, the rain coming and the birds flying. If God were to take His hand off the world for any moment, it would cease to exist. Spend some time on your walk thanking God for making and maintaining His creation.

Bible Study Questions

Power Up – In Job 38, God helps Job understand His character. For this exercise, your teenager will use Job 38 to see how God is the Creator and find verses that show what He created.

Did You Get It? – Using the lesson, your son will figure out the main point by answering this question: Where did God come from? He will need to use verses to support the answer.



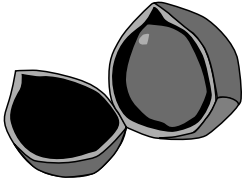


Parent's Guide

Trek Billboard Series: *FAQs*



Lesson 2:2 – What's the Difference Between the Old and New Testaments?



In a Nutshell

Jesus is the way to understand the Old and New Testaments.

Memory Verses

Compass Point – 1 Peter 1:18a, 19

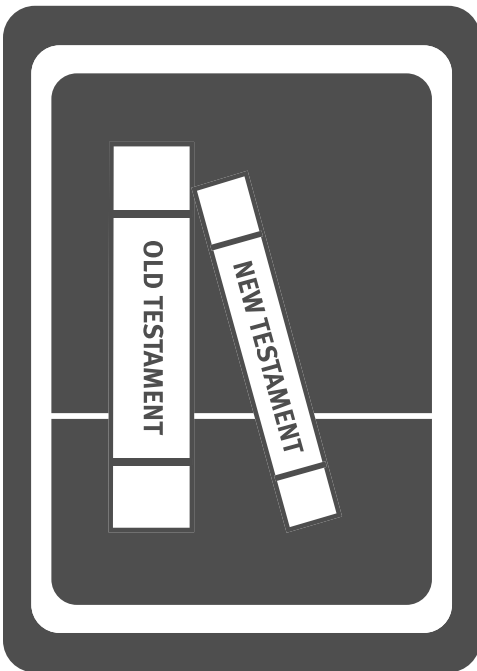
Bible Study – Galatians 3:24-26; Galatians 3:28

Summary

Compass Point – The two parts to the Bible are the Old Testament and the New Testament. In order to understand the New Testament fully, you have to know the Old Testament. Isaiah 53 and Mark 15 are good ways to see how the Old and New Testaments are connected.

Bible Study – The Old Testament is the part of the Bible before Jesus came to earth. The New Testament describes His birth, life, ministry, death and resurrection and what all of that means for the Christian life.

In order to understand the New Testament, it's important to know the Old Testament; it explains the reason Jesus came to earth.



The Next Step

Together with your daughter, find three New Testament references where Jesus claims to fulfill an Old Testament prophecy. Write them down and talk about how your understanding of the New Testament is clarified by seeing how the Old Testament prophecy was fulfilled in Christ.

Bible Study Questions

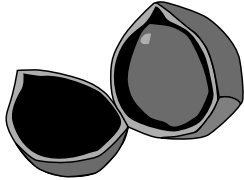
Power Up – The memory verses this week will help your daughter answer questions on Old and New Testament divisions for this Power Up.

Did You Get It? – Your teenager needs to write in her own words (using Scripture as support) why the Old and New Testaments are separated in the Bible.





Lesson 2:3 – Why Is There So Much Evil in the World, and Why Does God Love Those Evil People?



In a Nutshell

Ever since Adam and Eve sinned, all people are born with a sin nature.

Memory Verses

Compass Point – Romans 5:12

Bible Study – 2 Corinthians 5:17-19; Romans 5:12

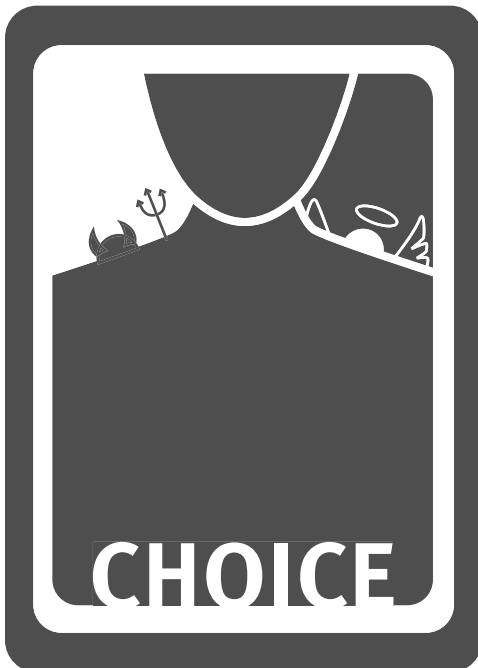
Summary

Compass Point – Even though Satan was created by God, he thought he could overpower God. When he tried to do this, Satan and the other angels (now demons) who tried to help him were kicked out of heaven.

But there is good news! Even though sin is real and Satan is real, God provided a way for us to know Him. Even when we were God's enemies, God sent Jesus to die on the cross for our sins. When we trust Jesus Christ's perfect work on our behalf, we can be sure of our salvation!

Bible Study – In the garden of Eden, Adam and Eve had a choice. They could either trust God and have faith that what He said was true, or they could disobey and eat the fruit they were not supposed to eat. Sadly, Adam and Eve chose the latter.

The consequences of Adam and Eve's sin didn't just extend to them that day in the garden, but to all people for all time. As a result of their sin, everyone is born with a sin nature because everyone is a descendent of Adam and Eve.



The Next Step

It didn't take long for the sinful nature to have an effect. Read Genesis 3-4 together to see how sin spread. Take some time to pray with your family, asking God to keep all of you from temptation. Then spend time praising God for His provision for your salvation in Jesus Christ.

Bible Study Questions

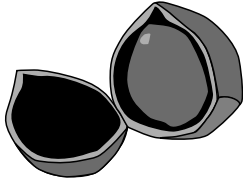
Power Up – What is the message of reconciliation? Your teenager finds out in this section of the lesson. He will be challenged to share this message with a friend.

Did You Get It? – What would you say if someone asked you if God loves evil people? That is the question your son will answer in this section. He should use Scripture to support his answer.





Lesson 2:4 – Why Do Some People Have More Advantages Than Others?



In a Nutshell

God does not show favoritism.

Memory Verses

Compass Point – Matthew 6:19a, 20a, 21

Bible Study – Philippians 3:7; Matthew 6:19-21

Summary

Compass Point – Many people in the world seem to have it all: popularity, good looks, money and power. While these things seem great to have, they don't matter in light of eternity.

God does not look at your position in the world as holding any value. He looks at your position in Christ. Do you know Jesus? Are you trusting in Him for salvation? If so, then you have all you need.

Bible Study – Sometimes it is hard to know why some people seem to have all the advantages.

As far as religion was concerned, Paul the apostle seemed to have all the advantages. His résumé would have included being circumcised on the eighth day (very important to Jewish custom), being a Hebrew of Hebrews, being educated as a Pharisee, having defended traditional Judaism and being blessed according to the Mosaic law. But even with all these qualifications, Paul knew his life would never earn him favor in God's eyes. Paul counted all his achievements as garbage.

One of the best ways to get over feeling advantaged or disadvantaged is to serve someone else. The Take the Trek Challenge section in this lesson offers hints to help your teenager put this into practice.



The Next Step

Make it a family thing! Although your daughter is getting older and perhaps seems a little more disinterested in family activities, she still is watching you, maybe even more now than ever before. Do the Challenge as a family. And consider not just doing it once, but making it a monthly family time!

Bible Study Questions

Power Up – The questions in this Power Up will have your daughter thinking of ways to use her gifts for the church.

Did You Get It? – Why do some people have more advantages than others? Your daughter will need to answer this question by using the verses from the lesson.

Take the Trek Challenge – Sometimes advantages lead to materialism. Your daughter will use this exercise to evaluate where she has “stored her treasures.” Then it will encourage her to donate items to a local shelter, nursing home, pregnancy center or other similar place.



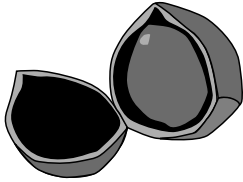


Parent's Guide

Trek Billboard Series: *FAQs*



Lesson 2:5 – Why Am I Here?



In a Nutshell

You are here because God wants you here.

Memory Verses

Compass Point – Ephesians 2:10

Bible Study – Psalm 139:13-14; Philippians 1:21; Ephesians 2:10

Summary

Compass Point – Before you became a Christian, God prepared good works for you to do once you became a Christian. These good works were not meant to earn your salvation or favor in God's eyes, but a way for you to show how God is working in your life.

Bible Study – God created you on purpose – from your hair color to your height to the family He put you in – He planned it all! Psalm 139 reminds us that we are wonderfully made, and God planned on us being here.

Not only are we created on purpose, but we were chosen on purpose to be in God's family. We don't always know why God does what He does, but God has a plan in mind and it will happen! That plan is important and it includes you.

YOU ARE HERE



The Next Step

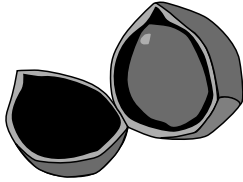
Ephesians 1 details God's call in your life. The chapter tells believers all the things they have "in Christ." Take your son out for ice cream (or other treat) and use Ephesians 1 to write down all the things you have in Christ. Take time to thank God for calling you to Himself and giving you faith in Jesus.

Bible Study Questions

Power Up – First Peter tells believers more about their Christian identity. For this Power Up, your son will answer questions about the four main phrases that describe that identity: Chosen people, royal priesthood, holy nation and a people belonging to God.

Did You Get It? – What is God's purpose for your life? For this exercise your son will need to consider the verses in the lesson to answer this question.





In a Nutshell

If you believe Christ's death on the cross (and not your own actions) paid for your sins, you can be confident that you are saved.

Memory Verses

Compass Point – John 10:28-29

Bible Study – Ephesians 1:13-14; John 10:28-29

Summary

Compass Point – Every person has DNA that is unique to him or her (except twins, who have the same DNA). DNA is the signature of your genes. You get half of your DNA from your mom and half from your dad. DNA is a way to identify to whom you belong.

God also has a way to identify you. It's the Holy Spirit. Every person who is a Christian has the Holy Spirit living inside of him or her. The Holy Spirit is our guarantee that we are God's child.

Bible Study – While people can change their contracts by asking for "one more thing" before giving you what you need, God isn't like that. If you trusted Christ to take the punishment for your sin, you are saved. God doesn't require anything else from you. There is no "small print" with God.

Salvation is a free gift, and saying you need to "do something" in order to add to your salvation or earn favor in God's eyes is like saying Christ's death wasn't enough to save you.



* no additions required

The Next Step

Help your teenager understand how fruitless it is to try to add to her salvation by doing a little experiment. Tell her you will give her \$10 if she brings you a spoon. When she brings the spoon to you, tell her you need a fork too before you give the \$10. Every time she brings something to you, keep asking her for something else before you give the \$10 away. Do this until she gets so frustrated she no longer wants to keep getting you things.

Use this as a way to talk to your daughter about how God isn't like that. When God says "all you need is Jesus," He means, "all you need is Jesus."

Bible Study Questions

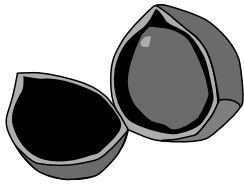
Power Up – When your daughter understands her own salvation, she is ready to talk to someone else about Christ. In this exercise, she will read the verses listed and use these different situations to explain salvation to different kinds of people.

Did You Get It? – What is the basis for your salvation? Your daughter needs to answer this question using the verses from the lesson.





Lesson 2:7 – What Am I Supposed to Do With My Life?



In a Nutshell

Allowing God to transform your mind will allow you to put off the old man and put on your new life in Christ.

Memory Verses

Compass Point – Romans 1:16

Bible Study – Philippians 3:14;
Romans 1:16; Ephesians 5:8-10

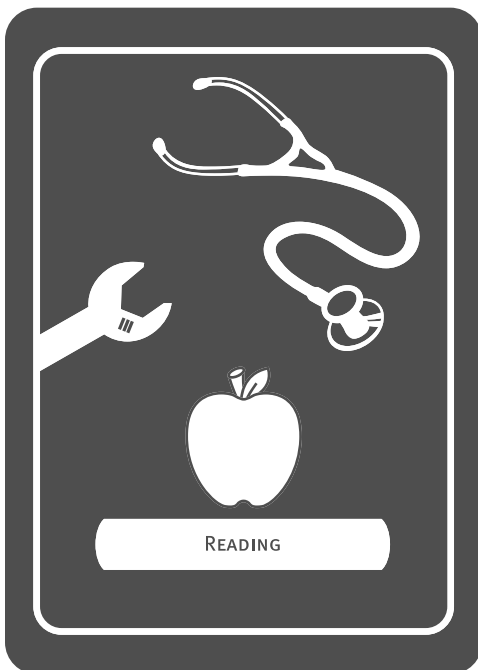
Summary

Compass Point – Wherever you are, God wants you to live for Him. When you grow up, you might be a missionary or you might be a plumber. You might be a doctor or you might be a teacher. But right now you are a student. You don't have to wait until you have your career and family to serve God. You can serve Him right now, in your school, in your church and in your family.

Bible Study – It's easy to get scared about the future. What will I be? Where will I live? What classes will I take next year? Who are my friends? These questions naturally come to the surface as you get older.

Some of your questions won't specifically be answered in the Bible. You won't find the answer to your math problem or how to write a good essay to impress your English teacher. However, there are things God's Word instructs you to do that will make the rest of your life make more sense.

God's Word instructs us to put off the old man. Once you are saved, you should no longer live like a person who doesn't know Jesus Christ. Secondly, you need to renew your mind. Once God's Word is in your head, it will start influencing your decisions. Finally, put on Christ. Now that you are saved, live in a way that shows you know who Jesus Christ is and what He has done for you.



The Next Step

Take your son into a completely dark room where you have placed a few objects like a blanket, a cup, etc. Tell your son to find those objects with the lights off. Make sure you have a watch to time him! He will probably take many minutes to find everything. When he comes out of the room, tell him what his time was.

Do it again. Place the objects in different places this time. When you are ready, have him go into the room again, this time with the lights on. Of course, he will find the objects quickly.

After your “experiment” is over, explain that this should show him what the Christian life is like. At first you are stumbling around in the dark, and it’s hard to see. But when the lights come on (when you become a Christian), it’s much easier to find your way. Ask him, although the answer is obvious, if it was easier to find the things with the lights on or off. Encourage him that now that he “lives with the lights on” because he is a Christian, he should act like it.

Bible Study Questions

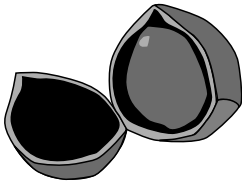
Power Up – Ephesians 4 instructs believers to “put on” and “put off” certain things. This Power Up lists the things that Ephesians tells believers to “put off.” Your son will get to do some reading and find out what he, as a believer, should “put on.”

Did You Get It? – How does Scripture help us know what we should do with our lives? Your son will be able to write down some ideas based on the Scripture from this lesson.





Lesson 2:8 – Why Does God Love Me?



In a Nutshell

God's love for you is not dependent on what you do but on who He is.

Memory Verses

Compass Point – Ephesians 3:19

Bible Study – Ephesians 1:3-4; Ephesians 1:5-6

Summary

Compass Point – Christ's love is higher than the digits of pi, deeper than the Mariana Trench, longer than the Nile and bigger than Jupiter. Christ's love is so big that the human mind can't comprehend it.

Bible Study – When we sin, God doesn't love us any less. When we obey, God doesn't love us any more. Because it is God's character to love, He loves His children.

This lesson uses the prodigal son parable from Luke 15 to illustrate God's tender love for His children, even when they disobey.



The Next Step

As a family, have fun acting out Luke 15 with your teenager!

Bible Study Questions

Power Up – There are five things in Ephesians 1 that are promised to God’s children. Your daughter will look them up and jot them down for this exercise.

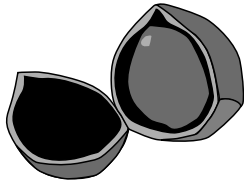
Did You Get It? – Why does God love you? It seems like an easy question, but it might be hard to answer. Your daughter will wrestle with this question and use the Scripture to form her answer.

Take the Trek Challenge – There are a lot of misconceptions about what missionaries do and who they are. This Challenge allows the teenagers to find a high-school student or adult in the church that has been on a short-term mission trip and conduct an interview about the experience. The questions to get your daughter started with the interview are in the Trek book.





Lesson 2:9 – Does the Bible Really Talk About Today's Situations?



In a Nutshell

The Bible is relevant for us today.

Memory Verses

Compass Point – Hebrews 13:8

Bible Study – 1 Thessalonians 4:1-2;
Hebrews 13:6,8

Summary

Compass Point – God's Word, the Bible, was inspired by God. He used specific people and their personalities to write down the words He wanted in Scripture. Because it is God's Word, we can trust that it is powerful and reliable. God's Word also gives us everything we need to know about how to be saved.

Bible Study – While the Bible tells us a lot of facts about who God is, there are also many true stories of people who went through life-changing events – especially in the Old Testament. These people can serve as an example of how to handle (or not handle, in some cases) hard situations.

In the New Testament, Jesus used parables to help people understand a truth or a principle He was trying to teach.

While the Bible doesn't tell you how to handle every single situation you personally face, it does tell you who God is. Often times knowing God's character will help you make right choices. There are also verses to help you specifically live the Christian life.



The Next Step

This Next Step will be a little different than the others. Ask your son if he has any questions about any part of the lesson. There was a lot of Scripture in the activities and for memory. Ask your teenager how you can help him better understand the lesson this week and help him get the materials he needs to dig deeper. If it is a Bible dictionary, check out your church library or go online. If talking it through more would help, then lend a listening ear and advice.

Bible Study Questions

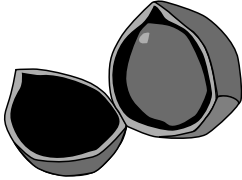
Power Up – This Power Up will have your son digging into Scripture to see what it has to say about today's situations.

Did You Get It? – Does the Bible help with me with the problems I face today? For this exercise, your son will form an answer based on the verses and the lesson.





Lesson 2:10 – When Jesus Comes Again, How Can We Tell He Is Real and Not Some Crazy Man Just Pretending?



In a Nutshell

The Bible tells us how Jesus will return.

Memory Verses

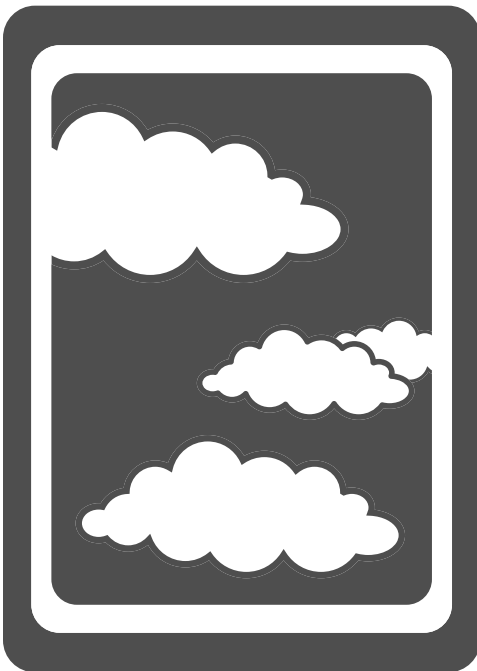
Compass Point – 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17

Bible Study – 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18;
1 Thessalonians 4:14

Summary

Compass Point – There are a lot of things in life that we have to wait for. People wait for the bus, for food in a restaurant, for Christmas or even for water to boil. Sometimes it's hard to wait. But there is one thing that Christians wait for that is well worth it. They wait for Jesus Christ's return. Jesus is coming back again. It's a promise that is worth the wait.

Bible Study – First Thessalonians tells us that when Christ returns, six things will happen. First, Jesus will shout as He descends. Then the voice of the archangel will be heard just before the trumpet sounds. After that the dead in Christ will rise and the Christians who are alive at the time will rise into the clouds. Finally, everyone will meet in the air.



The Next Step

Take your daughter out for dinner and discuss any fears she might have associated with the end times. Use your meal as an example of God providing for the little, everyday things. If He provides food now, then He will be faithful to His children in the last days.

Bible Study Questions

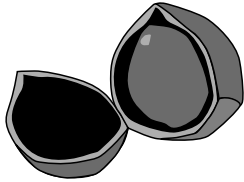
Power Up – For this Power Up, your daughter will need to remember the six things that happen when Christ returns. It shouldn't be too hard once she memorizes the verses because the six things are written in the verse.

Did You Get It? – How will you know when Jesus comes? For this exercise your daughter will need to answer this question using the verses provided.





Lesson 2:11 – What Will the Final Judgments Be Like?



In a Nutshell

In the final judgments, believers will get crowns and nonbelievers will be sent to hell because they did not trust Christ.

Memory Verses

Compass Point – Revelation 20:11a, 12

Bible Study – Revelation 20:11-12;
1 Corinthians 3:13

Summary

Compass Point – God is a just judge who cannot tolerate sin. At the final judgment God will judge Christians for the things that they have done. Thankfully, Jesus took all the punishment for their sin because they believed that He did. However, nonbelievers will also be judged. Because they had no faith in Jesus, they will be judged by their works or what they have done in life. Nobody's works are good enough to get him to God. Works will not be enough to get anybody to heaven.

Bible Study – During the final judgments, two things will take place: the judgment seat and the great white throne. At the judgment seat, believers will receive crowns for the good things they accomplished through Christ. At the great white throne, nonbelievers will receive the final judgment of hell because they have not been covered by Christ's blood.

While this news is sometimes hard to hear, it can serve two purposes. One is to encourage believers that they are saved because of Christ's sacrifice on their behalf. The second is that believers have a good reason to tell everyone about Christ's sacrifice. Time is short, and there will be a judgment.



The Next Step

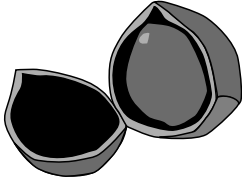
Role-play with your teenager for this exercise. Take turns being the believer and the nonbeliever. Practice sharing the gospel with each other so that when the time comes, your son is ready to share Christ with a friend.

Bible Study Questions

Power Up – This Power Up helps explain 1 Corinthians 3:13, one of the memory verses this week. Your son will need to have a Bible ready because there are a lot of passages to look up!

Did You Get It? – This question asks your son to explain the final judgments to someone who doesn't understand it.





In a Nutshell

There are rewards for believers.

Memory Verses

Compass Point – 1 Corinthians 9:25

Bible Study – 1 Corinthians 9:24-25;
1 Corinthians 9:26-27

Summary

Compass Point – In life you can get rewards for many different things. You could be a great football player or a prize-winning artist. You could be an Olympic gold medalist or win the Victoria Cross for your bravery. But there are rewards that last longer. They are heavenly rewards. What you do here on earth as a Christian matters.

Bible Study – This lesson will ask your teenager to do some digging into Scripture to answer questions about rewards for believers. These questions also point the student to important truths about maturing in Christ.



The Next Step

Write the numbers 1-12 individually on pieces of paper and put them in a bowl. Have your daughter grab a number (without looking!). Use her book to ask her questions for the lesson corresponding with the number she drew out of the bowl. For every correct answer given, decide on a reward.

Bible Study Questions

Power Up – Ready to review? This Power Up will help your daughter summarize each of the lessons.

Did You Get It? – Based on the lesson, your daughter needs to write down how she would tell someone about rewards in heaven.

Take the Trek Challenge – This Challenge maps out the rapture and the second coming. Your daughter will need to write in some specific events surrounding the rapture and the second coming using the verses provided and the chart on the page. After that, she should use her notebook to write down what she has learned about the differences between the rapture and the second coming.

