



2011 Camp Teaching Curriculum

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LO  **ED**

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-Introduction

" The most wonderful thing that can happen to any human being is to be loved. It alone speaks to the gnawing sense of insignificance and isolation we feel. And the marvelous news is that we have been loved and we are loved, each and every one of us. Uniquely and individually. At the heart of the universe is love, divine love, personal, intimate God – love for you and me. We are known! We are chosen! We are loved!

Once experienced at the deepest levels of the soul, no reality can be more profoundly disturbing, more radically healing, more utterly transforming."

-Richard Foster

Learning to live loved is not an easy concept for us; never has been.

Humanity's story illuminates how challenging it is to live loved. In the Garden of Eden, God lavished Adam and Eve with affection and showed himself to be the God of the Yes. He had orchards filled with Yes and only one No, the Tree of Good and Evil. Yet, struggling to live in the trust of genuine love, Adam and Eve chose the one No and we have been living in the echo of that choice since. Believing a lie, they thought God had removed his love and glory from their lives and in fear, ran and hid in the bushes with guilt and shame. They were still loved but not living loved. Like our Eden ancestors, our blindness and futile demands for independence haven't stopped God from loving us.

There is a significant difference between **being loved** and **living loved**. Through the work of Jesus, the entire world is being loved by God. The Father's heart is for his children – he will not abandon them; his love for them is unending and unflinching. The whole world is being loved but many are not *living loved*.

The 2011 GenMin Camp Teaching Curriculum seeks to answer the question, "What does living loved look like?" To answer the question, each chapel message will challenge listeners to accept what is already true and to live in that truth. By accepting what is already true, by the will and accomplished purpose of God, one can truly start living loved. What is true? Jesus. He proclaimed himself as the truth (John 14:6). He is the gospel – the good news that is true for each person. This curriculum highlights that truth in Jesus, by proclaiming several of the "You Are" statements found in the gospel's message:

- ✚ Chapel 1 – You Are Free
- ✚ Chapel 2 – You Are Abba's Child
- ✚ Chapel 3 – You Are A Person of Promise
- ✚ Chapel 4 – You Are Victorious
- ✚ Chapel 5 – You Are Embraced

These “You Are” statements of the gospel stand in stark contrast to the slew of “You Are Not” statements our culture throws at young people:

- ✝ You are not good enough
- ✝ You are not chosen
- ✝ You are not accepted
- ✝ You are not loved
- ✝ You are not fill in the blank

Without these trustworthy “You Are” statements, young people are trapped in an endless cycle of trying on as many identities as they can find, hoping to find one that fits.

The need and purpose for this curriculum is simple yet profound – relationship. Those who come to know and experience the marvelous reality of the Father’s love, embrace and live in a relationship of peace and trust – the fruit of being in a relationship in which a person knows they are valued and loved. Our deep desire is that young people attending GenMin Camps & Missions will come to know deeply that God can be trusted. By living in a trust relationship with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, they can experience the validity of Paul’s statement:

Christ's love is greater than anyone can ever know, but I pray that you will be able to know that love.

Then you can be filled with the fullness of God.

Ephesians 3:19 (NCV)

The GenMin team is praying for you: directors, pastors and chapel presenters. May you be anointed with the “oil of joy” as you proclaim God’s fame and declare the utterly astounding wonder of his love.



NOTE – *Living Loved* is an exegesis of Romans 8. All scripture references are quoted from the New Century Version of the Bible. The NCV is considered a solid translation, both conservative and evangelical in tone. The NCV is written with younger readers in mind which is why we chose it for this curriculum.



You Are Free

Bible Reading:

Romans 8:1-4 (NCV)

So now, those who are in Christ Jesus are not judged guilty. ² Through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit that brings life made you free from the law that brings sin and death. ³ The law was without power, because the law was made weak by our sinful selves. But God did what the law could not do. He sent his own Son to earth with the same human life that others use for sin. By sending his Son to be an offering for sin, God used a human life to destroy sin.⁴ He did this so that we could be the kind of people the law correctly wants us to be. Now we do not live following our sinful selves, but we live following the Spirit.

Message:

Earlier in the spring of this year, a royal wedding took place in England. Some of you probably got up early on the morning of April 29th to watch the nuptials on television. The event was full of pomp and circumstance as Prince William was married to Kate Middleton. Millions watched on television and millions more watched by streaming the wedding on the Internet. There was such great interest and curiosity surrounding an occasion of this magnitude, but why? Why would thousands line the streets for hours just to get a glimpse of the couple? Some of it undoubtedly had to do with tradition. Some of it may have been due to the fairy tale nature of the wedding. There is something else however, the fact that one who was considered royalty (Prince William) had chosen one who was considered a commoner (Kate Middleton) for a lifelong relationship. Because a person of royalty chose a person of common background, they are both honored as royalty by the sake of their relationship.

Royalty is an interesting concept. One is considered royalty based upon relationship; relationship to a king or queen. This reality makes what the Father, Son and Spirit did, before creating the world, all the more spectacular.

The Bible reveals to us that you were chosen in Jesus before the creation of the world. Long before you took your first breath, God knew you and loved you...and chose you! He chose you because he wanted to know you and he wanted to be known by you – he chose you for the purpose of relationship. Not just any relationship, mind you, but a priceless relationship for eternity. Jesus is already crowned as the King above all other kings; the pinnacle of royalty. Therefore, by his choosing, you are considered priceless and worthy of this royal relationship.

But, to experience this royal relationship the way the Father, Son and Spirit intended, something had to change. Because of the law, a written code found in the Old Testament of the Bible, people got a

wrongheaded notion that God was someone who cared more about actions of right and wrong than about relationship. It simply wasn't true. To prove it, Jesus did something totally radical – he set us free from the law. He gave us complete freedom. He did this because he knew there is no such thing as a little freedom. Either you are all free, or you are not free.

Why make a big deal about freedom? Is it really important? What chains of bondage did you have? During today's Bible reading, we heard through Jesus we have been set free from the law. That may not seem like such a big deal until you hear what the law did to our lives – it highlighted the ugliness and pain of sin that brought the penalty of death. What I just said may come as a surprise to some of you. Maybe you have been taught, for as long as you can remember, that keeping the rules (the law) and "being good" will keep you right with God. Said in another way, if you do enough good things, you can go to Heaven. How many of you have been taught this or believe this? Here is the true reality – rules cannot make you right with God and bring freedom and salvation; they only have the power to accuse.

Let's talk more about the weakness
greatness of freedom in Christ.
billboard in Atlanta,
letters: **DO NOT CALL**
and it listed a local
do you think
guessed it, thousands
number on their cell
driving down the
would call it curiosity
our human nature is to
are told not to do. So,
told us not to do something;
the law told us to do something;



of rules compared to the surpassing
There was once a highway
Georgia that read in bold
THIS PHONE NUMBER
phone number. What
happened? You
of people called the
phones as they were
freeway. Why? Some
but the actuality is that
want to do the things we
when the rules of the law
we did it. When the rules of
we didn't do it.

There was only one power great enough to save you from the chains of sin and death – Jesus. And here is the really good news; he's already done it! We heard in the Bible reading that God the Father sent his own Son to do what the law could not do – bring life in the Holy Spirit. You see, freedom has a name and his name is Jesus. By his determined love, he has freed you from the bondage of sin and death. This was and is his will and you are *being loved* through this action of freedom. However, like any relationship, you have a role to play. Or, said in another way, by actively participating in this relationship with Jesus through the Holy Spirit who lives in you, you begin to experience the freedom he has given you. By believing Jesus and accepting his love for your life, you begin to experience the freedom he offers and you begin *living loved*.

This freedom is potent and full of power. Not only does it set you free from the guilt and shame of your sin but it also quiets those doubts of whether or not you're good enough for God. God the Father loves you as you are and he wants you to know today there is nothing you have done or will do that will ever change his love for you. He has chosen to love you because love is always a choice and he chooses you!

This freedom extends to every aspect of your life. What are you struggling with? What brings the most pain in your life? God deeply desires for you to experience his freedom in those areas. His freedom is strong enough to set you free from addictions. His freedom is strong enough to heal wounded relationships. His freedom is strong enough to release you from the bitterness you have tucked away in the secret places of your heart over someone who deeply hurt you in your past. His freedom is real and has power for you, today.

You are also free to love him back. You are free to pray to him and listen to him and enjoy an intimate relationship with Father, Son and Spirit. You are free to be you – the way God has designed you with your passions, dreams and ambitions. You are free to identify yourself as one radically loved by God and to love others with that same love.

Freedom also means you can freely choose to be selfish and make decisions that hurt others. Freedom means you can make poor choices which can hurt you for years to come. Freedom means you can choose not to love God and ignore the relationship with him. God does not force you to love him or else it wouldn't be love. Love is always a choice.

As we have come to see today, God is good and he has set you free from death because of the sheer will of his love for you. Knowing that truth, how can you choose anything but to freely love him and be immersed in a relationship with him?

There is a certain beauty, rhythm and flow to God and what he is doing in this world. It's like a beautiful song being played and you have your part. Moving and dancing to the rhythm of this God-song looks like an active participation in a relationship with him and embracing the same things Jesus embraces: kindness, compassion, forgiveness, family, joy and mercy.

May you, out of complete freedom, choose a deep, abiding relationship with God.

Being Loved is God's choosing of you for a personal relationship.

Living Loved is freely choosing to participate in a loving relationship with Father, Son and Spirit.

Living Loved is to embrace what Jesus embraces.

Living Loved is to live and dance with the rhythmic movement of God. This is done by following the life-giving lead of the Holy Spirit.

All camp prayer to be read aloud.

Father, thank you for choosing to be in relationship with me. Though I didn't deserve it and did nothing to earn it, you set me free from sin and death. Help me, by the lead of the Holy Spirit, choose to love the things you love and to embrace the things you embrace. In Jesus name. Amen.



Debrief Questions – Chapel 1

You Are **Free**

1. What is sin and why was it a problem? What did Jesus do about the sin problem?
2. What was the purpose of Jesus setting us free?
3. Does freedom mean you can do whatever you want? Why or why not?
4. Talk about the Holy Spirit. Who is he and how does he bring life as the Bible reading said today?
5. What do you believe about God's involvement in your everyday life?



You Are **Abba's Child**

Bible Reading:

Romans 8:15-17 (NCV)

¹⁵ The Spirit we received does not make us slaves again to fear; it makes us children of God. With that Spirit we cry out, "Father."¹⁶ And the Spirit himself joins with our spirits to say we are God's children.¹⁷ If we are God's children, we will receive blessings from God together with Christ. But we must suffer as Christ suffered so that we will have glory as Christ has glory.

Message:

What defines you? Is it the clothes you wear? Is it whether or not you're considered attractive by others? Is it the car you drive or the car you hope to drive one day? Is it the smart-phone you carry in your pocket? Is it the iPhone, the iPad, the iPod or the iNeed one of those? Are you defined by how many text messages you receive each day or how many posts you get on your Facebook page?

The better question is **WHO** defines you? Is it a boyfriend or girlfriend? Is it your parents or grandparents? Is it a coach or teacher? Are you defined by that boy or girl who once rejected you? Or are you defined by the rejection or feeling of abandonment caused by someone dear to you?

All of these things and people can have an enormous impact of how we feel about ourselves, there's no denying it. However, there is only one person in the entire universe who can truly define you.

Abba.

Say what? Who and what is an Abba? Is it a new "app" available on iPhone? Not exactly. It's a term that was commonly used by Jewish children for their fathers during Jesus' time on earth. The best translation we have for Abba in modern English is "Daddy" or "Dearest Father." Abba was a term used in an informal, intimate way. It expressed trust, belonging and the intimate joy of a close relationship with one's father. You can almost imagine a Jewish girl running in the front yard calling to her dad, "Abba, Abba watch me run fast!" Or maybe you can picture a Jewish boy asking his father, "Can you help me make a birdhouse, Abba?" Abba is love.

There was just one problem. No one would dare call God "Abba." It seemed too informal, too familiar – too flippant for a holy, unapproachable God. Terms like Almighty, Holy One, King and Eternal Lord seemed far more appropriate. No one would dare call God "Abba", that is, until Jesus did.

We see in the Bible that Jesus prayed to God the Father and used the loving term Abba. In today's Bible reading, the writer of Romans tells us God's Spirit shows us that we too should view God the Father as Abba. He is our loving dad. More personally, he's your loving dad. He's a dad who will not abandon you; who will keep his word; who knows the worst secret about you and loves you just the same.

Abba has chosen to be your Father. Bringing you into his family has always been his deep desire. He made this choice to identify you as his child before he breathed the stars into existence, before he spoke the cosmos into being and long before you took your first breath. This was his choice, his desire, his determined will and his way of declaring, "I love you!" You were made on purpose, for purpose – to be Abba's child.

The truth of Abba's love for you is just that simple but living it out isn't always simple.

The country of Haiti has been in the news of 2010 and the subsequent earthquake wasn't devastating natural disaster exposed an slavery has been a became even more earthquake. Child "Restavecs" in Haiti. term that means, "One are children who have streets and claimed by them into their homes. a home with a family, anything but children. They abused. They don't have the birth child. Restavecs routinely are hours (if not days) without food and water and are not allowed to attend a school so they can work long days for their "owners." It's tragic and heartbreaking.

recently because of the massive earthquake damage to life and property. If the enough, the aftermath of the unsavory practice. Child problem for years but it rampant after the slaves are known as Restavec is a French who stays with." These been taken from the families who brought Though Restavecs live in they are treated as are slaves and are often same rights and privileges of a forced to sleep on the floor, go long



Recommended Resource:
NOOMA video "Rain" by Rob Bell. It can be purchased at
<http://store.flannel.org/films/007.html>

What's also tragic and heartbreaking is when children of Abba live their lives like Restavecs. They believe a lie that somehow God is a slave owner or a hard man who only wants people living in his house so he can demand work from them. Nothing can be further from the truth. Our Bible reading today meets this terrible lie directly by stating we are not slaves and there's no reason to be fearful with God the Father. The writer is telling us not to settle for anything less than the beautiful truth – Abba is a loving, adoring Father and you are his precious child. Anything less than this truthful reality is a cheap counterfeit lie.

May you learn to run freely into the loving arms of your Father, Abba. May you learn to define yourself radically as a child beloved by Abba because that is who you are.

Being Loved is God the Father's plan before time to adopt you as his child with all the rights and privileges of a natural-born child.

Living Loved is to encounter Abba as your loving Father and to come to know him with child-like trust and wonder.

Living Loved is to be confident in your identity as a child of God.

Living Loved is to live in the assurance of the Father's love. Though there are always consequences to your actions, there is nothing you can do to make God love you less.

All camp prayer to be read aloud.

Abba, help us to come to know you and trust you as a loving Father. Help us to know Jesus as our friend and brother. Help us to know the Holy Spirit as our counselor and supporter. May we be the type of children who run into your arms and long to be in relationship with you. In Jesus name. Amen



Debrief Questions – Chapel 2

You Are **Abba's Child**

1. Is it easy or hard to picture God as your dad? Why?
2. Are there times you have looked at God the Father in fear? If so, how did that affect your relationship with him?
3. What are characteristics of a loving father?
4. Do you trust Abba? If so, how do you help others trust him?
5. What are characteristics of a loving child?



You Are a **Person of Promise**

Bible Reading:

Romans 8:18–27 (NCV)

¹⁸ The sufferings we have now are nothing compared to the great glory that will be shown to us. ¹⁹ Everything God made is waiting with excitement for God to show his children's glory completely. ²⁰ Everything God made was changed to become useless, not by its own wish but because God wanted it and because all along there was this hope: ²¹ that everything God made would be set free from ruin to have the freedom and glory that belong to God's children. ²² We know that everything God made has been waiting until now in pain, like a woman ready to give birth. ²³ Not only the world, but we also have been waiting with pain inside us. We have the Spirit as the first part of God's promise. So we are waiting for God to finish making us his own children, which means our bodies will be made free. ²⁴ We were saved, and we have this hope. If we see what we are waiting for, that is not really hope. People do not hope for something they already have. ²⁵ But we are hoping for something we do not have yet, and we are waiting for it patiently. ²⁶ Also, the Spirit helps us with our weakness. We do not know how to pray as we should. But the Spirit himself speaks to God for us, even begs God for us with deep feelings that words cannot explain. ²⁷ God can see what is in people's hearts. And he knows what is in the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit speaks to God for his people in the way God wants.

Message:

There was a popular Christian movie in theaters a few years back called *Facing the Giants*. How many of you saw the movie? It was written, directed and acted by church members from a congregation in the Atlanta, Georgia area and had good themes such as perseverance, overcoming obstacles, believing all things are possible with God and the importance of faith. It's a great family flick and you should check it out if you haven't seen it. For all the strong themes found in *Facing the Giants*, there was a subtle thematic thread woven throughout the film – suffering and glory. The Christian faith was presented as a life of struggle when God is not the #1 priority but how things come together when God is first and foremost. The movie showed a young couple who was struggling to pay their bills, struggling to have a happy marriage and struggling to find happiness and success at work when God wasn't the top priority. Almost magically, when the couple began to put God first they found success and glory at work (coaching football and won a championship), their marriage was filled with joy and hope (blessed with their first child after infertility) and they were blessed financially (including a brand new truck). Sounds great right? Sure, but there's just one problem – those blessings may happen for some followers of Jesus but many God-loving people find their lives filled with suffering. Did they do something wrong? Did they not have enough faith

in God? Or could it be that Jesus likes some of his followers more than others? Or could it be there is another vision of what the Christian faith is all about?

In today's Bible reading, the writer of Romans said the suffering we endure now is nothing compared to the glory that is to come.

Suffering isn't exactly a warm and fuzzy chapel topic but it is a reality of our walk with Jesus. The fact of the matter is life stinks sometimes. It's hard, really hard. There are seasons in our lives when it's easier to cry than it is to smile. The writer of Romans was a follower of Jesus Christ named Paul. This guy Paul knew a thing or two about suffering. He was a man who had rejected the teachings of Jesus but after an encounter with the risen Lord, became a God-follower. Things must have gone really well for him after placing his faith in Jesus right? Not exactly. The Bible tells us Paul suffered greatly as a Christian. He was placed in prison multiple times for his beliefs; he was shipwrecked and left for dead; he suffered through times of great hunger and had assassination attempts made on his life. His life paints a different picture than what we saw in the movie *Facing the Giants*, huh?

Paul's life, by all accounts, and great pain. Still, in heartache, he was come would the present anguish. news. He was a person a strong vision for the was a person of promise Spirit was living in him promise. That same Holy too are people who have a great

Recommended Resource:
NOOMA video "Open" by Rob Bell. It can be purchased at
<http://store.flannel.org/films/019.html>

was filled with suffering spite of all the convinced the glory to exceedingly surpass That's really good of great faith and had future. He knew he and the fact the Holy was the first sign of that Spirit is living in us and we promise for the future.

But what about now? Though we look forward to what is to come, what about the reality of heartache now? Does God only offer a power of promise for the future with little hope for today?

The Bible tells us the Holy Spirit helps us in our times of weakness; in our times of despair and confusion. He prays to Abba Father on our behalf, just as Jesus does. Even when we don't know what to pray for, the Holy Spirit does and will. He provides comfort in our times of hurting, hope in our seasons of despair and peace in the tumultuous and confusing episodes of our lives. Notice what I just said – there WILL BE times of hurting, seasons of despair and episodes of confusion. What the Father, Son and Spirit have promised is to be with us through it all. Jesus calls us friend and like any good friend, he mourns when we mourn, he laughs when we laugh and he goes through the valleys of life with us. Jesus is called Emmanuel – God with us. One of the great and most reassuring promises Jesus makes is that he will never leave us or abandon us.

There is great expectation for the future but there is also hopeful promise for today. It doesn't mean life will always make sense. As a matter of fact, we can count on it being confusing at times. It also doesn't mean we will always know why it "appears" God is answering some prayers and not answering others or why some people "appear" to be blessed while others aren't. Things aren't always what they seem because we know, through Jesus and what he has done, God is love and he is working good through all things including our suffering.

Being Loved is God's promise to you of hope for the future and today. He guarantees this promise through the Holy Spirit.

Living Loved is to trust God as a loving Father even in the midst of pain.

Living Loved is to share your confident hope with others who are in despair.

Living Loved is living a life of prayer – sharing your hopes, dreams, fears and raw emotions with God and believing that he hears you and loves you through it all.

All camp prayer to be read aloud.

Father, thank you for your son Jesus and for the Holy Spirit. Thank you for the promise of glory in the future and your presence in our lives today. We need you more than ever. Help us in our times of weakness and despair. Help us to share our lives with you in prayer. In Jesus name. Amen.



Debrief Questions – Chapel 3

You Are A **Person of Promise**

1. Does God answer prayer? Do you think he sometimes says no?
2. Do you feel comfortable being honest with God? Do you tell friends and family what you're thinking but not God?
3. Are you angry with God about something that's happened in your life? Why or why not?
4. Why do you believe it appears some people are being blessed by God while others don't appear to be blessed?
5. Share a time when you felt God's comfort and peace during a stormy time in your life?



You Are Victorious

Bible Reading:

Romans 8:28-34 (NCV)

²⁸ We know that in everything God works for the good of those who love him. They are the people he called, because that was his plan. ²⁹ God knew them before he made the world, and he chose them to be like his Son so that Jesus would be the firstborn of many brothers and sisters. ³⁰ God planned for them to be like his Son; and those he planned to be like his Son, he also called; and those he called, he also made right with him; and those he made right, he also glorified. ³¹ So what should we say about this? If God is for us, no one can defeat us. ³² He did not spare his own Son but gave him for us all. So with Jesus, God will surely give us all things. ³³ Who can accuse the people God has chosen? No one, because God is the One who makes them right. ³⁴ Who can say God's people are guilty? No one, because Christ Jesus died, but he was also raised from the dead, and now he is on God's right side, appealing to God for us.

Message:

Are you familiar with the “Peanuts” cartoon comic? In a memorable comic strip, Lucy says to Charlie Brown, “Sometimes, I feel we are not communicating; You, Charlie Brown, are a foul ball in the line drive of life. You’re often in the shadow of your own goal post. You’re a miscue. You’re 3 putts on the 18th green. You are a 7-10 split in the 10th frame. You have dropped a rod and reel in the lake of life. You’re a missed free throw. You’re a shanked 9-iron, a called 3rd strike, a bug on the windshield of life! Do you understand? Have I made myself clear?”

Have you ever felt like Charlie Brown? Have you ever had days where you felt life was against you? Days where you felt like you were always coming up short? Days where it appeared you were always a second behind in claiming victory?

Have there been times in your life when you honestly felt like God was against you?

Feeling like the world is against you is common to the human condition. You’re not alone. However, feelings and emotions can be terribly deceiving. In today’s Bible reading, we heard the powerful proclamation: God is for us! Furthermore, with God being for us, who in the world can defeat us? Want proof the Father is for us? Look no further than the next statement in the Bible: He did not spare his own Son but gave him for us all. Let’s make it personal – He did not spare Jesus and gave him for you!

The truth – the awesome scandalous nature of grace – is in spite of your past failures and times when you felt like you were getting a cheesy ribbon in life when everyone else was getting trophies, you are an

absolute winner in Jesus. You are caught up, wrapped up and spoken for in the love of Father, Son and Spirit. This is the gospel truth.

Your victory was accomplished and won through the death and resurrection of Jesus. Victory wasn't predicated on your performance. Victory wasn't based on your ability to achieve. Victory wasn't even settled because you became a Christian and believed God as your Creator. The ultimate victory of death being defeated, the sin disease being cured and you entering into union and right relationship with God was solely because of Jesus and his relentless love for you. Do you ever get the sense God really likes you?

The Father's love for his children has been expressed in many ways throughout the Bible. He created a lush garden for them to live in; he provided manna and quail while they were hungry in the wilderness; he gave them a land to call their own and crops to sustain them. However, the most vivid expression of his love and victory is in the person of Jesus Christ. By the determined action of Jesus in the world, your life was paid for, your sin debt was cancelled, your broken relationship with God was healed and you were set free from the prison of guilt and despair.

This is good news but we
Though victory is ours,
in the matter. We want
We want to feel like
get first place. We like
done!" So, the
any role to play in this
No, in that you there is
take away from the
yours in Jesus. Yes, in
everything to do with how

Resource Recommendation:

*NOOMA video "Today" by
Rob Bell. It can be purchased
at*

<http://store.flannel.org/films/017.html>

humans are a funny lot.
we want to have "say so"
to earn our trophies.
we've worked hard to
to say, "Look what I've
question is, do we have
victory? No and yes.
nothing you can add or
victory that is already
that your response has
you *experience* the victory.

Imagine receiving a gift that blows away any gift you have ever received. This gift is expensive, is a treasure and is beyond anything you ever imagined someone giving you. Now imagine taking this elaborate gift and walking it into the basement of your home, placing it on a shelf in a dark corner, turning out the light and locking the door behind you. You occasionally think about the gift but choose not to open it. Days turn into weeks and weeks turn into years and the gift is never opened. Seems silly, doesn't it? The gift is yours but you never experience what it has to offer.

Jesus has given you this gift through his life, death and resurrection. He has given his life to you and claimed victory on your behalf. What a gift! The gift is yours so open it by trusting Jesus. Experience it by believing God the Father in working good in all things in your life – even the suffering that makes no sense to you. Find joy in the gift by asking the Spirit to set you free from the things holding you captive.

Take hold of this gift today. Don't be burdened by the past or fret about the future. Live today in victory!

Being Loved is what Jesus has done and is doing for you. You can't change it – God loves you.

Living Loved is trusting the Father's love for you and his determination to make good out of all things in your life. This includes suffering, even when it is hard to understand why it is happening.

Living Loved is rejecting the lie you have to earn your way into the Father's good graces and being confident, in Jesus, all things have already been made right in your relationship with him.

Living Loved is shouting "NO!" to a defeatist attitude in your life and proclaiming "YES!" in the confidence God is fighting your battles and has already secured the ultimate victory!

All camp prayer to be read aloud.

Father, thank you for the victory we have in Jesus. May your Spirit lead us to a greater awareness of this awesome gift . Give us the faith to believe, the eyes to see and the courage to take hold of it. Help me not to settle for anything less than your best for my life. In Jesus name. Amen.



Debrief Questions – Chapel 4

You Are **Victorious**

1. Why does our past sometimes haunt our present?
2. What about the future makes you anxious? Do you believe you are safe and secure in Jesus?
3. Are there things in your past you haven't thoroughly dealt with to move on in victory?
4. The Bible says God is working good in all things for those who love him. Explain in your own words. Can you share a time where you saw God at work in this way?



You Are Embraced

Bible Reading:

Romans 8:35-39 (NCV)

³⁵ Can anything separate us from the love Christ has for us? Can troubles or problems or sufferings or hunger or nakedness or danger or violent death? ³⁶ As it is written in the Scriptures: "For you we are in danger of death all the time. People think we are worth no more than sheep to be killed." — *Psalms 44:22*

³⁷ But in all these things we are completely victorious through God who showed his love for us. ³⁸ Yes, I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor ruling spirits, nothing now, nothing in the future, no powers, ³⁹ nothing above us, nothing below us, nor anything else in the whole world will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Message:

"A hug is two hearts wrapped in arms."

There's something about a hug. There's a reason, for most of us, a hug feels good. Besides the joy we experience embracing someone we love, there is actual physiological good happening in our bodies. Each time we hug, we increase the level of oxytocin in our blood. This hormone is known as the "bonding hormone" because it triggers a "caring" response in both males and females. There is scientific evidence to suggest daily hugs produce daily doses of oxytocin which help protect us from heart disease.

Hugs are healthy!

Hugs are wonderful and can express acceptance and belonging but have you ever noticed they often happen as a goodbye? You can see this at airports all the time. Two people embrace but one then leaves to catch a flight. As meaningful as the hug may have been, it's temporary and eventually the two people are separated. Not so with God. God's love for us is so passionate, he knew us and embraced us before we were even born. God's love for us is so faithful, he hugged us first and refuses to let go. God does not walk away.

Hugs are heavenly!

The Father, Son and Spirit understand you. God gets you. He knows your life is often filled with stress, fear, disappointment and hurt. He knows you sometimes doubt if he really cares and doubt if he's involved in your life. He has seen the tears of sorrow you have cried and he knows the bouts of loneliness you have experienced.

The good news is instead of giving you a “pep talk” and telling you to get over it and move on with your life, Jesus reassures and meets your fears head on. The Bible reading today says clearly that nothing in the universe can separate us from Jesus Christ’s love. I want you to stop whatever you’re thinking at this moment and consider what this means for your life. Nothing you have ever said or will ever do can separate you from his love. Nothing means nothing.

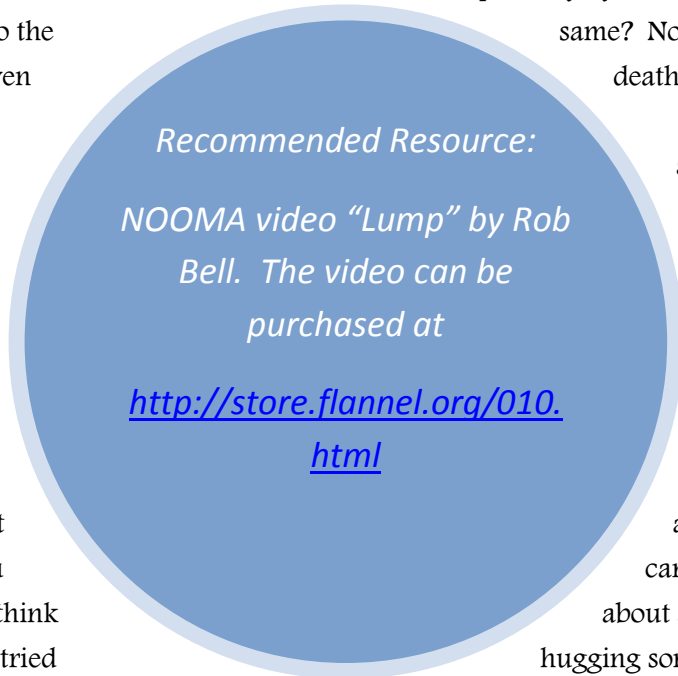
What about the time you were so mad at God that you cursed him and didn’t want to have anything to do with him? Nothing can separate you from Christ’s love, not even your denial and anger toward God.

But you don’t know me and you don’t know all the hurtful things I have done. Nothing can separate you from Christ’s love, not even your behavior.

But I am someone who has been abandoned end, isn’t God going to do the from Christ’s love, not even

repeatedly by family and friends. In the same? Nothing can separate you death.

But I am someone is skeptical if God even respecting God would doubt his existence? you from Christ’s love, yours.



attending this camp who exists. What self-still love me when I Nothing can separate this is his choice not

You didn’t work your the Father, Son and Spirit way out of it, though you rocky relationship. Let’s think moment. Have you ever tried

way into this union with and you can’t work your can certainly make it a about a hug again for a hugging someone but they didn’t

exactly hug you back? Maybe you attempted to hug them and they turned sideways as a means of rejection? You still hugged them but it was awkward and less than satisfying. God choose you and embraced you forever in Jesus before he created the world. This was his choice as a loving Father toward his children. However, you have the freedom to choice if you want the relationship to be fulfilling or like the awkward hug; unsatisfying. God has chosen to embrace you (that’s being loved), the choice for you is to hug him back (that’s living loved).

What does it mean to accept his embrace and to go about living loved? It simply means to be engaged in a relationship with God. It’s talking with him, praying to him and listening to him. It means loving the same things that he loves. It’s loving other people well, it’s forgiving a wrong and it’s standing up for those who are helpless. It’s being on a life-long mission with Jesus, while being led in the power of the Holy Spirit, all to the glory of our God and Father. May you find great joy in the journey of living loved!

Being Loved is God's love for you before the creation of the world. He loved you then and loves you now and will love you forever.

Living Loved is embracing the Father as he has already embraced you.

Living Loved is trusting that Jesus is clinging to you and will never abandon you.

Living Loved is rejecting the lie that God is separated from you.

Living Loved is learning to love others well as the Father, Son and Spirit have loved you.

All camp prayer to be read aloud.

Father, we are beginning to see there's a big difference between *being loved* and *living loved*. May we know, in the depths of our hearts, we are already being loved by you, Father, Son and Spirit. This was your choice before the creation of the world. Father, we want to know your love more and to experience living loved. Help us to choose to believe the truth that we are loved, we have always been loved and we will always be loved. In Jesus name. Amen.



Debrief Questions – Chapel 5

You Are **Embraced**

1. Have you ever felt separated from God? When and what was that like?
2. The Bible reveals we are never separated from Jesus (God). Why, then, can we feel separated at times?
3. Any good relationship requires effort. What commitments are you making to deepen your relationship with Jesus?
4. Explain, in your own words, the difference between *being loved* and *living loved*.