



BREATH

DOES A RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD MATTER?

GOAL

The goal of this session is for the teens to understand that they were created to be in a relationship with God and that, through this relationship, they will find the fullness of life.

KEY CONCEPTS

God created us through love. We are sustained by the love of God.

God is a personal God, never ceasing to draw us closer to Him.

The fullness of life is found in acknowledging God's love and responding to it.

KEY TERMS

Free Will: The power of the will to determine itself and to act of itself, without compulsion from within or coercion from without.

Fullness of Life: In order to reach the perfection of charity the faithful should use the strength dealt out to them by Christ's gift, so that, doing the will of the Father in everything, they may wholeheartedly devote themselves to the glory of God and to the service of their neighbor.

Identity: Quality of sameness. Absolute identity is total sameness, without any change or difference; relative identity is all other sameness, which allows for numerous differences in nature and degree.

SCRIPTURE: Genesis 1:25-27, 2:4-9, 2:15-24, 3; Psalm 39:11-12; 2 Corinthians 6:18

CATECHISM: 27, 30, 295, 301, 1730, 2196

ABOUT THIS CONFIRMATION SESSION

The teaching expounds upon the reality that we are all created to be in a relationship with God and that, through this relationship, we will find the greatest fulfillment in life. After the teaching, the teens have time to think about and discuss important relationships in their lives, the qualities they see in those people, and how they also can find those qualities in God. The session ends with the teens reflecting on different Scripture passages about the presence of God in their lives.

MEDIA SUGGESTIONS

Spotify: “Purpose” (spotify:user:lifeteen)
Purpose Video: “Heart of God”

Welcome and Opening Prayer (10 min)

Gather the teens in the main meeting space. Welcome them to the session and begin in prayer.

Game: Change Places If..

SAY: We’re going to play game called “Change Places If...” First of all, everyone should stand in a circle (give a moment for the circle to form moving any chairs in the way). In this game, the “leader”, who is in the middle is going to call out a series of statements that may or may not relate to your life. For example, the leader will say, “Change places if you’ve ever swam in the Pacific Ocean!” If that’s something you’ve done before, you will change places so that you’re no longer standing next to either of the people beside you now. If you haven’t done what “the leader” calls out, then you’ll simply stay put.

After Game: Explain how the basis of all relationships and friendships is common interests and even our relationship with God needs to be rooted in our understanding of who He is.

Video (3 min)

Play the video “Heart of God” from the *Media Suggestions*.

“Breath” Teaching (10 min)

The Book of Genesis

Read Genesis 1:25-27 and Genesis 2:4-9, 15-24. Before reading, encourage the teens to listen to what the narrative says or implies about God. After the passage is read, invite the teens to share words they would use to describe God based on the reading.

This section of Genesis reveals a great deal about who God is and why He matters. Let us take a look at the line, “God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.” In this sentence alone, we learn many things about God.

Genesis 2:7

First off, we know that God is tangible — He can be felt and seen — and works with the Earth to create. We also know that God is the creator; He breathes life into what He made. Furthermore, God is close and personal. From one line, we know that God is not distant, disconnected, or uncaring. In fact, God is so caring that He not only places humanity in the most prime location but He also recognizes man’s need for communion with another being and creates a companion for him: woman.

God Sees, Knows, and Provides

This is a God who sees, knows, and provides for His creation. He sees that Adam is lonely, He knows what Adam longs for, and He provides for Adam's needs. This is a God who cares for, sustains, and interacts with His creation. This is the same God we can know in our lives.

God sees us in a real and honest way. God sees when we have a rough week at school, just as much as He sees when we score the game-winning goal. God is there with us for the good and bad, because we are His creation and He loves us. Often, we forget how close God really is to us and how much our existence depends on Him. We forget how well He knows our hearts and lives. We forget that we must depend on Him. The Catechism tells us that we were created through love and are sustained by the love of God. **Hold Catechism up**

CCC 27

Our Priorities

We tend to fill our days with lots of activities. Between school, friends, sports, and homework — not to mention eating and sleeping — our lives are pretty busy. In the midst of it all, God can become less of a priority. Our faith, prayer, and relationship with God often take a backseat to everything else we have going on. But that is the opposite of the life God has prepared for us.

God loves us in a profound, life-changing way. He loves us in a way we can only gradually understand, which is why He desires that we spend our lives getting to know Him and falling deeper in love with Him. We cannot fully live unless we acknowledge God's love and entrust ourselves to Him.

CCC 27

Going Deeper

We can fill our lives with lots of great things. We can travel, we can fall in love, we can see the wonders of the world, but none of these things can be experienced in their fullness unless we receive and return God's love. It is not bad to find joy in or desire these things, but a relationship with God will deepen our experience, understanding, and appreciation of these experiences and bring us to the ultimate fulfillment we are seeking.

To live our lives rooted in God's love means we receive His love and return it, which can be challenging in the midst of our busy lives.

First, we need to know and embrace the fact that our identity is in Christ alone. Our whole life — our whole identity — is rooted in the fact that we are beloved children of a good Father. When we live our lives rooted in this love, everything changes. If we believe we are “the beloved,” we no longer strive to be something else and instead come before God just as we are. We trust His plan for our lives and know that He will provide for us.

This impacts the way we live, love, work, and speak. It changes how we spend our time, money, and talent. It changes our social media posts and texts. It changes the movies and shows we watch. Not because we want God to like us, but because we trust Him and believe His way is the best way.

Right Priorities

God asks two things of us: to love Him above all things and to love our neighbors as ourselves. He asks us to put things in order. Saint Augustine would say, “to order our hearts rightly.” When we do this—when the love of God is first—we open ourselves to the fullness of life.

God desires a relationship with us for our own good, and an encounter with God changes us because His love is so powerful that it shapes how we see and know the world. Here is the crazy thing about God: even though He knows He is right, even though He knows that His way is the best way, He lets us choose. He lets us choose how to “order our lives.”

This is the free choice God presents us with. We can choose life in its fullest form by choosing to put God in His rightful place or we can choose death by putting God aside and living only for ourselves. And the great paradox is this: the fullest life sometimes means death to self. In choosing life, we have to die to our sins and our will. This is where many people walk away or decide they do not want to be in a relationship with God. When they see the decision laid before them, they choose themselves over God — very much like Adam and Eve in the garden.

Lessons from Adam and Eve

Tech: Project Image

We can learn a lot from Adam and Eve. First, you cannot hide from God in a garden He created. Second, Adam and Eve chose to disobey God. They chose to try to be God instead of trusting in His love and providence and being obedient to Him. They forgot who they were as beloved children and who God is as a good Father.

We often do the same thing. We want our will and our way. We want control over our lives. We do not want to trust God or we do not think He is worth trusting. These are the things that keep us away from Him, that keep us from loving Him with all of our heart. We are afraid God will ask us to give up something that we do not want or feel ready to give up. We worry that He will call us to something we do not want to do. We think He could not love us because of our sin.

But God, in His goodness, does love us. He only asks us to give up things that are going to be bad for us in the long run. He calls us to greatness — to what He knows we were made for — and loves us more than we could ever imagine.

God is calling you by name to seek Him, to come to know Him, and to live your life for Him. The more you give, the more you will receive. Ultimately, we can choose a full, abundant life in a relationship with God, or we can choose to simply walk away.

CCC 30

BREAK

Relationship Inventory (5 min)

Divide the teens into their Confirmation small groups. Begin in prayer, and then provide each of the **leaders a white board and dry erase marker.**

SAY: We learn the love of God in part through our connections to others and our relationships with people can also help our relationship with God. **Think of** the names of the four most important people in **your life.** Ask them to **share** one quality that they highly value in each of those people.

Once **you** have written those qualities **on the white board,** invite them to brainstorm how they can find those same qualities in God. (E.g., If a teen loves their best friend because they are always there for them, help them identify ways they can also experience God being ever-present to them.)

Small Group Discussion (10 min)

Keep the teens in their small groups, and use the following questions to facilitate a discussion:

- *Whip Around Question:* If you could be friends with any celebrity, who would you choose?
- Which of the relationships you reflected on do you think has the most impact on your life? Why?
- What about that person — their personality, the way they act, the way they speak, etc. — do you admire the most?
- What attributes of God do you think this person possesses?
- Do you think you can have this same kind of relationship with God? Why or why not?

SEND

XLT/Hearing God's Words (20 min)

Lead your small group into the church. Invite them to sit closer to the altar for Adoration.

Need 8 leaders to read each verse before exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.

Music and Adoration

After XLT: Handouts will be given at the end of Adoration as the Teens walk out.



HEARING GOD'S WORDS

HANDOUT

1. "The Lord will fight for you, and you have only to be still." (Exodus 14:14)
2. "Commit your way to the Lord; trust in Him and He will act." (Psalm 37:5)
3. "The Lord will keep you from all evil; He will keep your life. The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and for evermore." (Psalm 121:7-8)
4. "Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid; for the Lord God is my strength and my song, and He has become my salvation." (Isaiah 12:2)
5. "For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope." (Jeremiah 29:11)
6. "For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:38)
7. "See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know Him." (1 John 3:1)
8. "We love, because He first loved us." (1 John 4:19)

Circle the verse above that was most challenging for you to hear. Take a few minutes to pray with that verse, asking the Lord to help you believe His words. Write your thoughts below

Circle the verse above that was the most meaningful to you. Take a few minutes to pray with this verse, asking the Lord what He wants you to know through this verse.

