GROSS WEIRD TRUE

life lessons from the strange side of the Bible
**Quick Overview:**
Gross, Weird, True is designed to incorporate a competition between small groups. This competition awards points for traditional stuff like bringing Bibles or a guest. It also involves a quick 60 second game where each team sends one volunteer to try to earn points.

**Making the Game**

The Gross, Weird, True game consists of two parts:

**Reward Points:**
This isn't really a game as much as it is an encouragement for students to come back each week and to invite their friends. Check out the points total sheet for a complete list of rewards and their point totals.

**60 Second Games:**
Teams will send one volunteer to participate in games adapted from the TV show “Minute to Win It.” Each contestant is competing against the clock and not against the other teams. Points are awarded for teams who complete their task.

**The Teams:**
For this series you will need to divide your group into teams. These teams will compete in the competitions as well as spend time in small group discussion together. As such you will need an adult or other leader on each team.

For smaller groups try to make teams of at least 3 people who will have consistent attendance throughout the study. It is better to have fewer teams than too few regular attenders on a teams.

For larger groups you will need to adjust your team size according to how many final teams you want. Remember since each team competes individually in the 60 second games more teams means more time devoted to games. If you have a very large group consider letting groups only compete in the 60 second games every other week (half would compete the first week, half the second) to save on time.

When we taught this study we just put the groups together the first day of the study, but this meant that students didn’t get any reward points for the first week. You may want to make the groups the week before the study.

**The Prize:**
Most of your students will be motivated enough just with the thought of winning to have fun with the game. For others a prize of some sort might help. Come up with some sort of prize that you can give to the whole group such as pizza, ice cream, iTunes cards or the like. We had pizza before our normal Wednesday night Bible study for the winning team. Very youth group cliche, but it still worked.

**60 Second Games:**
Included in this material you will find a 60 second video timer and a 60 Second Game graphic. If you don’t have the ability to project the timer then keep time on a watch or stopwatch (or ask a student to use the timer on their phone).

For the 60 second games go to [http://www.nbc.com/minute-to-win-it/how-to/](http://www.nbc.com/minute-to-win-it/how-to/)

I don’t have permission to reprint these games here, but they have a complete list of 60 second games, materials list, and instructions. Browse the list and choose games that will work in your space and with the materials that you have available. Remember you will need one game for each team each week. So if you have 3 teams you will need 3 games every week.

**The Points:**
My philosophy is that points are free so why not give lots of them. The points are balanced in such a way that teams can win without winning any games as long as they are inviting their friends.

**Using Points as Advertisement:**
When we did this study I would mail out a letter each week with an updated points list to let teams know who was winning. The letter would include pictures of the games from the previous week, the reward point system, and a reminder for the teams to invite their friends. I have included a sample of this letter in the download so that you can see what I am talking about.
INTRODUCTION:
There are many strange things in the Bible. If you or I were writing a book to base a new religion on we probably would clean it up a bit, but God isn’t afraid of strange things, in fact He uses them to teach us more about Him. This study takes a look at a few of the strange things in the Bible to see what we can learn from them.

Let’s Talk about Poop
Tonight we are going to be talking about poop, or more specifically where to poop. Yes the Bible even mentions where to do your business.

A Little Context:
This chapter contains a few miscellaneous laws. Included is a short list of rules about what is to happen when the men of Israel go off to war. There are also rules about what to do in case of nocturnal emissions. You can include those verses if you would like because they are also concerning God’s holiness, but poop really may be enough to tackle for one night.

Have a volunteer read Deuteronomy 23:12-14
⇒ What is the command of God in these passages?
⇒ Why does he tell them to do this?
⇒ Why else do you think this is beneficial?

God is serious about holiness. When the army was assembled He wanted to make sure that they were taking their lives and their actions as serious as He was. If the army got together and didn’t follow God’s rules then He wouldn’t go into battle with them. God wanted His people to approach Him with respect and to live in holiness.

God intends for Us to be Holy.
This wasn’t only an Old Testament idea. Call on a volunteer to read 1 Peter 1:13-16.
⇒ Because God is holy what are we supposed to be?
⇒ What does it mean to be holy?
⇒ What are some synonyms for holy?

HOLY ARE THE GREEN M&Ms GAME
What you will need:
• Long table
• 4 chairs
• 4 blindfolds
• 4 paper plates
• Two large bags of M&Ms with the green ones removed
• 40 green M&Ms (the rest of the removed green ones are yours to enjoy)
• You will also need 4 pairs of volunteers (8 students in 4 groups of 2)

The Set Up:
Place four plates on the table. On each plate place 20 “green-less” M&Ms (any color other than green). Mix exactly 10 green M&Ms into the stack on each plate. Place the taller student in each pair in the chair. Blindfold the other student and position him behind his partner. Seated students place their hands down at their sides. Blindfolded students should place their hands under the arms of their partners, reaching out so they can sort the candies.

The Game:
On your signal the blindfolded students must find all non-green M&Ms and feed them to their seated partners. Since they cannot see they must listen to the instructions of their partner. If any candies fall on the floor replace it with a clean one, so that all teams will eat the same amount of M&Ms. The first team to have only 10 green M&Ms on their plate wins the game.

Award a small prize (or 1000 points if you are playing the GWT Game) to the team that eats all their green M&Ms first.
Note: If you are playing the GWT Game you may want to scale this game so that you can have two people from each team playing.

Play the “Holy are the Green M&Ms Game” (see sidebar)
Debrief the game by pointing out that this is sort of a picture of what it means to be holy. To be holy is to be set apart, to be undefiled, uncorrupted. That is what we are called to be. We are called to remove from our lives anything that isn’t of God. God wants us to be holy like he is holy.

⇒ What does “being holy” mean in the life of a teenager?
⇒ What would it look like?

Of course there are the obvious things, don’t drink, do drugs, smoke, cuss, have sex until you are married, or look at porn. But there are some more subtle things too.
Holiness means avoiding hateful thoughts about others. It means to not only stop doing things, but start doing holy things. Holiness is about standing up for others and cutting out gossip and backbiting.

**How Do We Get Holy?**

We are to be holy; we are to clean up our lives. You may have tried this dozens of times before. You may have gone to a church camp or come to an event and decided that this time things will be different. You may have made commitments to stay away from bad stuff and to read your Bible and do good stuff. But for some reason it never seems to work.

It doesn’t work because we aren’t strong enough to clean up our own lives. But God is strong enough. We can be holy because we have the Holy Spirit living inside of us. God himself, the third part of the godhead, the Holy Spirit dwells in you if you are a Christian.

If you are a Christian then you have the Holy Spirit working and giving you strength to change from the inside out. But that means that you will have to decide that holiness is something that you actually want. It means that you are going to surrender to God, and go out of your way to live the way He wants.

**Why Should I Try to be Holy?**

You may wonder that if holiness means giving up things that I enjoy or doing things that I may not want to do then why should I try to do it? “Because you are told to by the God who created you” should probably be enough of an answer, but that isn’t the answer that God gives.

God says that you should strive to be holy because that is how you succeed in this world. God’s ways aren’t just arbitrary ruiners of fun. They are laws designed to help you to make it, to save you from unnecessary pain and to help you live fulfilled.

**Remove the Poop**

Close with this activity that is both silly and serious. Make copies of the “toilet” sheet for each student. Before you begin, acknowledge that the activity is a little silly; but ask the group to take it seriously. Pass out sheets and pens and give your group time to find a place to be alone.

Play some soft music (“What do I Know of Holy” by Addison Road is what I used) while they are working through their sheets. After 5 minutes or so close with prayer and dismiss the students to small group time.
Use the following questions to lead your group in a short discussion about tonight's lesson. Your goal isn't to work through all of the questions or to get a particular answer, but rather to help students to process what they have learned tonight. It can be hard to keep a lesson about poop on track, but try to keep the discussion focused on holiness and not on bodily functions.

- What was the high and low point of this past week for you?
- What jumped out at you about tonight's lesson? Was there anything that you didn't know before?
- Was there anything that you didn't agree with or that was particularly challenging?
- Do you think that God's holiness is a big deal to Him?
- Do you live like holiness is a big deal? Why or why not?
- Are there some things in your life that you know that you should remove but that you aren't willing to let go of yet?
- What is one action that you can take this week to remove the unclean stuff from your life?

Close your discussion with a prayer thanking God for the truths we find in the Bible even in the strange parts. After you pray, remind students of the small group game and encourage them to be back next week and bring their friends.
Are you serious about holiness? Is your life clean or are there some things that you should bury “outside the camp”? Use the bowl below to list some of the things in your life that you know you need to remove. Use the back to journal a prayer asking God to give you the strength to flush them out of your life.
INTRODUCTION:
Welcome back to Gross, Weird, True. We are taking a look at some of the strange things in the Bible and seeing what we can learn from them. If we say that we believe that the Bible is the word of God then we have to assume that everything that we find there is important. That means that even the strange stuff, the hard to understand stuff, is important. This week we are going to look at two stories and a few rules from God and see what truths we can learn and possibly get another look into the person of God.

**Bibles:**

Even if you normally project the Bible verses up on a screen this is a good lesson to pass out Bibles to each student. Actually holding a Bible in their hand helps students to understand that these strange stories and commands are actually in the scriptures.

Naked Noah:

Instruct the group to turn to Genesis 9:18-29 and call on a volunteer to read it for the group.

- So what’s happening here in this story?
- What was wrong about the actions of the younger son?
- What was right about the actions of the older sons?
- What was wrong about the actions of Noah?
- Did Moses’ actions change the way that the older sons responded?
- Why do you think that Moses responded so harshly to the younger son’s actions?
- What do you think we can learn from this for our lives?

The Bible stresses the importance of obeying your parents and having respect for those who are in authority over you. That is one of the reasons why I think this is such a neat story. The guy that God has chosen to be the head of the new world gets drunk and passes out naked in his tent. This isn’t the picture of the Bible hero that most people think of when they think of Noah. But even though he messed up, he chastises his son for not treating him with respect.

In the same way we should always treat our parents with respect, even when they are doing things that are wrong. This doesn’t mean that we should stay in abusive relationships. You should always tell someone if you are being abused in any way, but even if you have to leave home you should do so with respect.

Mauled for Bald Jokes

The Bible judges disrespect for parents and elders very harshly. Let’s turn over to our next story. This one comes from 2 Kings 2:23-24.

**Background:**

Elisha was a prophet of God, most people in Israel believed that he came from God, but they still didn’t treat him very well. So one day he is out walking and this happens. Point out that this wasn’t just a couple of kids walking along the road, this was a large group of young people who have come out specifically to torment Elisha.

Read 2 Kings 2:23-24

- What is the taunt of him?
- What are they saying by speaking about his bald head? (They are calling him old)
- Do you think this curse of Elisha to be a little harsh?
- Do you think the youth who escaped ever made fun of bald people again?

These youth treated Elisha with contempt because of his age. Once again we see God treating this as a very big deal. So the question you have to ask yourself is do you treat this as a big deal. Do you think that being disrespectful to your parents or to your elders is something that warrants harsh punishment?

Optional

Instead of just reading the text, draft 6 volunteers to come to the Bald Jokes Skit.

Optional Messy Game:

Bad Hair Day

Pick up some cheap shower caps and a bottle of whipped cream for each of your teams. Choose two volunteers from each team and place them on a well protected part of your stage. Have one volunteer sit in the chair while the other one stands behind her and attempts to create a hairstyle with the whipped cream. Give students 1 minute to create their hairstyle and then judge them on creativity and on how close they have come to creating an actual hairstyle. (Note: You need to keep the whipped cream cold or it won’t work. Shaving cream is more stable, but also burns if it gets in your eyes so you may need to add goggles if you use it instead.)

Materials Needed:

- Bibles and Pens
- Honor Meter Sheets
- Optional: Bald Head Drama
- Optional: BluefishTV video

Quick Overview:

We continue discussing God’s holiness by taking a look at His teachings on honoring your parents and elders. God has harsh words (and punishments) for those who don’t honor their parents. This lesson takes a look at those and discusses how students should live lives that honor their parents. The lesson also touches on how honoring our parents is actually honoring God.
The Price of Dis-Honor

Start talking about respecting your parents and most teenagers will just roll their eyes and mutter about how their parents “just don’t get it” or something similar. To badmouth your parents is common for teens. But it is against God’s plan. Help them to understand the need for honoring their parents by looking at God’s punishment for rebellious children.


- What is a parent to do if they have a rebellious son?
- What is the punishment for being a rebellious son?
- Do you think that is justified?

Death because you don’t listen to your parents is a pretty harsh sentence. But again, we find that God is teaching something here. He is teaching about more than just being nice to your parents. He is teaching about himself.

Our parents are a reflection of God here on earth. That is why God set up the family so that we could understand him better. That is also why he thinks it is so important for us to treat our parents with respect.

What if you have bad parents?

Let’s be honest, some of you have bad parents. I mean, I know that some of you do, or at the very least you have parents who don’t believe in God or who don’t follow him. What are you supposed to do then?

Keep on respecting them.

As long as it has to do with you then keep on respecting and honoring them? Why? Because you are commanded too and because God honors those who follow His commands.

Honor Your Father and Mother

Close by reading this verse from the 10 commandments. Read Exodus 20:12.

- What are we commanded to do?
- Why does the Bible say that you should honor your parents?
- What does “honoring” your parents look like?

Honoring your parents is more than just being nice to them and not yelling at them. It is about living in such a way as to bring them honor.

When people look at your life, when they see the way you act, the way that you live does that bring honor to your father and mother? Do you treat them with respect when you are with them and do you live in such a way to bring them honor when they are not around?

BLUEFISH TV VIDEO:

Supplement your teaching time with this video from David Nasser. In it Nasser talks about the reaction of his Muslim family on the night that he was being baptized as a Christian. Instead of bragging about his bravery, Nasser speaks about how he wishes that instead of just walking out the door he would have honored his father and stayed home like he was told to do.

(If the above link doesn't work go to www.bluefishtv.com and search for honoring parents)

What does “honoring” your parents look like?

Honoring your parents is more than just being nice to them and not yelling at them. It is about living in such a way as to bring them honor.

When people look at your life, when they see the way you act, the way that you live does that bring honor to your father and mother? Do you treat them with respect when you are with them and do you live in such a way to bring them honor when they are not around?

BLUEFISH TV VIDEO:

Supplement your teaching time with this video from David Nasser. In it Nasser talks about the reaction of his Muslim family on the night that he was being baptized as a Christian. Instead of bragging about his bravery, Nasser speaks about how he wishes that instead of just walking out the door he would have honored his father and stayed home like he was told to do.

(If the above link doesn't work go to www.bluefishtv.com and search for honoring parents)

So what about you? Do you live in a way that is honoring to your parents? Do you treat your elders with respect? God may not be sending any bears your way, but I do know that you are called to live with respect towards your elders and if you do then you are living how God intends for you to live.

Pass out the “Honor Meter” tests and ask students to work on them silently for a few minutes. After they have had a minute or two talk through each statement. Add scenarios about each statement to help students dig deeper into what it means to respect their “elders.”

(For instance when you get to the “respectful to your parents in public” ask students if they have ever asked their parents for something in front of other people and then whined when their parent said no.)

Close with a time of prayer for students and their parents.

PERSONAL NOTE:

Even now, 20 years after my parents’ death I am still trying to live in such a way as to honor them. When people see me, when they see the way that I act, the way that I raise my children, the way that I live, I want them to say that I am an honor to my parents. That is what honoring your mother and father is all about.
SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

SESSION 2

Use the following questions to lead your group in a short discussion about tonight’s lesson. Remember your goal isn’t to work through all of the questions or to get a particular answer, but rather to help students to process what they have learned tonight. Students have a whole lot of parent issues so use your judgement on which tangents to chase in this small group discussion. Be sure to constantly come back to the need for us to treat our parents with respect (even if they aren’t acting like they deserve respect).

1. What was the high and low point of this past week for you?
2. What jumped out at you about tonight’s lesson? Was there anything that was challenging or that you didn’t agree with?
3. If you lived in the time of the Bible do you think that you would be in trouble for being stoned because of the way that you treat your parents?
4. Do you think your friends would say that you treat your parents with respect?
5. Have you ever heard the phrase “You have to earn my respect?” Does this line up with what the Bible teaches about honoring our parents?
6. What are two things that you need to work out this week in order to show more respect to your parents?

Close your small group time by asking for prayer requests and praying for your group. Pray for each student by name. Pray for whatever requests they may have and also for their relationship with their parents or guardians.

HOLY BIBLE
When my parents ask me to do something I don’t want to do I respond with respect and do it without complaining.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Always</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I am respectful to my teachers in school in class and outside of class. When others speak negatively about them I do not join in.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Always</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I speak to my parents in a respectful tone, even when they are yelling at me.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Always</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I treat my parents with honor when in public. If I have a disagreement with them I speak to them calmly and privately.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Always</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I obey the rules my parents set for me even when they are not around and there is no chance that I could get caught.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Always</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Characters:
- Elisha
- Youths 1-3
- Bear (if you have a bald adult volunteer this would be a good part for him)

Narrator:
Here is a story from 2nd Kings chapter 2. Just so you know Elisha was a prophet of God.

Elisha:
Hi! I'm Elisha. I'm a prophet.

Narrator:
The Bible says that Elisha went up to Bethel, and while he was going up on the way, some small boys came out of the city and jeered at him, saying, "Go up, you baldhead! Go up, you baldhead!"

Youths enter

Youth 1:
You're bald

Youth 2:
He's super bald!

Youth 3:
He's so bald I can read his mind.

Youth 1:
He's so bald when he wears a turtleneck he looks like roll-on deodorant.

Youth 2:
Dude! I need some sunglasses; the glare from your head is blinding.

Youth 3:
Is that your head or is your neck blowing a bubble?

Youth 3:
You're so bald when you take a shower you get brain washed.

Youth 1:
(walks up and waves his hands over Elisha's head and speaks in a spooky voice) I can see the future and it is very, very lonely.

Narrator:
Actually his future was going to be very, very short because here is what happened in the next verse. The NIV version of 2nd Kings 2:24 says, "He (that would be Elisha) turned around, looked at them and called down a curse on them in the name of the LORD. Then two bears came out of the woods and mauled forty-two of the youths."
strong man’s weakness | session 3

**INTRODUCTION**

We have been talking about some gross and weird things in the Bible. We have been studying them because they are fun, but also because God must have put them in the Bible for a reason. The Bible is God’s word to us and all of it—even the weird parts—is important.

We started out by looking at God’s holiness and the expanded that by discussing how we can’t be holy if we don’t respect our parents and those in authority over us. In this session we are going to study the life of Samson and see how strange it is. We are also going to see how he disregards God’s call to live a holy life and pays the penalty for it.

**The Life of Samson in 6 Acts**

Divide your group into 6 teams (a team can be as small as 1 person. If you have more than 8 people on each team consider making more teams and doubling up the assignments)

Pass out the team assignments. Make sure each team has a Bible and a pen. If possible place an adult volunteer with each group to help things move smoothly. While students are working circulate around the room to answer questions and give directions.

Give teams 8-10 minutes to finish their assignments. After they have finished call on the teams in order and ask them the questions on their sheet. As students answer you may want to clarify points for the whole group. When you are finished with all 6 teams your students should have a quick overview of the life of Samson.

**God of Second Chances**

As you can see Samson was a man who was driven by his passions. He let his emotions and immediate pleasures control his life. He was a sucker for pretty women and they eventually led to his downfall. Samson didn’t pursue God’s holiness and because of that he never lead the Israelites to freedom from the Philistines. That is of course until at the end of his life when God listened to his prayer and used him to liberate the Israelites from the Philistines.

Most teenagers (most people actually) live their lives like Samson. They are controlled by their emotions and live life for the moment rather than following the ways of God. Because of this they often end up hurting or broken and wondering if they can still be used by God.

The story of Samson shows that God can used anyone, and that He is a God who offers second chances.

Help students apply the truths that they found in the story of Samson to their own lives by discussing these questions.

- What would you see as some lessons for your life that you can learn from this story? *(Stop and think before you act. Don’t take God’s gifts for granted, etc)*
- What can you take home and do differently this week because you looked at the life of Samson? *(This will be different for each person, but answer can include: I will make an effort to control my emotions. I will give God credit for the blessings in my life. I will ask God for strength to stay away from places I know I should go. I will use 300 foxes next time I need to get even with a group of people.)*
- Do you think that most of the time you control your emotions or they control you?
- Have you ever acted out of your desire for immediate pleasure or out of your emotions and gotten in trouble for it?

**Closing Charge**

You are powerful. You have the spirit of the living God inside of you, the same power that raised Jesus from the dead is the power that God gives to you. The question is are you going to use that power to help change the world or are you just going to be controlled by your whims and immediate desires like Samson? What will be your choice this week?
GROUP ONE

Read Judges 13:1-5; 11-24. Work together with your group to answer the questions below.

What is the state of the country of Israel at the start of this story?

What is the name of the couple?

What is their problem?

What does the angel of the Lord tell them?

What special instructions are they given for the child?

How do they realize that it is the angel of the Lord?

What was the name given to their child?

How did he grow up?
Group Two

Read Judges 14:1-20. Work together with your group to answer the questions below.

Who does Samson want to marry?

Why do his parents object?

What does the Bible say that the Lord was planning with this marriage?

Why was the Lord seeking an opportunity against the Philistines?

What happens to Samson on the way to Timnah?

Why do his parents object?

Who does Samson want to marry?

What happens to Samson’s wife?

How did Samson pay off the bet?

How did Samson respond?

How did the men figure out the answer?
Context: In chapter 14 of Judges Samson gets married to a Philistine woman. At the wedding feast Samson makes a bet with the men there. The bet is a riddle that he is sure they can’t answer. His wife cries for days trying to convince him to reveal the answer to his riddle. When Samson tells her the answer she immediately tells the secret to the men. Samson loses the bet and in his anger goes home and leaves his wife behind.

Read Judges 15:1-8. Work together with your group to answer the questions below.

When Samson went back to get his wife what was he told?

What was Samson’s response?

What does Samson do first to punish the Philistines?

What do the Philistines do in response?

After the Philistines’ response how does Samson retaliate?

Where does Samson go after he is finished?
Group Four

Context: Samson is enraged to find that his wife has been given to another man, so he attacks the Philistines and then goes to hide in a cave.

Read Judges 15:9-20. Work together with your group to answer the questions below.

Why did the Philistines attack Judah?

How did the men of Judah respond?

What did Samson say when they went to get him?

What happened when Samson was about to be turned over to the Philistines?

What weapon did Samson use against the Philistines?

How many men did Samson kill?

What happened after he killed the Philistines?
GROUP FIVE

Context: Samson spent many years harassing the Philistines. More than once they have tried to capture him and each time the power of the Lord gives him great strength to overcome them.

Read Judges 16:4-22. Work together with your group to answer the questions below.

Who does Samson fall in love with?

What is the offer that the Lords of the Philistines make?

What does Delilah ask of Samson?

What does he tell her?

What does she do after he tells her?

What happens when the Philistines try to attack him?

How many more times does Samson give Delilah false reasons?

Why does Samson finally give her the real reason?

What does Samson imagine will happen when he wakes up after his head was shaved?

What actually happens?
Context: Samson took the power of the Lord for granted and told Delilah the secret to his great strength. As a result, he was captured and thrown into prison by the Philistines (the enemies of Israel).

Read Judges 16:23-21. Work together with your group to answer the questions below.

What was Samson’s request to the young man who was with him?

How many people were watching Samson?

What did they decide to do with Samson?

Who did they say had delivered Samson into their hands?

Why were the people rejoicing?

Why were the people rejoicing?

What was Samson’s prayer?

How did God respond to Samson’s prayer?

What happened to Samson and the Philistines?

How did God respond to Samson’s prayer?
SESSION 3

Small Group Questions

Use the following questions to lead your group in a short discussion about tonight’s lesson. Remember that the goal isn’t to work through every question, but rather to help students to process what they have learned tonight. This is the last week of our Gross, Weird, True study so feel free to bring up questions or topics from previous lessons.

- What was the high and low point of this past week for you?
- What jumped out at you about the lesson tonight? Was there anything in the story of Samson that you hadn’t heard before?
- Can you identify with Samson and the way that he let his emotions control him? Have you ever felt controlled by your emotions?
- What are two things that you can try to do differently this week in order to live a holy life that is controlled by God instead of by your emotions?

Close your small group with this guided prayer time.

- Go around the group and have everyone share at least one request
- Tell the group that they are going to pray for the person on their right
- Students who are comfortable praying aloud can pray however they feel
- Tell students who are worried about praying out loud to pray this simple prayer “Lord, help _______ (the person on your right) with __________ (whatever she requested). Amen.”
- Go around the circle letting everyone pray
- Close by praying for your group and thanking God for what he teaches us even in the “weird” parts of the Bible.
INTRODUCTION
We are taking a look at some of the strange stories of the Bible, not just because they are strange, but because we believe that the Bible is God’s word to us. So if these stories are in the Bible then apparently God had a reason for putting them there. We have been following this idea that God calls us to be holy like he is holy. God sets the bar pretty high and expects us to passionately pursue Him. He expects us to respect our elders and to control our emotions.

In this lesson we will discuss how God will help us to live this holy life and why living this holy life is so important, and we are going to do it by taking a look at the life of a prostitute.

A Strange Request
Have a volunteer read Hosea 1:1-3

What does God tell Hosea to do?
Do you think this was a strange request?
How do you think you would have responded if you were Hosea?
Who did Hosea marry?
Why did God tell Hosea to marry Gomer? (Because the land is guilty of the vilest adultery.)

The reaction of a family
While we may all be a little hesitant if a family member suddenly decided to marry a prostitute, it is nothing compared to the reaction that Hosea probably experienced. With this action he brings dishonor not only to himself but his entire family.

What a Name
Read Hosea 1:4-9
What are the names of Gomer’s children?

God gives Gomer’s children 3 very descriptive names:

• Jezreel means “God will scatter” and the valley of Jezreel was the site of many bloody battles.
• Lo-Ruhamah means not loved
• Lo-Ammi means not my people

Imagine going through life with names like this. “What’s your name?” “Not loved, and this is my brother, not my people.” But once again we see that God is teaching his people through the life of the prophet Hosea.

Buying Back what was already his
Call on a volunteer to read Hosea 3:1-4 (This is where the narrative picks back up again. we will come back and pick up the stuff in chapter 2 after we get the rest of the story of Hosea and Gomer.)

What is God’s command to Hosea this time?
What has happened to his wife? (Apparently she has either gone back to her former place as a prostitute or has been taken back, but either way she has once again become unfaithful and is apparently owned by someone.)
What does Hosea have to do to get her back? (He has to buy her back.)
After Hosea married Gomer who did she belong to? (OK, this isn’t the best question for a 21 century audience, but Gomer belonged to Hosea as his wife. Try to point it out as more of a having a place to belong than an ownership thing, but this is important for the overall lesson.)
So why did Hosea have to buy her back? (Because she had walked away)
What parallels to this story can we make about how God deals in our own life?
You are a creation of God. You were made by Him and for His purposes. As such you belonged to God from the beginning. But instead of sticking with God and loving Him like He loves us we have decided to chase after other lovers.
What are some of the things that teenagers chase after other than God? (Popularity, drugs and alcohol, relationships, pleasure, etc.)

These other things may seem good for a while, but ultimately they can never satisfy us and ultimately we become enslaved by them. They get control of us. We get trapped by our sin and someone needs to come and get us out.

Jesus is the price to buy us back
We were a creation of God, we belonged to Him, but each one of us have turned from God and chased after sin and stuff to the point that the Bible says we are slaves to sin.

That is where Jesus comes in. He pays the price of his own life to redeem us from that slavery. Just like Hosea had to buy back his wife God bought our way back to Him with the blood of Jesus.

But here is the interesting thing. We don’t want to go back to Him. We like the things that we are doing. But God knows something very important, God knows that the things we are doing will ultimately hurt us. So he does everything that he can to try to turn us back to Him. He does this because that is what a loving father does.
Good Boundaries
This is sort of a directed reading through chapter 2. You are eventually going to read all of the chapter, but there are lots of stopping points to make sure that the students are following along. If this doesn’t fit the way that you teach, feel free to read all of the chapter and then go back and ask questions.

Read Hosea 2:2-5.
In verse 5 Gomer’s actions are saying “these other things are giving me what I want and need.” It is like us saying “Being with this guy and going all the way makes me feel loved and valued. Putting others down makes me feel like I am important. Being a part of this group is giving me the acceptance I need and I will do anything they ask me to do so that I can be included.”

Read Hosea 2:6.
➤ What does God say he will do?

Read Hosea 2:7.
➤ What does she say she will do?

Read Hosea 2:8-13.
God doesn’t stop opposing her. He doesn’t immediately give her good things. God knows that she is only coming back to get a quick fix. She hasn’t learned a lesson yet, she is just out for what makes her feel good. She is just coming back to God because she wants something from Him.
➤ Do any of you know people who treat God and church that way?
➤ Do any of YOU treat God and church that way? In other words do you go and live however you want and then when you feel a little guilty or when things start to fall apart turn quickly to God for help without ever really letting go of the stuff that is really killing you?

God says that He will do whatever it takes to remove you from that situation, even if it means that He has to strip you of everything so that you can wake up and see what is really hurting you.

Sometimes we forget that God’s love means that He won’t leave us to get hurt. He will do whatever He has to do to make a healthy again. He will do whatever it takes to make us His.

A Parent’s Love
We don’t like to think about someone controlling our life and putting up boundaries on us, but everyone can agree that a young child needs boundaries. If a parent gives their toddler nothing but junk food or lets him eat nothing but candy we would call that person a bad parent. A good parent gives rules and makes their children eat healthy food. God gives us rules and guides us in ways that may not make us happy at first (think a child who is told he can only have one piece of candy) but he knows better than we do.

It’s Just a Little Tumor (Skit)
Before you start enlist 2 students to go through this humorous skit about a doctor who doesn’t want to remove a tumor because the patient would be inconvenienced.

Debrief the skit by asking these questions:
➤ What do you think about his doctor?
➤ Is he/she a doing a good job?
➤ Why did he/she tell the patient not to get the tumor removed?
➤ Do you think that there are people who would choose to just have a tumor rather than be inconvenienced by the surgery?

We all feel that this doctor is being negligent for not doing the surgery, but we get upset when God wants to clean sin from our life. Sin is like a tumor in your heart. Sometimes it takes a little pain to remove it, but you will be better off if you let God take it out of your life.

The “wooing” of God
The story doesn’t end with the tearing down of Gomer.

Read Hosea 2:14-18.
God says that once she is in a place where she realizes that the stuff she has been craving is killing her; then I will speak softly to her and call her back to what is right.

God desires for us to be holy. He is working in our lives to lead us to that place, because only when you are following God can you be free. God wants to redeem you from slavery. Will you keep chasing after stuff that will never satisfy you or will you turn to Him and let Him make you whole?

Notes:
SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS
SESSION 4

Use the following questions to lead your group in a short discussion about tonight’s lesson. Remember that the goal isn’t to work through every question, but rather to help students process what they have learned. Since this is the third week of this lesson encourage some of the quieter people in your group to speak.

1. Had you heard the story of Hosea and Gomer before tonight? How has God proved His love for you?
2. What were your thoughts on the story? What really jumped out at you?
3. What are some of the “lovers” that teenagers chase after instead of God?
4. Why do you think that even Christian teens pursue these things other than God?
5. How does it feel to know that God will actively oppose you and try to stop you from chasing after these things? Are you scared or encouraged?
6. Think of your life this past week. Did you live more like the wife of God or like a prostitute?
7. What are some of the “lovers” that teenagers chase after instead of God?
8. Why do you think that even Christian teens pursue these things other than God?
9. What were your thoughts on the story? What really jumped out at you?
10. Had you heard the story of Hosea and Gomer before tonight? How has God proved His love for you?

Finish your small group time by taking prayer requests and praying for the people in your group.
It’s Just a Little Tumor

**Setting/Props:**
Stage setting is quite simple, just a couple of chairs will do the trick. If a gurney is available, then that will be fine, but really not necessary. Throughout most of the sketch the doctor is standing. Only sitting to drive a point home.

**Characters:**
Doc (either a girl or a guy)
Bob (either a girl or a guy)

**Bob:** OK Doc give it to me straight. What is it?
**Doc:** Well, Bob, it’s not to good, but it’s not to bad, you see that pain you’ve been feeling is because you have a rather large cyst on your heart.

**Bob:** (obviously shaken up.) Large, well how large?
**Doc:** Well, I’d say that it’s about the size of a (acts like he’s lining up a golf shot) a small golf ball. (“watches” his shot go sailing) speaking of that I’m running late for a game, I’ll see you in about two weeks.

**Bob:** Two weeks! Doc, I got a tumor on my heart, what are you going to do about it?!

**Doc:** Well my nurse will give you a local for the pain, that should make it stop hurting for a while, then if it hurts again come back and we’ll give you another one.

**Bob:** So you’re saying that this isn’t that bad, that I can just get a shot, and it will go away.
**Doc:** I’m sorry, did I say that it will go away, I meant that the shot would make that pain go away for a while, the tumor will still be there.

**Bob:** So I don’t have to worry about the tumor, just the pain?
**Doc:** (obviously annoyed that he is still here lines up another golf shot) no, the tumor can kill you if it stays there.

**Bob:** Well, can’t you take it out?!
**Doc:** Of course I can take it out, I’m a doctor. But I don’t think that you really want that, I mean it takes so long, and I’d have to cut into your chest, and your stay in the hospital would definitely disrupt your lifestyle. No, I’ll just keep giving you locals to keep out the pain; you won’t know the difference.

**Bob:** Won’t know the difference, I have a tumor on my heart that is going to kill me and you’re saying that I don’t know the difference, I’ll be dead!!
**Doc:** Don’t worry, it could be years before it kills you, besides, tumors are relative, they effect people in different ways.

**Bob:** What do you mean different ways

**Doc:** Well this one isn’t growing very fast. It will probably take a while before it kills you. I’m sure that no one will even know you have it. You can go to work tomorrow, and no one will ever be the wiser. As long as you come back here every so often and take something for the pain you should be able to live a normal life. But if I take it out, everyone will know. You don’t want that do you.

**Bob:** No not really, I don’t want people pitying me, or thinking I’m not healthy. You really can just keep giving me something for the pain.

**Doc:** Well it might grow too big to deal with, but that’s rare. More than likely it will just stay right where it is.

**Bob:** Well thanks Doc, I’m glad you set me straight. Even if this thing is going to kill me, I sure don’t want people knowing that I have it. I can deal with a little pain if everybody thinks I’m OK.

**Doc:** Now you’re talking sense. Well, I’m late for a game. (goes out swinging)

**Bob:** (gathers his stuff) And to think, I almost disrupted my lifestyle just for one little tumor. (gives a half laugh and walks out)