

#Selfie with God

Resource Activity: Sunday 5th July

Hi lovely young people!

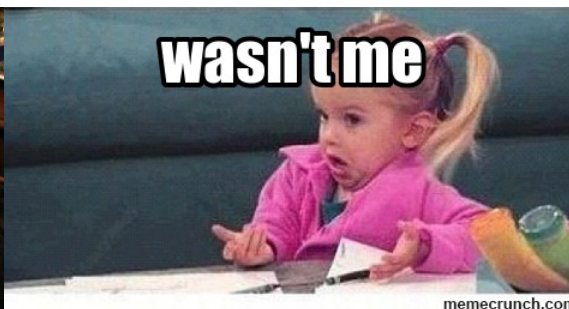
We hope you are all okay and that you have had a good week. We are keeping you all in our prayers and we hope you enjoy this week's activity.

Let's begin by having a bit of fun...Can you guess the kids movies from the below emojis?

1. ❄️
2. ★ Vs. ★
3. 🇺🇸 🇩🇪 🏹 🚀 ⚔️ 🕷️
4. 😬 😬 😬 🍌 😬 😬 😬
5. 🎩 🧐 🍫 🏠
6. 🍌 + 🟠 + 📺 + 🎬
7. 🚂 + 🌱
8. 📞 🏠
9. ☁️ 🍲
10. 😊 🦶
11. ⬆️
12. 🚗 🚗 🚗 🚗
13. 🐛 🐜 🐞 🐛

(Answers can be found on the final page)

Today we will be looking at something, which at times, can be a real inner struggle – the conflict between sin and God's purpose for us. It is something all of us encounter in our walk with God.



To look at this closer, we will need to read the below passage:

Romans 7:15-25– Taken from The Message version

¹⁴⁻¹⁶ “I know that all God’s commands are spiritual, but I’m not. Isn’t this also your experience?” Yes. I’m full of myself—after all, I’ve spent a long time in sin’s prison. What I don’t understand about myself is that I decide one way, but then I act another, doing things I absolutely despise. So if I can’t be trusted to figure out what is best for myself and then do it, it becomes obvious that God’s command is necessary.

¹⁷⁻²⁰ But I need something *more*! For if I know the law but still can’t keep it, and if the power of sin within me keeps sabotaging my best intentions, I obviously need help! I realize that I don’t have what it takes. I can will it, but I can’t *do* it. I decide to do good, but I don’t *really* do it; I decide not to do bad, but then I do it anyway. My decisions, such as they are, don’t result in actions. Something has gone wrong deep within me and gets the better of me every time.

²¹⁻²³ It happens so regularly that it’s predictable. The moment I decide to do good, sin is there to trip me up. I truly delight in God’s commands, but it’s pretty obvious that not all of me joins in that delight. Parts of me covertly rebel, and just when I least expect it, they take charge.

²⁴ I’ve tried everything and nothing helps. I’m at the end of my rope. Is there no one who can do anything for me? Isn’t that the real question?

²⁵ The answer, thank God, is that Jesus Christ can and does. He acted to set things right in this life of contradictions where I want to serve God with all my heart and mind, but am pulled by the influence of sin to do something totally different.

I wonder how this reading made you feel? For me, it gave me a real sense of an inner struggle.

This passage was taken from Paul’s letter to an early church in Rome to encourage them to look within themselves about the things that they do and whether they are in line with God. This comes from a personal place for Paul, as someone who had previously persecuted Christians and had committed awful deeds. He knew sin first hand but more importantly, he knew of God’s grace and forgiveness.

Much like Paul’s inner struggle, we can all have our own personal inner struggles. Sometimes the right thing to do can be staring us in the face and yet we still choose to go down the wrong path. Paul is trying to explain that we must place our reliance in Jesus to keep us on the right path.

If a friend came over to you and asked you what is sin, what would you say? (please write your answer here):

.....

.....

.....

Sin can appear very simple, right vs. wrong – but it isn’t always such a simple thing.

When we think of sin, we can link it back to Adam and Eve and how temptation led to Eve biting into the forbidden fruit. If we look deeper, we can see that something was broken that day and as a result sin came into the world. When we think of sin, it’s so important we understand it in connection to a broken world and also to human nature.

Some of us may have followed Jesus for many years and some of us may be newer Christians. Either way, despite being made new in Jesus when we gave our lives to Him, we can still have that same inner struggle between sin and God’s full purpose for our lives. We may want with all our hearts to do what is right but act in ways that are not.

It's not always easy to be honest with ourselves about sin. It can be uncomfortable and challenging. It can be hard to really think about the different things we are doing in our lives that are not good for us.

I know in my life, I definitely don't always get it right. It's like a glitch that's inside of me that makes me forget the spiritual direction of my life in God. Sometimes, we can struggle to say sorry to those we might have hurt, let alone to God. Sin is sadly a part of our human nature but it was for all of our sins, that Jesus paid the ultimate price for on the cross. When we put our trust in Jesus and accept the gift of what He did for us, we will be **completely** forgiven. When we look to Jesus, His teaching and example, we are also given the opportunity to use this as a guiding light to deal with sin in our lives.

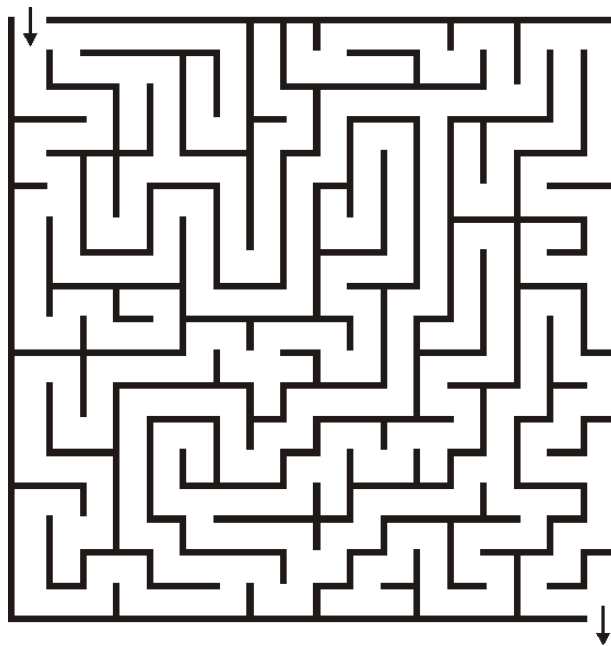
Jesus' sacrifice wouldn't have been needed if we were all perfect beings with no greed, no hate, no sin...so this shows us that within our human nature, we all have the potential to sin but God continues to love us anyway.

1. How do you feel about asking for God's forgiveness? Do you find this easy/difficult?

We may not always get it right in life but when we ask for forgiveness from Christ and have a relationship with him, our struggles with sin are covered by his grace and our journey with Jesus allows us to show grace to others.

Life can feel like a maze sometimes, with so many decisions to take but Jesus' holy spirit will help us to discern more and more the right paths to take in our lives.

Quick game: Can you find your way out of the maze?



When we receive that forgiveness and the understanding of fully laying down our sins, our hearts are softened to also forgive those who sin against us. This isn't an easy thing to do but is only possible because we ourselves have first felt the love of God's forgiveness.

2. Do you find it easier asking for forgiveness or giving your forgiveness to others?

There can often be a connection people make with sin and punishment. 'I did this bad thing, now I will be punished.' There have been times in my life that something awful has happened and my mind has, within an instant, wondered, "what did I do to deserve this?" Whilst sin leads us down paths that have consequences,

God doesn't turn us away but instead loves us and wants to walk with us, helping us in dealing with those parts of our lives that need His spirit poured into.

The truth is, His love for us is an unconditional one. It doesn't keep scores or hold grudges. Despite all of our sins, He loves us and trades in the ashes of the sin in this world for beauty.

When Jesus died for us, it meant that we can off-load the heavy chains that we have been carrying and instead, live in freedom. The world can sometimes feel pretty unforgiving, but that isn't Jesus' nature – He is a forgiving Father.

God wants to gently bend us and our lives towards His purpose for us, so that we can live life in abundance and in full freedom.

3. Do you find it easy to accept that you really are forgiven?

Activity: Perhaps this week, we could try and privately write down the areas we struggle with, those things that we know Jesus doesn't want for our lives. Then at the end of the week, rip them up into tiny pieces and throw them away. This reflects what Jesus does with our sin when we bring them to Him and seek forgiveness – they are taken and thrown away.

It would be great if this could be this week's prayer focus: Lord help us to become aware of the areas in our lives that we need your help with. We pray for your strength, wisdom and guidance. We ask for your forgiveness and thank you for your mercy and your unconditional love.

Although "the struggle is real," with Jesus at our sides, it isn't one we face alone.

Please turn to next page for this week's 'Feel Good with Selfie!' kit.

Feel Good with Selfie!
(with updated links for your enjoyment)



To help you stay healthy and positive remember to:

- Limit how much news and social media you look at to give your mind a rest.
- Do something nice that you love; read a good book, play a game you enjoy or do some baking.
- Exercise each day, it will help boost your mood.
- Get in touch with friends, connecting with others always makes us feel good.
- Speak to God about your thoughts and worries, find rest in Him.

Something to make you smile: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AX9_q7cG0es

A song for your spirit: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YsxBrb_uXNg

A song for your feet: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BGPMX4zU9jc>

Words to inspire you: “It’s a mistake to think that we have to be lovely to be loved by human beings or by God.” - Mr Rogers

Answers to the emoji quiz:

1. Frozen
2. Star Wars
3. The Avengers
4. Minions
5. Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory
6. The SpongeBob Movie
7. How to Train Your Dragon
8. E.T.
9. Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs
10. Happy Feet
11. Up
12. Cars
13. A Bugs Life