



# GROWING UP

God's  
**Good**  
Story



LESSON 6

**We live what we believe**

**Philippians 2:14-16**

**faith**  **kids**

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Growing Up - God's Good Story

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We recommend the International Children's Bible for use with children during the lesson. Our leader's notes and parent handouts use the New International Version.

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"All for the glory of God alone" (1 Corinthians 10:31)



## LESSON 6

# We live what we believe

**Philippians 2:14-16**



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### Truth that changes me:

We live differently because we know that we are children of God.



### Faith in Kids looks like:

Children living differently with God as the biggest influence on their thoughts and actions.

## Preparation

As you prepare this lesson, we recommend watching the training video, and the introductory video if you haven't seen it.



## Notes



### Where are we going?

This lesson aims to inspire children to 'go for it' as they live out their faith seven days a week. We want them to listen to God's voice and to be confident in the truth and goodness of his word. We'll prepare them for the reality of living in a culture that rejects Christ and his call to live differently.

Pray and read the Bible passage. Read **Where are we going**, **The world our children live in** and **Look at the passage** to give you a better understanding of how to apply the truth.



### The world our children live in

Our children hear that it is important to fit in. Affirming the messages of culture - gender is a choice, bodies can be changed, emotions should be followed, marry anyone - will earn them acceptance and approval. Anxiety increases as they try to keep track of current trends and what their peers are doing. Our children can become afraid of rejection at a time when they need a calm and loving voice to help them work out who they are and what they think. Will they follow the crowd? Will they follow Christ?

We have a better story that our children need to hear. God offers us truth to cling to - he does not shift with trends or change his mind, he calls us to trust and follow him and offers an eternally secure place to belong. We'd love our children to have a hope-filled, confident and realistic vision of their future walk with God.





## Look at the passage



### Who We Are

**I** *“So that you may become blameless and pure, children of God.”* PHILIPPIANS 2:15

This verse is rich in identity language, children of God is **who we are**, not where we go on Sundays, or how we behave, but our identity. As we understand whose we are, we know where to go to find out how to live; our Heavenly Father tells us. As his children, our future is hope-filled, we are on an upward trajectory to **become** blameless and pure. One day, truth will win, we will be home, our struggles will be behind us and we will live out our identity perfectly.

### Where We Live

**I** *“Children of God in a warped and crooked generation.”* PHILIPPIANS 2:15

We don't need to pretend, or sugar coat it for our kids - we live in a crooked world with people who reject the things of God and it's wise to prepare our children to be rejected for living differently. We don't do this with arrogant superiority but with compassion - Paul quotes Deuteronomy, a description used by God to Moses about his own rebellious people. We live differently whilst remembering that we were just as warped and crooked until God stepped in.

### How We Live

**I** *“Then you will shine among them like the stars in the sky as you hold firmly to the word of life.”* PHILIPPIANS 2:15

What an image! We're shining stars declaring God's glory across the universe – WOW! Looking up at the night sky it's the stars we admire - they take our breath away shining out from the dark backdrop. Like stars that burn bright in the dark sky, God's Spirit, growing God's goodness in us, burns bright in the godless darkness. Moses told the Israelites back in Deuteronomy 32:47, to command their children to carefully obey all God's words because, “These are not just idle words for you – they are your life.” So Paul echoes and we teach – no matter what others may do or say – we will let God's word shape our lives.



## Win my heart first

When did you last feel like an outsider or feel excluded from a group? What door was shut to you? When did you miss out on the invite, or feel weird because you're a Christian? The Bible is realistic and honest, it's not hidden in the small print or T's and C's; as Christians living in a world that rejects God we can expect to stand out and face rejection and suffering,

*For your heart, before you prepare the lesson.*

continued →



So why bother? Because children of God is who we are, who we were made to be! Trying to be anything else is like a star wrapping itself in a blanket to be more like the night. When we stand out as Christians, we are holding on to something better, we can know joy and flourishing as we live what we believe until the day that every knee bows and every tongue confesses that Jesus Christ is Lord.

- Where in your life are you most tempted to roll over, to compromise as a Christian and to fit in?
- Who has inspired you as a Christian with a life that shines out the beauty of knowing Jesus?



## 5 minutes to focus on your group

As you think about the children in your group, what is your prayer for them? How can you prepare them to be ready to face rejection for what they believe as Christians whilst remaining clear that the truth they are clinging to is life, flourishing and a shining future? If you could help them write a vision for their future – what would it say? Would it sound as awesome as Philippians 2:15?

*What do the children in your group need?*

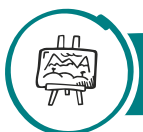
*Pray for them:  
• to grasp the truth*



## In case you're feeling nervous...

- The children you teach will be at different stages on their journey to faith. As you explain the difference it makes being a Christian, be sure to present the Christian life positively and invitationally. Explain that this is their story if they are trusting in Jesus. This might be an opportunity to tell children how to become a Christian.
- We want the children to confidently live out the truths we have taught in this series. Keep the application focused on these topics - bodies, feelings and relationships.
- Encourage the children to think about how they can live distinctively whilst showing love and compassion to those who think differently.

*We understand this might feel daunting. We are starting a conversation not completing it.*



## Series overview visual

The series overview visual (see p.17) helps to explain the foundation of this series. Because God created us, he knows us better than anyone else. He gets to tell us who we are.

The visual shows a person hearing messages from themselves - these are thoughts and feelings (represented by the thought clouds); messages from others - including other people and the media (represented by speech bubbles); and messages from God - what he has written in the Bible. The crown shows that God's messages are the most important - we only let other messages stick if they say the same things as God says. God made us and loves us more than anyone, great delight comes from listening to him.





# All-together time



This has been written as an all-age slot to introduce the whole church family to what the children are learning today, but it could be adapted for the children's classes



## Props

Large star shape covered with foil / shiny paper, series overview visual (see p.17), dark sheet to use as a backdrop, hat and towel to "disguise" the star.



## What to Say



## What to Do

Have you ever seen the stars?

On a clear night, you look up into the huge darkness of the sky, and there they are! Too many to count, twinkling away...

*Start to sing, "Twinkle twinkle little star, how I wonder what you are."*

Hold up a foil covered star shape with a question mark on.

Turn round to reveal the question "Who am I?"

Growing up, we start to ask big questions: Who am I? What am I good at? Who are my friends? What will I do in the future?

As we try to answer these, we will hear lots of different messages:

From ourselves – our thoughts & feelings

From others – the ideas and opinions of those around us

From God – the one who made us.

Show the overview visual.

Point at the person in the middle.

Point at the voices of others.

Point at God surrounding us.

We need to know who to listen to - whose voice should carry the most weight?

In our series, Growing Up, we've been thinking about what it looks like to let God tell us who we are and how that affects the choices we make with our feelings, bodies and relationships.

We believe that the God who made us is the most important one to listen to.

Today's Bible verses tell us that listening to God leads to shining like a star...

"Do everything without grumbling or arguing, so that you may become "children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation." Then you will shine among them like the stars in the sky as you hold firmly to the word of life."

Philippians 2:14-16 on the screen.

continued →

## What to Say

## What to Do

WOW! What a verse!

I feel like we need to change the words of the song – “Twinkle twinkle little star – let God tell you who you are!”

Did you hear God’s words? We are children of God, he made us, he knows us, he loves us, he calls us to hold onto his words and shine like stars!

Our lives are shaped by what God says.

Overview visual back up.

Point to the overview visual.

Not everyone lives this way. The Bible is realistic about the world around us. Many people don’t know, or don’t want to know how God tells us to live. They are guided by their strong feelings - “If I feel like it, I’ll do it”. Or perhaps they just want to fit in with everyone else.

When people live as if God doesn’t exist, it’s sad, it’s twisting how it was meant to be - it’s darkness. We’ve all lived this way.

Bring on a dark backdrop behind the star.

Point to the black backdrop.

But when we realise that we don’t make sense without God, when we start to listen to him, we are changed from darkness to light - from backdrop to stars!

Just like a star shining in the night sky, Christians shine as they live differently.

Point to the star.

Imagine this star... After a while it thinks, “Hang on, there’s a lot of darkness around! I don’t fit in, I should try and be more like everyone else”.

It finds sunglasses, then a dark hat... and finally wraps itself in a blanket so less “twinkle twinkle” will get out.

What do you want to say to the star? What is the star made to do? SHINE!

Be who you were made to be - go for it!

Disguise the star with a hat / blanket etc.

As God’s people we can go for it too!

We can listen to what God tells us and live what we believe, even if it seems like we’re the only ones, even if we stand out, because it’s who we are. It’s who God made us to be!

When we do, people around us can see how great God is!

They may even realise how much better it is to listen to him than to live in darkness.

continued →

## What to Say

Parents, when we help our children hear what God says about how to live, when his voice guides our thinking about bodies, gender and relationships, we're shining in the dark and we're teaching our kids to shine, we are giving them light when the world gives them darkness.

God is good and his plans are good - we aren't on our own, God is with us and for us, we can shine together.

Be a star!

Pray: Father, by your Spirit help us to hold fast to your word and shine as the people you made us to be. Thank you that you tell us who we are and it's literally brilliant. Amen

## What to Do

Strip the disguise from the star.

How about adding some battery operated fairy lights for the final effect!?







## 7s and under lesson plan




### Get going

#### Shining Stars

This game is all about moving around and acting like a star - when I give you an instruction, you respond like a star

- Star burst = Do a big star jump
- Shooting star = Run around the room
- Star struck = Freeze and stand still
- Starfish = Lie on the floor in a star shape
- Shining star = Spin slowly spreading your arms and fingers wide

 **Link:** Today we are learning that as God's people we live what we believe. When we listen to God we will stand out from those around us who don't, like a star that stands out in the night sky by shining.



### Teaching time

#### Who We Are

*"Do everything without grumbling or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, 'children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation'."* PHILIPPIANS 2:14-15 (NIV)

Ask the children to find their name and stick it on.

You found your name - you know who you are - you're Lucy. Max, Gemma... *name the children.*

Your name was given to you by people who care. When your family shouts your name, you know they mean you, you know who you belong to. In the same way, God calls us his children - he is our heavenly father who made us, loves us and knows all about us. We belong to God!

Read verses - ask the children to put their hand up when they hear whose children they are.

Give each child a heart sticker to stick on to their name label.

continued →



### Notes

**You will need:** Space to move around and act out the actions.

**You will need:** A name label for each child, a heart and a star sticker for each child, a dark blanket backdrop, four shiny star shapes. (You could write their names in a big heart / star drawn on paper if you don't have stickers.)

## Where We Live

*"Children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation."*  
**PHILIPPIANS 2:15**

*Read the verse and place the dark blanket on the ground.*

God made the world, and filled it with his light. When we say no to God and live like he doesn't exist, it's like choosing to live in the dark. *Place the blanket over everyone or crawl through a dark den you made.*

This is not how we are meant to live - under the blanket we can't see what we're doing, who we're talking to, or even see ourselves properly. Imagine trying to get dressed and eat breakfast in the dark - it would be messy and difficult!

When people let their thoughts and feelings take over, or listen to other people instead of God, that is like living in the dark. We live surrounded by darkness.

## How We Live

*"Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky as you hold firmly to the word of life."* **PHILIPPIANS 2:15-16**

Read verses.

As Christians we are children of God, we belong to him. We listen to God and trust his words because we know that he loves us and knows what is best for us. When we do this we are living like stars that shine in the darkness.

*Place the star on the blanket - get the children to add another star for each example you share.*

Over the past few weeks, we've heard what God has to say about...

- Bodies - God gives us a good boy's body or a good girl's body, we can't change which one we have. When we look after our body well, when we speak kindly about other people's bodies and thank God for our own body, we are being a shining star.
- Marriage - God made marriage as one man and one woman sticking together for their whole life. When we trust God's plan for marriage we are being a shining star.
- Feelings - God gave us our feelings to enjoy and help us - not to rule over us. When we feel angry, we don't need to kick or shout - we can stop and take a deep breath. When we listen to God more than to our strong feelings, we are being a shining star.

*You could help the children come up with more examples of their own if you have time.*

As you keep coming to church, talking with your family and finding out more about what the Bible says, you'll notice it's different from what you see on TV or how other people make choices. It's OK to be different, that's just what God said would happen. When we listen to God, we will be like bright shining stars.

*Give each child a star sticker to add to their name label - encourage them to say with you, "I am God's loved child, I can shine for him."*

continued →





## Brain break

### Spot the Different Statue

One child leaves the room to be the detective. The other children are statues. Choose one child to be the lead statue and another child to be the different statue. The lead statue strikes a pose and all of the other children copy them except the different statue, who makes a different pose. The game works best if the pose is clearly different but not too obvious, e.g. one hand on a hip instead of two, left hand up not right, eyes closed not open. The detective returns and tries to spot who is the different statue. Repeat so that the children can have different roles.

➔ **Link:** In the game we were trying to find the one person who wasn't blending in with the crowd. Our Bible verse today told us that it was good not to be the same but to shine as different as we live for Jesus.



**You will need:** Space for the children to move around in.



## Heart & hands

### CRAFT TIME

### Make a star named door hanger

As the children write their names, remind them how they are children of God, just as their bedrooms belong to them, they belong to God and are loved by him. As the children decorate the stars and stick them on to the door hanger, remind the children that they shine like stars as they live for God.



**You will need:** Paper, foil, glue, scissors, pencil, pens, black paper/card, door hanger template printed on card if possible (see p.18).

*If you don't have time, you can buy star stickers instead*

**Prepare in advance:** Glue the foil to plain paper making sure to cover the whole paper with glue. Draw star shapes on the paper side and cut out, one side should be covered in foil. Stick the door hanger templates onto the black card/paper and cut out. One side of each hanger is black, the other has the Bible verse.

**During the session:** Children use a pencil to press designs onto the foil stars. Stick the stars to the front of the door hanger (Bible verse on the back) and write their name at the top using the pens.

continued →



## Think time

**Big Question:** Who does God say we are? *His children.*

**A follow up question:** What are we like when we live trusting God in the world?  
*Shining stars.*

## Prayer

**Say together:** Heavenly Father, thank you that you love us and we belong to you. Thank you for bringing us from darkness to light. Help us to trust you and listen to you, even when others don't and to be shining stars that love you. Amen



Use this craft time to reinforce the **Big Idea** of the lesson to get them ready for Think Time





## 8s and over lesson plan



### Notes



### Get going

#### Who Are You?

Give the children in your group a piece of paper where they have to write down two facts and a lie about themselves. Encourage them to include information that others in the group might not know about them.


Collect the pieces of paper in and read them out one at a time

Give everyone a sheet of paper for them to write their guess as to who this person is and what is true about them.

#### You will need:

Paper - two sheets per child and pens

*If you have younger children in your group - simplify the game by excluding the lie.*

 **Link:** We live in a world where we'll hear lies about who we are and how we should live - Christians live what they believe and hold onto the truth God gives us.



### Teaching time

#### I Belong to God

*"Do everything without grumbling or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, 'children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation.' Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky as you hold firmly to the word of life." PHILIPPIANS 2:15-16*

Think of two sets of famous parents all of the children will know, e.g., Prince William and Kate, Mufasa from the Lion King. They do not have to be a couple, one parent is fine for the activity. Ask the children if they can name one (or more) of the famous parents' children.

We can describe someone as the child of X and Y e.g. Prince George is the child of Prince William and Kate, Simba is the child of Mufasa.

Look at the verses together and highlight who we belong to as Christians - *we are children of God.*

Being a Christian is more than just a name, it's an identity. We know we are people created by God, who make no sense without him, but we have lived like he didn't exist. God paid the price through Jesus to bring us back into his family. Christians know that they belong to God and understand how much he loves us, so they want to live trusting and listening to him.

**You will need:** Bibles / verses printed out, pens and paper, dark backdrop, shiny foil star, series overview visual (see p.17), list of the titles of each week's lessons / topics covered

continued →

## Where We Live

*"Children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation."*  
**PHILIPPIANS 2:15**



During this series, we have heard lots of big truths:

- God has given us a male or female body and we can't change our sex;
- Bodies are a good gift from God and should be treated with respect;
- God's plan for marriage is one man and one woman for life;
- Feelings are a good gift from God but they are not supposed to control us.

*To discuss:*

- Do they notice a difference between what the Bible teaches and how others live in these areas?
- What do these verses say about the world we live in?
- Is this a surprise to them?

Use a dark sheet of paper/blanket and a foil star - these verses have described the times we live in as twisted, crooked and dark. Perhaps you don't find it difficult to be different as a Christian at the moment, that's great, but the Bible wants us to be ready and know that we will find it tough because we will think differently to others.

## How We Live

*"Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky as you hold firmly to the word of life."* **PHILIPPIANS 2:15-16**

How are Christians described here? *Stars shining in the sky.*

It would be crazy for a star to try and hide its light because it wanted to be like the darkness around it. In the same way, as God's children we need to be who we are and not change to fit in.

Show the series overview visual. We hear lots of messages and ideas from others, media, our own thoughts and feelings, God's Word - which messages should we listen to most?

The secret to keeping going as a Christian is in these verses - we need to hold firmly to the word of life. God's word that first brought life into the world and that brings new life as we understand what Jesus has done for us - God's word keeps us going.

If we live listening to God and holding firmly to his truth, then we will shine in the world like a star in the night sky.

How could we show that we are living listening to God's truth in the way that we think about bodies? Encourage the children to think back to that lesson - e.g. *speak kindly about other people's bodies, treat them with respect, not treat them as objects, care for our own body well and thank God for our body. This is a chance to get practical.*

*It is only Christians who can shine like stars. This is a good opportunity to explain to the children how they can become a Christian if this isn't them yet.*

continued →



## Brain break


### Spot the Odd One Out

Split the group into two teams.

Ask one team to study the other carefully, paying close attention to what they look like.

The studied team then leaves the room and can make four adjustments to their appearances - swap a sock, add an accessory etc, when they return to the room the other team has a time limit to spot all four differences.

Swap over once complete.

 **Link:** This game was about spotting what was different, some differences were easy to spot, some were harder. As Christians the differences in the way we live compared to those around us who aren't Christians will be noticed. That's a good thing, when we live what we believe people will notice the difference.



**You will need:** A couple of clothing accessories - hat, gloves, scarf, jumper.



## Heart & hands

### Did you spot it?

- How is the Christian described?
- How is the world around us described?
- What is "the word of life"?

### Work it out

- What would you like your future to look like? Will God be more influential in your life than your friends are?
- What help do you think you will need to keep going as a Christian?
- Who could you ask to encourage you and help you know what God says?

### Live it out

Look at case study picture A (see p.19) with the girl sitting at a table in her primary school classroom. She is looking thoughtfully at the white board as the school gets ready for Pride week - there are rainbow flags (LGBTQ+) up around the classroom and the board shows a heart saying 'Love is Love'.

- This girl hears messages at school, at home and at church about relationships. What differences might she hear or notice? *Encourage children to recall what we have heard in God's word in other weeks.*
- Who could she talk to to help her work it all out?
- What do you think God would say to her?

*We have found that this is where children make the most progress relating the Bible to their everyday lives. Please leave enough time for this section*

*These questions can mostly be found on the **Chat Time** (see p.21-22) sheet which has been designed to aid your discussion. If possible, enlarge the page to A3 so you can work on it together. Make sure each child can still answer the personal questions honestly for themselves (e.g. hand out Post-it notes for them to write/draw their answers to these questions).*

continued →



Look at case study picture B (see p.20) where a boy is walking into church with his Dad alongside others from the congregation. A friend from his class walks past with his Dad on his way to play football. He's wondering - why can't I be like everyone else?



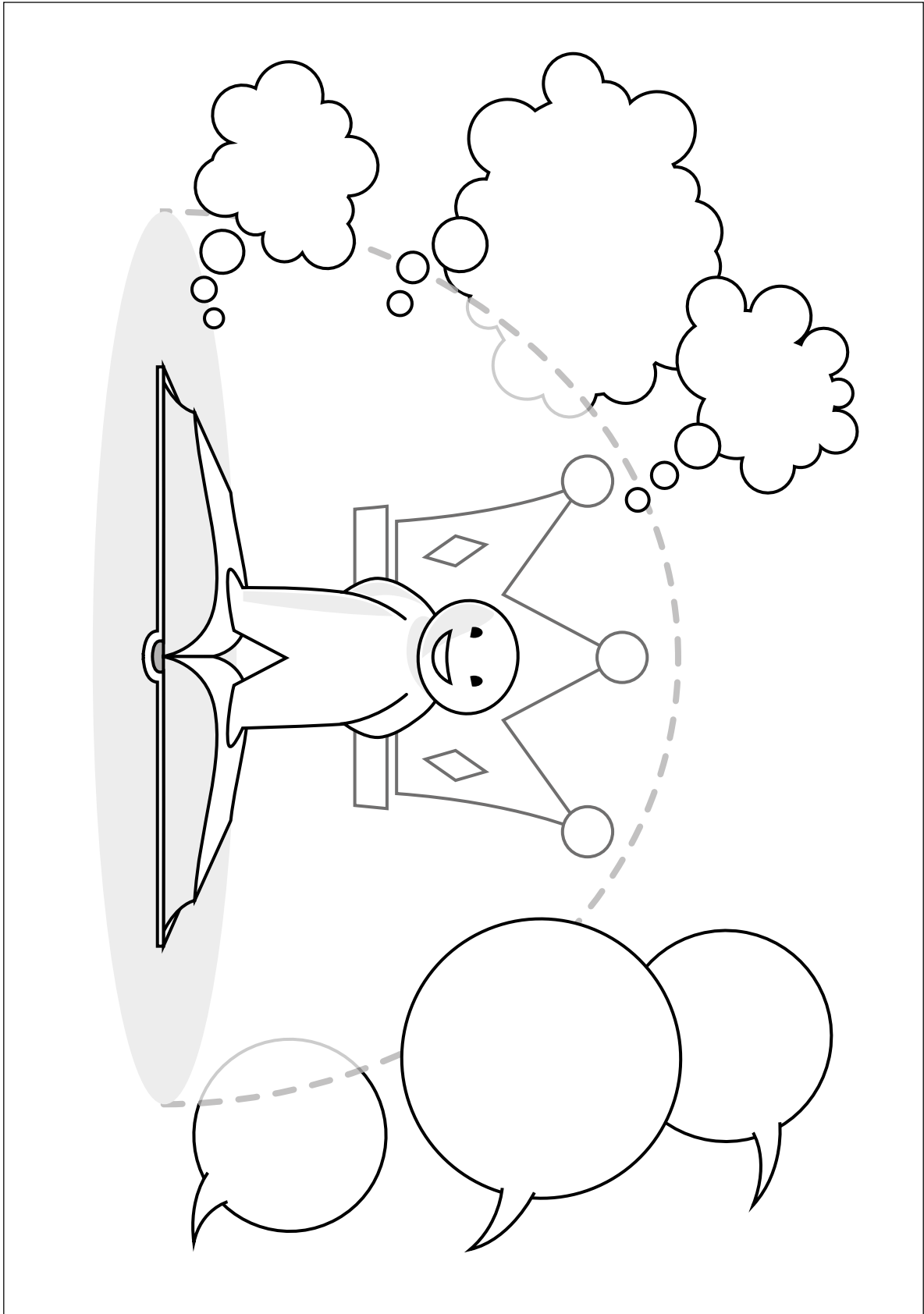
- How is his life different as a Christian? What might others notice? *This could go in different directions - that is great - but draw out that others will particularly notice that he goes to church.*
- What might be hard about being different? *Children often long to fit in more than adults and can be reluctant to stand out. Explore why this might be - afraid to lose friends, be teased, not be cool, etc.*
- What have you heard today that would encourage you that it is worth standing out?

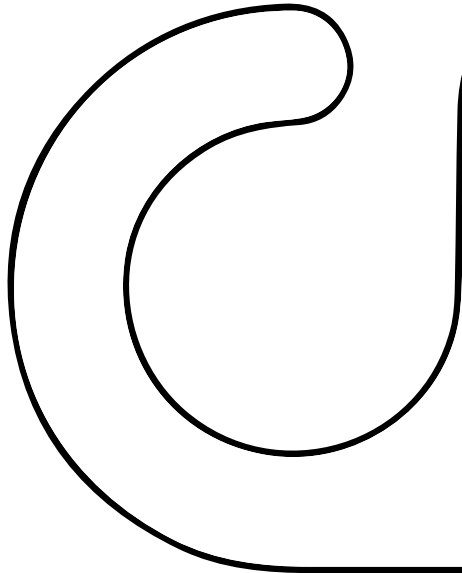
## Prayer

Thank God for the way he describes you and ask him to help you live listening to him - thinking over the different topics we have covered - ask him to help you shine brightly in the darkness of the world and hold onto the truth.



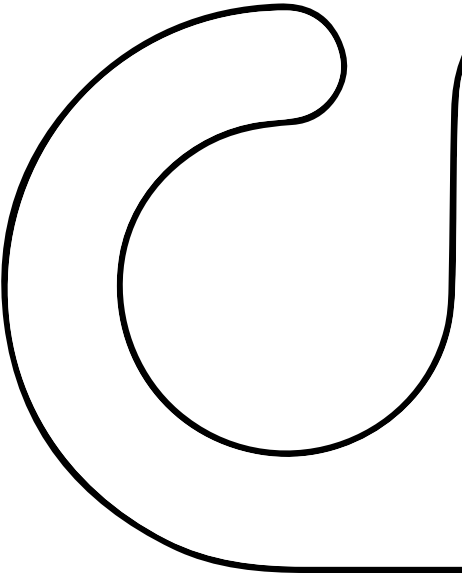






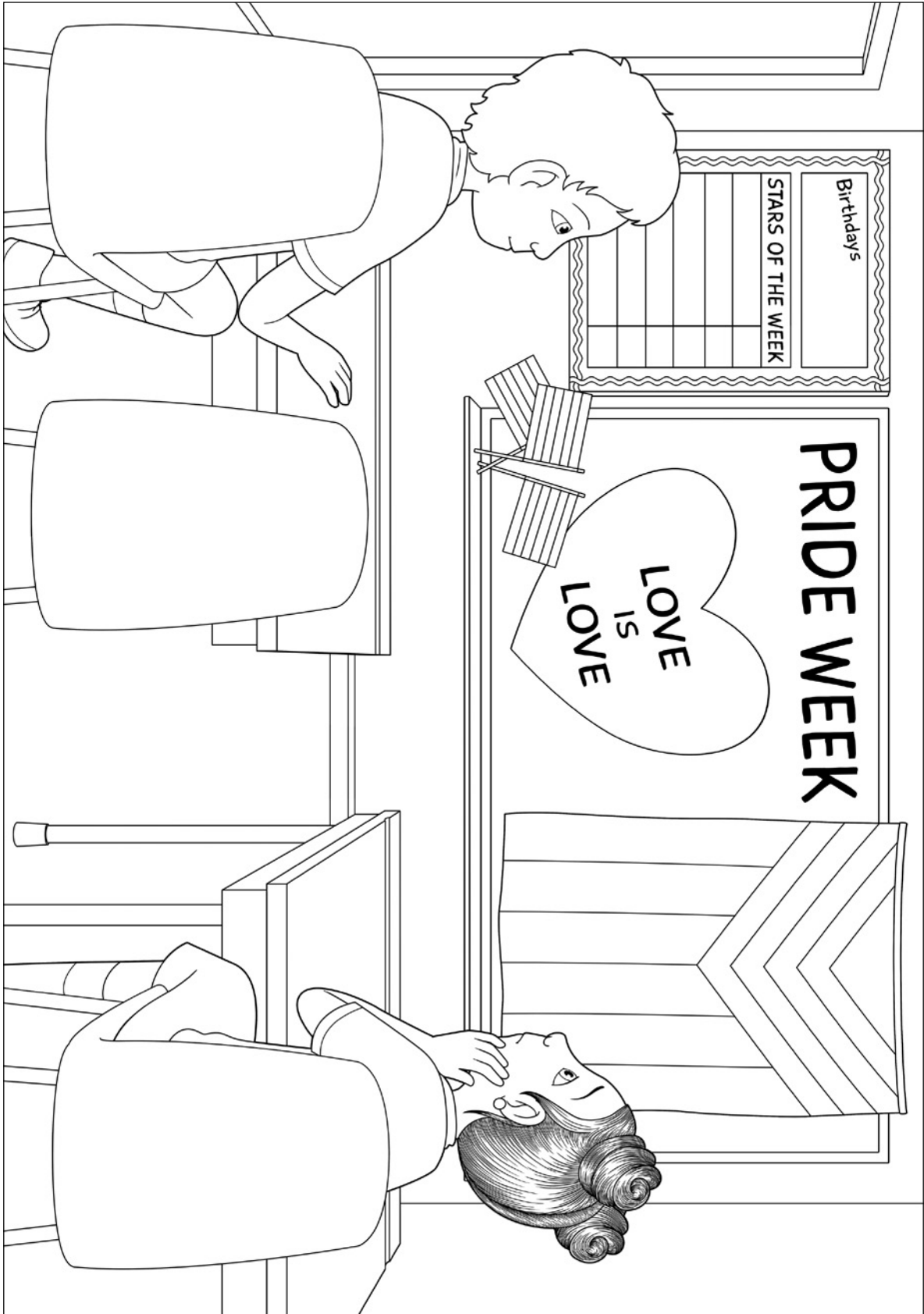
**“Then you will  
shine among them  
like the stars in  
the sky as you  
hold firmly to  
the word of life.”**

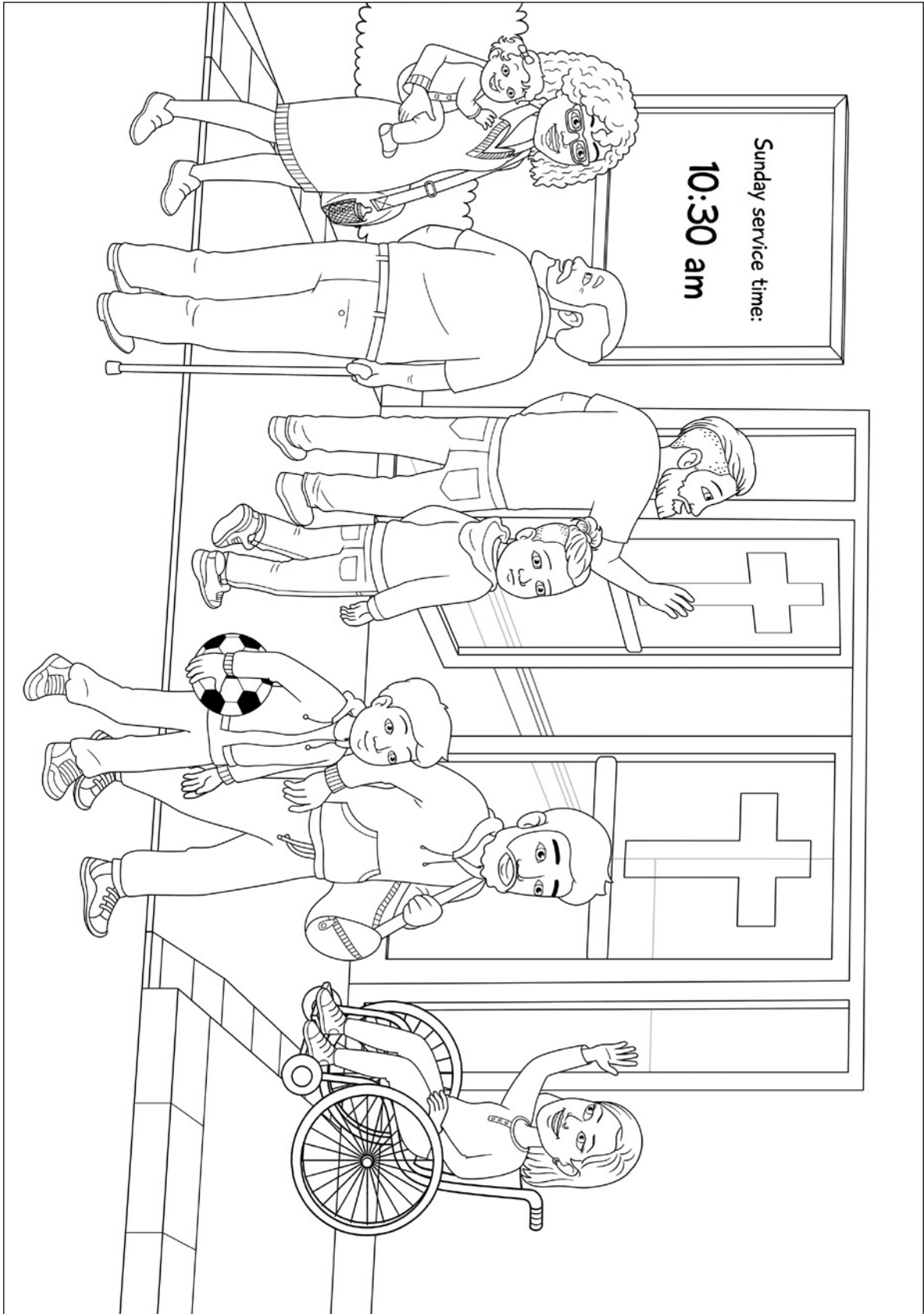
Philippians 2:15-16



**“Then you will  
shine among them  
like the stars in  
the sky as you  
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the word of life.”**

Philippians 2:15-16







# Heart & Hands Chat Time

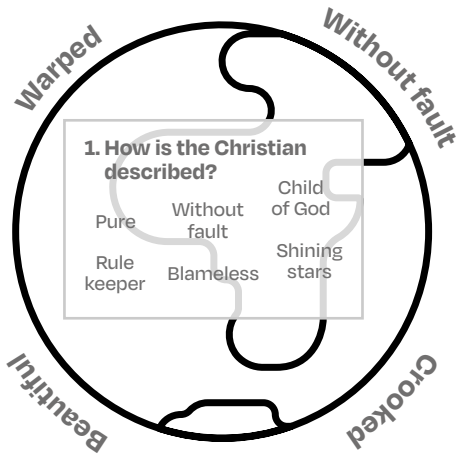


## Philippians 2: 14-16

Look at these verses together and find the answers



### Did you spot it?



2. How is the world around us described? (using Phil 2:14-16)



### Work it out

Give everyone a chance to answer

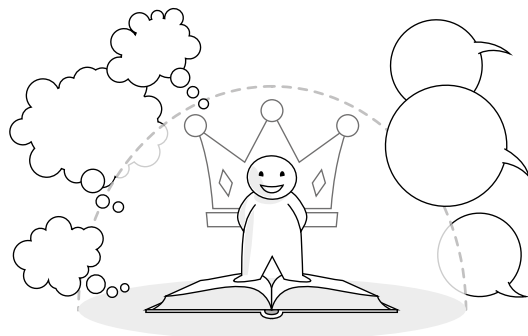
What would you like your future to look like?



What help will you need to keep going as a Christian?

Will God be more influential in your life than your friends are?

Who could you ask to encourage you and help you know what God says?





# Heart & Hands Chat Time



Live it out

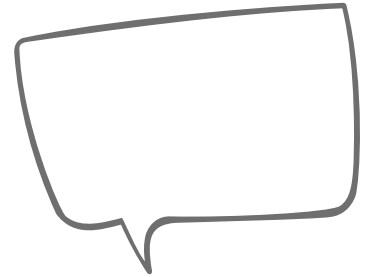


This girl hears messages at school, at home and at church about relationships, what differences might she hear or notice?



Who could she talk to to help her work it out?

What do you think God would say to her?



How is his life different as a Christian?  
What might others notice?



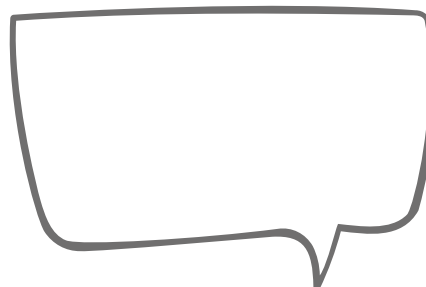
What might be hard about being different?

What have you heard today that would encourage you that living as a Christian is WORTH IT?



Thank God for the way he describes you.

Ask God to help you shine brightly in the darkness of the world and hold onto the truth.





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# GROWING

God's  
Good  
Story

Take  
home  
truth

LESSON 6

We live what we believe

Philippians 2:14-16

faith **in** kids



## Read and understand

### We live what we believe

PHILIPPIANS 2:14-16

**TRUTH** = We live differently because we know that we are children of God.

**FAITH** = Children living differently with God as the biggest influence on their thoughts and actions.

*"Do everything without grumbling or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure," children of God, without fault in a warped and crooked generation". Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky as you hold firmly to the word of life." PHILIPPIANS 2:14-16*



## Talk together

### 7 and Under

- Who does God say we are?
- God says that when people live without listening to him and trusting him, they are living in darkness. How easy is it to do things well in the dark?
- What are we like when we live trusting God?



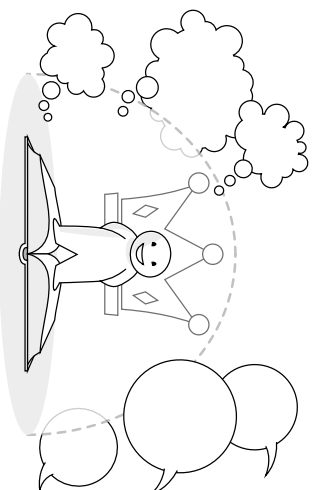
### 8 and Over

- The boy is wondering why he has to go to church when so many of his friends don't. How is his life different as a Christian?
- What might be hard about being different?
- What have you heard from God in Philipians that encourages you that it is worth standing out?

What would you like your future to look like? Will God be more influential in your life than your friends are?

## God's better story

- We are children of God - this is our unchanging identity.
- We live in darkness - the world is warped from God's good creation. We pick up crooked messages.
- If we hold firmly to God's word and live out the truth it tells us, we will shine like stars in the darkness.



## Live it out

Talk to your child about messages they hear, from:

- TV, social media, music lyrics
- Teachers at school and after school activities
- Friends and family members

What would it look like to listen to God in his world most of all? Try to think about topics in Growing Up; marriage, feelings, bodies. Get practical!

*NB: Some other messages say what God says and can stick. Others should be dropped.*

## Connect to the truth

- We are God's children.
- God tells us how to live in the Bible.
- We shine like stars as we live trusting God.

## Pray

Use objects to help you connect with God.

- BIBLE - Thank God for his words of truth in the Bible. Ask God to help you to listen to him more than anything else, all of your life.
- STARS - Look at the stars shining in the night sky. Ask God to help you to shine for him.

Let's be people who hold tightly to God's true word and shine like stars in the darkness.



We've got more on this topic on our podcasts. Listen in and carry on the conversation.



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