

HELLO PARENTS

It has been a great start to the year in student ministries. We finished our first message series called *Basic Training*, where we discussed the basics of Christianity and why it is important for Christians to have a solid grasp on these essentials of our faith. The following is a short synopsis of what we unpacked during this awesome series.

Week One - Bible

Daily reading and studying God's word is extremely important. The Bible is the way that the Creator of everything has chosen to reveal Himself to us. It helps us to understand why things happen the way that they do in our world and reveals to us where we came from and where we are going. It explains why there is evil in our world and how to stand against it. It gives us direction and hope and brings peace in the middle of chaos. The Bible is a God's heart-driven, deeply personal, experiential encounter with God. We go to the Bible to engage with God, to meet God – it is one of the ways that we hear from God. Hebrews 4:12 says, "For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart." Our conclusion: It has supernatural power, and it really is God's words.

Week 2 - Communion & Baptism

Baptism is the next step of obedience in our faith journey after trusting Jesus as our Savior. It does not save us, but rather it is a public and outward exclamation of the inward work that Jesus has done and is doing in our heart.

Communion gives us an opportunity to reflect on what Christ did for us by taking the wrath and punishment that we deserve for our sin upon Himself. Our hearts and minds need to be in the right place during communion. Jesus said, "Do this in remembrance of me." It is all about the work that He did on the cross.

Week 3 - Worship and Fasting

There are two types of worship. One is with music—praising and worshipping God with our voice. This type of worship can be done at church, in the car, at home, etc. The other type is the worship of God that we do with our lives. We worship God with how we treat other people, how we speak, or what we put into our hearts through our eyes and ears.

God created us to worship. That's why some people worship things like money, statues, animals, the sun, other people, etc. God instructs us to worship Him—the only One who is worthy of honor and glory.

To *fast* is to give something up that is important to us for a period of time to focus on our relationship with God. We can fast from many things— food, technology, or a form of recreation for example. By taking our eyes off that certain thing that we are fasting from, we turn our attention to praying about important decisions or another person or healing. Fasting is not a way to earn God's favor by getting him to do something for us. Fasting changes us, not God.

Week 4 - Salvation

The last and most important topic that we discussed was salvation. During the night we dug into what the Bible has to say about this word. These are the vital questions that we answered and unpacked. What does it mean to be saved? What are we saved from? What is sin? How does salvation take place? Here's what we learned.

- Everyone has sinned and falls short of God's standards.
- The payment for our sin is death, but...
- The free gift of God is eternal life through faith in Jesus.
- If we believe in our heart that Jesus is who He said He is and did what He said He did, and if we confess with our mouth that Jesus is Lord we are saved.
- We are saved from God's wrath on sin.
- Through the power of the Holy Spirit we begin to turn our lives over to God.

FALL RETREAT: OVER THE TOP

The Fall Retreat will be held Friday, Oct. 25-27 and is open to both middle and high school students. It is going to be a great weekend for students to connect with God, grow in their faith, and build relationships with friends. We will serve together, go to Bowlero for bowling, laser tag and pizza, visit an Escape Room, enjoy a bonfire, and much more! But, most importantly, we will learn more about the over-the-top God we serve! Bring a friend and they will get \$10 off the registration price. Click [here](#) for more information and to register. Don't miss this awesome weekend.

PARENT RESOURCE: EVERY PARENT'S GUIDE TO NAVIGATING OUR DIGITAL WORLD

The goal is to have great relationships with our kids. And, in today's world, digital media will be involved somehow. Rather than it being a divider, it can be a common ground where families connect. This book will provide you with ideas on how to create healthy media routines, assist you in determining what is a constructive and healthy approach to digital safety, how to instill social media "etiquette" in your children, and how you can empower your teens to make good decisions and set their own boundaries as they mature.

