



## LEADER GUIDE

**Unit 9:** Sync  
**Lesson 1:** Awareness

# OVERVIEW

## UNIT OVERVIEW

### Lesson 1: Awareness

**DISCIPLINE:** Being aware of God's presence

**KEY VERSES:** Psalm 23; Psalm 139:7-10; Genesis 28:16

### Lesson 3: Journaling

**DISCIPLINE:** Journaling

**KEY VERSES:** 1 Corinthians 14:33; Psalm 19:1-4; Jer. 33:3

### Lesson 2: Unhindered

**DISCIPLINE:** Confession

**KEY VERSES:** Luke 17:31-33; Genesis 3:8-13; Isaiah 59:2

### Lesson 4: Communion

**DISCIPLINE:** Taking Communion

**KEY VERSES:** 1 Corinthians 11:23-28; John 3:16

## LESSON 1 OVERVIEW

**Communing with God is possible right now.**

Preteens are getting to an age where they can enjoy just “hanging out” with friends. The idea of enjoying someone’s presence is something that they are starting to be able to conceptualize. In much the same way, they are also developing the ability to foster a deeper personal relationship with God.

In this series, preteens will be introduced to the idea of communing with God himself. We’ll define communing with God as being aware of his presence and enjoying his presence.

This lesson focuses on awareness. What is God’s presence like? What is distracting preteens from it? The lesson ends with a workshop time, when preteens will have a chance to practice seeking the presence of God for themselves through a Scripture reading experience.

## LESSON 1 LEADER DEVO

**Read:** Joshua 1:9

**Most often we read this passage and focus on being strong and courageous.**

But notice what we overlook: the source of our strength and courage - and everything else - is God’s presence with us. .

Sit down. Pull up an empty chair next to yours. Invite the God of the Universe to sit next to you. Talk to him about whatever is on your heart. Look into his eyes if you dare. Look for other ways to practice noticing God’s presence today and the rest of this week.

Spend some time communing with God today. It will equip you to lead preteens in a lesson about communing with God. **But more than that, it will bless you in ways that only time spent with your Abba Father can.**



# SCHEDULE

## Lesson 1: Awareness



### 01 WARM-UP

10 min

*Preteens will play an Opening Game and get a brief overview of today's lesson topic.*

**Today's Opening Game:** Sync with Me



### 02 M.A.P.

10 min

*Preteens will read through a passage of Scripture on their own. They'll consider what stands out to them from the passage and why it stands out to them. They'll also be given time to talk with God about the passage.*

**Today's Passage:** Psalm 23



### 03 DISCOVER

20 min

*Preteens will learn about spiritual disciplines that will help them draw closer to God. They'll discover the Biblical basis for these disciplines, the purpose and benefit of these disciplines, and the reasons why Christians have practiced these discipline throughout history.*

**Today's Discovery:** What does it mean to commune with God?



### 04 QUEST

10 min

*Preteens will move into action as they practice different ways that they can grow in their own personal relationship with Jesus.*

**Today's Quest:** Being aware of God's presence



All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Reader's Version®, NIV® Copyright © 1995, 1996, 1998, 2014 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Biblica. All rights reserved worldwide. The "NIV" and "New International Reader's Version" are trademarks registered in the United States Patent and Trademark Office by Biblica, Inc.™

Notated Scripture quotations are from the The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®, ESV®, copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.



**NOTE:** Highlighted words indicate supplies to prepare. These are also listed in the ADMIN GUIDE.

[Slide 01 Sync]

[VIDEO 01 Sync with Me]

[Slide 02 Sync with Me]

[AUDIO 01 Opening Game]

Play the video to learn how to play the game. Then call forward two friends to play the game. Give them 4 tries to sync up. After they've tried, have another preten and his/her friend come forward. Play as time allows. You could have two leaders try it as well.

Optionally, award prizes.

[Slide 03 Sync]

Today we start a new series called "Sync." What does it mean when something is synced? Any ideas? *(Take responses.)*

Around us, right this very minute, there are all sorts of radio signals, television signals, and other waves of energy. There are also signals coming from a nearby cell phone tower.

My phone (*hold up phone*) can connect with these signals when I'm synced up to them. I can send and receive messages to the nearby cell phone tower.

I can't send or receive a message to the nearby cell phone tower with my pinky. *(Hold up pinky.)* My pinky isn't synced up, and it doesn't have the ability to sync up to the nearby cell phone tower. But my phone does.

If your parents have Bluetooth in the car, and it isn't working, you can't connect your phone to the car. They can't sync up.

Who can think of another example of something syncing up or not being able to sync up? *(Allow for responses.)*







You might be wondering what all this talk about being synced has anything to do with God. Well, I'll tell you! During this series, we're going to focus on becoming "synced" with God. As Christians, we can sync up with God. Each one of you has been created with this amazing ability to receive and send messages and be in a synced up relationship with God.

We're going to work on our relationship with Abba. Remember, Abba is a name we're invited to call God, and it means something like "Daddy" or "Papa." This month is going to be all about having a deep, personal connection with our Heavenly Father.

There's another way of saying this idea. It's "communing with God."

#### [Slide 04 Sync Communing]

Today, we're going to look at two things that are required for us to commune with our Heavenly Father. Before we talk about that, we're going to spend a little time on our own in God's word.

This part of our service is called M.A.P. time. Let's get started.





**HERE'S AN IDEA:** At this point, your regular attending preteens are very familiar with the M.A.P. time steps. You could have preteens make their own M.A.P. videos to use in place of the ones provided by the curriculum.

**[Slide 05 MAP]**

M.A.P. time gives us a chance each week to look closely at God's Word for yourself to see what you can discover about communing with God before I teach you anything.

It's important for you to know that I'm not making stuff up about God and how he wants to connect with you. That's why we look in the Bible each week and get ALL our ideas from there. These aren't my ideas. These are God's ideas. That makes them 1,000,000 times better!

With the Bible, we can see how people throughout history have synced with God, and we can see how to connect with God for ourselves.

As a reminder, if you do have a Bible, we want to encourage you to bring it each week to our StepUp class. That way, when we do M.A.P. time, you can write things in your own Bibles, and you'll have it to look back on for years to come.

Let's check out the three steps of M.A.P. with this week's video.

**[VIDEO 02 MAP 1]**

**[Slide 06 MAP Psalm 23]**

**[AUDIO 02 MAP Time]**

(After the video/instructions, hand out **MAP Cards** to preteens who didn't bring a Bible. Also, give each preteen a **pen/pencil** (if they don't already have one from the "Spot the Difference" game) and a **highlighter**.

Give preteens time to complete M.A.P. as explained in the video. When it looks like most preteens are done, you can have preteens describe what they highlighted and wrote in their Bibles – or on the M.A.P. Cards – either in Small Groups or with the whole group.)



**[Slide 07 Sync Communing]**

From reading Psalm 23, we can see that David had a pretty close relationship with his Heavenly Father. In the Psalm, David talked about walking with God and eating a meal that God prepared for him. That kind of close relationship is precisely what I mean when I talk to you about being synced up with God.

Let's think about what it would be like for a moment to be that close with God. (*Preselected leader enters the room in a white robe. Walk through the room in sync with and next to the preselected leader*) What would it be like to walk along and know that God is walking right along with you? What do you think that would be like? (*Take responses as you continue to walk in sync with the leader. After two or three answers, the preselected leader should walk out of the teaching area.*)

**[Slide 08 Presence]**

In the Bible, we can find out what it's like to commune with God by reading about people like David who were close to God. In fact, we're going to go on a little hunt right now through the Bible to find out exactly what it's like.

Around the room, you see Scriptures hung up on the wall. Your Small Group leaders are also standing around the room with clipboards, papers, and pens. Your job is to try to be the group that finds the most examples of what it's like to be in God's presence.

**Leader Tip:** Make sure every preteen is on a Small Group team for this game and knows who their leader is.

From reading Psalm 23, you might say – and Small Group Leaders, you can write this one down – that God's presence is like walking with God through a dark valley and feeling unafraid.

I've posted different Scriptures around the room, and from these, let's see what it's like to be aware that you are in God's presence. We're going to put on some music and give you a few minutes to stand up and go read these scriptures for yourselves. As you find answers to the question, "What's it like to be in God's presence," report to your Small Group Leaders what you're discovering.

We'll set a timer for 5 minutes. Get up and get ready.

**[VIDEO 03 5-minute timer]****[Slide 09 Presence]**



*(After time has expired, have everybody sit down. Ask which leader has the most responses.)* It's amazing. Sometimes, God's presence is like a meal. Another time, God's presence is felt in a walk through a dark valley. Then it's felt in thunder and lighting. It's seeing a burning bush. Another time it's heard in a still, small voice.

As you continue to read the Bible, you'll see more and more ways that God shows up. When people experience God's presence, it's not in one single way. It's hundreds and thousands of ways. We can experience God's presence in SOOO many different ways.

#### [Slide 10 SOOOO Many]

Why do you think that is? Why do people experience God in so many different ways? *(Take responses. Allow for some thinking here.)* Great answers.

One word that describes God is "omnipresent." That means that God is everywhere.

#### [Slide 11 Everywhere]

Think about that for a moment. God is so big; he can be in millions of places all at once. He is, right at this moment, in the White House. God is, right at this moment, in a tiny shack in the middle of China. God is, right at this moment, on the farthest star. He is also, right in this moment, in this room with us.

Listen to what David wrote.

#### [Slide 12-13 Psalm 139:7-10]

Earlier we asked this question about God's presence: What's it like to be in God's presence?

#### [Slide 14 Presence]

There were so many answers. Being in God's presence is like a walk in a dark valley. Being in God's presence is like laying down in a green pasture. Being in God's presence is like thunder and lightning. But being in God's presence is also like... *(say this next part slowly and deliberately.)* This. Moment. Right. Here.

*(Pause for a moment before continuing in order let it sink in.)* When we talk about communing with God, here's what we mean:

#### [Slide 15 Communing Definition]

Being aware of God's presence and enjoying God's presence.





The moments when we see people really syncing with God in the Bible are not just moments when God was with them. He was always with them. It's the moments when they were aware of God's presence and enjoying God's presence.

Let me give you a little illustration to help you understand. *(Optionally, you could have preteens or leaders act this out as you speak it.)*

Imagine you go to the movies. You have your popcorn in one hand and a gigantic soda in the other. You walk into the theater and the previews have already started, so you find your seat and are totally focused on the previews. Actually, you're focused on the previews AND your popcorn AND your gigantic soda.

You're so focused on these things that you don't notice your very best friend is also in the theater. He or she is in the same theater with you and you don't even know it. He or she is even yelling at you to get your attention, "HEY...I'm right here," but you're so focused on everything else that you don't know your best friend is there with you.

Are you aware of your friend's presence? (NO.) Are you enjoying being with your friend? (NO.) No, you don't know your best friend is there.

That's what so many moments of our life are like when it comes to God. Our Abba Father is here with us. The Creator of the Universe who loves you with a way bigger love than anybody else in here right now. The King of Kings is here right now.

Our Heavenly Father is here, but we don't even realize it. Like the friend in the movie theater, we don't enjoy being in God's presence. God might even be calling out to you "HEY...I'm right here," but we are too distracted to notice him, and we're too distracted to enjoy him.

A story will help us to understand this idea even better. It's time for Lip-Sync Story Telling.

#### [VIDEO 04 Lip-Sync Story Telling Intro]

#### [Slide 16 Lip-Sync Story Telling]

A few of us are going to act out a story from the Bible. This is going to be a little different, because the story is going to be told on a recording and we're going to lip sync to it. I'm going to be the narrator. [Helper 1] is going to be Jacob. [Helper 2] is going to be the voice of God. *(Have Helper 1 and 2 come to the teaching area and put on their costumes as you finish setting up the story.)*





This story is from Genesis 28. Jacob had just fooled his father and basically stolen a gift from his brother. He'd done some tricky things. He was walking along on his way to a place called Haran. Here's what happened:

[AUDIO 03 You Are Here]

[Slide 17 Genesis 28:16]

Amazing. Thank you. How about a hand for our helpers up here? If you'd like to be part of the lip-sync stories that we'll be telling over the next few weeks like [helpers] were today, there will be a sign-up sheet after service. I'll email your parents the songs for you to practice if you sign up, and then we'll lip-sync it right here over the next few weeks.

Like we heard in that story, Jacob woke up from his dream and said, "Surely God is in this place, and I didn't even know it."

After that, he was afraid as he realized that God was right there with him. (*Kneel down next to the rock and take out your vial of oil.*) He set up the stone as a sacred stone and poured olive oil on top of it (*pour oil over the stone*). He named the place Bethel.

I want you to think of a place where you'll be later this week. Maybe it's your classroom or the playground. Maybe it's your house or your parent's car. Think of a place where you don't usually think about God being. (*Pause for a moment.*) Everybody have a place in mind?

Here's what I want you to know today. God is there. He's there right now. And he'll be there when you get there later this week. That means you can SYNC with God when you get there. You can commune with him there if you're aware of his presence and if you enjoy his presence.

What Jacob found out, what David found out, and what everybody who's ever communed with God finds out is this: communing with God is way better than anything else that might be distracting me from communing with God.

Knowing God is with you and enjoying his presence: that's the greatest thing you can ever experience. It's what Heaven is all about, and you can experience it right now.

Think about that place where you'll be this week again (*pause*) and read what's on the screen with me.  
1...2...3... "Surely God is in this place. And I didn't even know it."



**[Slide 18 Quest | Being Aware of God's Presence]**

During each week of this series, we're going to do some experimenting with different ways of communing with God.

Today, we're going to be guided by Scripture as we SYNC with God. You can do something like this at home by just opening up the Bible for yourself and allowing God's Word to move you into a time of communing with him.

Today, we have a recording of Scriptures which will be guiding us in our Sync time.

Find a place in this room where you are not likely to be distracted by anybody or anything. If you brought popcorn or a gigantic soda to [ministry name] today, set that aside for now.

If you'll listen to the audio track I'm about to play and keep focused on God's presence in this place, you'll be able to have an amazing time of syncing with God. If you want a **pen** and a **piece of paper** to write down things you think about during this time, you can get those from [name of location].

Let's get ready to put distractions aside and focus our attention on God. Let's get ready to SYNC.

**[AUDIO 04 Syncing Scriptures]**

*(After the audio, continue.)* During this time, you heard truths about God and promises from God. What are some of the truths or promises that you heard that really helped you to focus on God? *(Look for hands, but don't take responses.)*

Instead of telling me, write it down with a pen(cil) on a **small piece of paper** that your leaders are going to hand you. Then after everybody has had a moment to do that, we'll dismiss you to Small Groups to share what you wrote and to talk about what this time of syncing with God was like. *(After preteens have had a chance to write on their cards, dismiss them to Small Groups.)*





## ADMIN GUIDE

**Unit 9:** Sync  
**Lesson 1:** Awareness



# SUPPLIES

## Lesson 1: Awareness



### 01 WARM-UP

10 min

- *Optional: Prizes for the winning preteen partners*
- Cell phone



### 02 M.A.P.

10 min

- Highlighters for each preteen
- Pens for each preteen
- **MAP Card** for each preteen (*copy on cardstock*)



### 03 DISCOVER

20 min

- Bible
- White robe (*and a preselected leader to wear it during part 1 of the lesson*)
- **God's Presence Scriptures**, *posted around your ministry space*
- For each leader:
  - Clipboard
  - Paper, *placed on the clipboard*
  - Pen
- *Optionally: Have pre-selected volunteers rehearse the Movie Theater Illustration*
- Select two preteens or leaders to join you in learning the "You Are Here" song. Practice ahead of time to lip-sync during the service. Consider adding choreography and props for a memorable experience. The lyrics for rehearsal are in a Word document in the Sync folder and can be emailed to the participants. If this is too much for your group, simply read the story from Genesis 28:10-18.
- **Lip-Sync Story Telling Sign-Up Sheet**
- Large rock, *or representation of a rock (i.e. a drawing, paper-mache, etc.)*
- Vial of anointing oil, *placed behind the rock*



### 04 QUEST

10 min

- Regular size pieces of paper (8.5" x 11"), *for each preteen and leader*
- Small pieces of paper (about 3" x 5"), *for each preteen and leader*
- Pens

**NOTE:** Within the leader guide, supplies are **highlighted** so you can understand how they'll be used and prepare accordingly.

**NOTE:** Supplies on this page that are written in a **bold font** can be found in the *Printables* Section.



All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Reader's Version®, Nlrv® Copyright © 1995, 1996, 1998, 2014 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Biblica. All rights reserved worldwide. The "Nlrv" and "New International Reader's Version" are trademarks registered in the United States Patent and Trademark Office by Biblica, Inc.™

Notated Scripture quotations are from the The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®, ESV®, copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

## Lesson 1: Awareness

[illegible]

Then the angel of the Lord appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn. When Moses thought, "I will go over and see this strange sight—why the bush does not burn up,"

And the Lord said to him, "Do not come near; you are standing on holy ground."

"Then he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." He hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.

**Exodus 3:1-6**

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house. They were all terrified and amazed. Tongues of fire appeared to them, resting on the head of each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

**Acts 2:1-4**

The Lord said, "Go out and stand on the mountains in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by."

Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and scattered the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire.

And after the fire came a gentle whirling; when Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave. Then a voice said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

1 Kings 19:11-13

But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.

Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord."

This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

Luke 2:10-12

On the morning of the third day there was thunder and lightning, with a thick cloud over the mountain, and a very loud trumpet blast. Everyone in the camp trembled.

Then Moses led the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain.

Moses' face shone with glory, because the Lord commanded all his laws. The Israelites looked up from their tents toward the furnace, and the whole community of Israel bowed down before him.

As the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke and the voices of Israel answered him.

**Ezekiel 9:7-10**

As I [Yahweh] seated Shadrach on my throne, suddenly a light form appeared before me.

He said to the guards and held a voice say to them, "Gai, Gai, why do you stand here now?"

"We sit for you, Lord," Gai asked,

"Turn right, where you are perceiving!" he replied.

**Acts 9:7-10**

[illegible]

**1 Highlight what stands out for Me.**

## Psalm 23

**2 How does what I highlighted Affect me?**

The Lord is my shepherd. He gives me everything I need. He lets me lie down in fields of green grass. He leads me beside quiet waters. He gives me new strength. He guides me in the right paths for the honor of his name. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid. You are with me. Your shepherd's rod and staff comfort me. You prepare a feast for me right in front of my enemies. You pour oil on my head. My cup runs over. I am sure that your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life. And I will live in the house of the Lord forever.

**M.A.P.**

**3 Pray about what you highlighted.**

SYNC > Lesson 1 > Awareness > PSALM 23 CARD

**1 Highlight what stands out for Me.**

## Psalm 23

**2 How does what I highlighted Affect me?**

The Lord is my shepherd. He gives me everything I need. He lets me lie down in fields of green grass. He leads me beside quiet waters. He gives me new strength. He guides me in the right paths for the honor of his name. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid. You are with me. Your shepherd's rod and staff comfort me. You prepare a feast for me right in front of my enemies. You pour oil on my head. My cup runs over. I am sure that your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life. And I will live in the house of the Lord forever.

**M.A.P.**

**3 Pray about what you highlighted.**

SYNC > Lesson 1 > Awareness > PSALM 23 CARD

There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up. So Moses thought, "I will go over and see this strange sight—why the bush does not burn up."

When the Lord saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, "Moses! Moses!"

And Moses said, "Here I am."

"Do not come any closer," God said. "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground." Then he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.

### **Exodus 3:2-6**

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting.

They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them.

All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

### **Acts 2:1-4**

The Lord said, "Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by."

Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire.

And after the fire came a gentle whisper. When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave. Then a voice said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

### **1 Kings 19:11-13**

But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.

Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.

This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

### **Luke 2:10-12**

On the morning of the third day there was thunder and lightning, with a thick cloud over the mountain, and a very loud trumpet blast. Everyone in the camp trembled.

Then Moses led the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain.

Mount Sinai was covered with smoke, because the Lord descended on it in fire. The smoke billowed up from it like smoke from a furnace, and the whole mountain[b] trembled violently.

As the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke and the voice of God answered him.

### **Exodus 19:16-19**

As [Paul] neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him.

He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?"

"Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked.

"I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied.

### **Acts 9:1-19**

[illegible]