



un(REAL)ity

What is unseen is eternal

*We fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen.
For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.
(2Corinthians 4:18)*

Generations Ministries
2009 camp teaching curriculum
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edited by Ted Johnston, GenMin director

Introduction

This **un(REAL)ity** standard teaching curriculum for 2009 GenMin camps uses the movie “Chronicles of Narnia: the Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe” to fire the imaginations of campers concerning the often unseen *reality* of their true identity: in Jesus, through the Spirit, they are God’s dearly loved children.

This message of *inclusion* is conveyed in the writing of C.S. Lewis, who presents a *trinitarian vision* of the gospel that is faithful to Jesus and to Holy Scripture. This is the vision embraced by the WCG (for more about our trinitarian theology go to <http://www.wcg.org/lit/booklets/theology.htm>).

The curriculum seeks to help campers see clearly and be embraced deeply by the stunning *reality* that is often overshadowed by *unrealities* in a world deceived by the enemy of our souls. That reality is revealed in the gospel, which proclaims that because of who Jesus is; and what he has done for us, to us and with us; our Heavenly Father loves us, wants us and accepts us as his dear children. **This is our true identity—our true reality.**

But the light of this eternal reality is often obscured by the darkness of a very “unreal” (false) world that seems so real—so tangible. But seen or not, our true identity is that we are God’s dearly loved children, and God invites us all into a deep and lasting fellowship (communion) with him on that basis. Doing so brings joy, purpose and fulfillment.

***This reality becomes our daily experience as, in faith, we journey with Jesus, in the Spirit,
embraced and sustained by our Heavenly Father’s love and life.***

Through this curriculum, we invite our campers—children of God all—to *understand*, and thus more fully *experience* and *embrace* the truth of this year’s **theme scripture** (2 Corinthians 4:18):

***We fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen.
For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.***

The curriculum unpacks this message through six chapel messages, each establishing a daily theme that may be complemented with daily camp activities (providing “teachable moments” that reinforce the theme message). The curriculum also suggests ideas for Christian living classes where campers are assisted in seeing dealing with daily unrealities that rob them of the enjoyment of their true identity/reality as a dearly loved children of God.

Because it’s often hard to “see” (believe) reality when unreality so dominates one’s vision, we join C.S. Lewis in penetrating the fog of unreality by telling (through the movie) a compelling story about ultimate reality. Each chapel message begins by showing a scene from the movie (each about 20 minutes in length). Since the movie is quite long, there will not be time show it all. Note also that because Disney only releases and re-releases their movies at certain times, you may need to look around to rent or purchase a DVD/VHS copy (the scenes to be played have been timed according to the DVD version). Amazon.com typically has the movie for sale.

One final note of introduction to those who will present the chapel messages: Although there are many powerful parallels that may be drawn from the Narnia movie, the intention of this curriculum is to lay a groundwork that each presenter can use to follow the Spirit in expressing their personal testimony and passion concerning the gospel of grace. The movie provides a powerful visual expression of this compelling message of true reality.

Please share this curriculum with chapel presenters, teachers, counselors and activity leaders. You might also share the WCG video about C.S. Lewis at www.wcg.org/av/lib/PlayVideo.asp?program=MiscVid/CSLewis&title=C.+S.+Lewis.

Chapel 1: A SEARCH FOR SHELTER

Main point: YOU HAVE A PLACE AND SOMEONE TO TURN TO FOR LOVE AND PROTECTION

Welcome and Introduction...

- What's it like to be in a strange place?
 - How many of you have been to camp before?
 - How did you feel on your first day? Did you think you'd make friends?
 - How do you feel now...coming back to an environment you know?

At what times and places do you feel most abandoned, threatened or insecure?

Pose the following or similar leading questions:

- What fears do you feel in such situations?
 - Not knowing the people you're with
 - Not knowing what's expected of you – procedures and schedules
 - Strange surroundings – wildlife, outdoors, dark forest
 - Worrying over whether or not you'll make friends

No matter what...***you're never alone***. This entire camp exists...all of these staff members volunteer their time to come here so they can tell you ***how much God loves you, wants you and accepts you—he has made you his child and wants you to know that so you can enjoy his love in a relationship with him.***

You can always turn to God. Some of you know what I'm talking about...perhaps some of you think I'm crazy. I encourage you to be open to Him this week...

Psalm 18: 2 (NLT)

The Lord is my rock, my fortress, and my savior my God is my rock, in whom I find protection. He is my shield, the power that saves me, and my place of safety.

Explain on the comparison of God to a rock. In bible times...a rocky area offered a prime position for battle...many safe places to hide and find shelter. Do we look to God as our rock—as a place of safe shelter?

Matthew 7:25-26 (NLT)

The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand.

Object Lesson:

Set the stage for the video by explaining that we are about to watch four children: Lucy, Susan, Edmond and Peter – all facing similar feelings, situations and strange surroundings to the ones we just discussed. Set the scene by describing the family of two brothers and two sisters who have to leave home to go to an unfamiliar place with strange people and surroundings. Point out that the brothers and sisters are a lot like the people at camp: going to a new place and meeting new people.

Ask campers to watch for worries and fears the four children face and imagine how they would feel if they found themselves in their place. Point out that after the movie we'll get in groups to discuss the situations and fears the children faced.

Video Clip: 24:42 minutes (0:00 – 24:42)

The opening scenes of the movie set the stage for a discussion about the dangers faced by the children in the war and having to leave home for safety. Campers should readily identify with the situation of going away to a faraway place with a bunch of people they don't know.

After the video, conclude by sharing that just as was read earlier in scripture, our God is for us a safe place—in his Son Jesus, we have a person who is always with us—who always loves us no matter what—a person to whom we may always turn for friendship and for protection. We'll discuss these truths more as we journey through the week.

Close chapel and move to small groups with a song that conveys how Jesus is the place of safety, the refuge, the rock, to whom we may always turn.

Small Group Debrief Questions:

Thinking about what we watched and what we talked about earlier, we want to learn from one another how we can best face similar times and feelings. Following are suggested discussion starters:

- What's a time that you felt frightened, scared or alone?
- What do we tend to do when afraid?
- What do you do to overcome your fears?
- Where do you turn for help at those times?
- Do you ever ask God for help? Why or why not?
- Close with the story of Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane (Matt 26:36-39...even with His great strength and purpose...Jesus still turns to His Father for help when He's alone.

Chapel 2: WHAT SHOULD YOU BELIEVE?

Main point: THERE IS MORE TO BELIEVE IN THAN THE “UNREAL” WORLD THAT WE SEE

Video Clip: 22:08 minutes (24:42 – 46:50)

Lucy introduces her sister and brothers to Narnia with varying degrees of success. Edmond claims not to believe in the land even after he has visited Narnia and knows it exists.

Discussion: Have you ever had a hard time getting someone to believe you? What was it like for Lucy to know that Narnia was real...but not have anyone believe her? I want to tell you a story about two kids in the Bible who faced a similar dilemma.

Tell the story of Joseph and Mary...Mary, a teen...in love...planning to get married. She gets pregnant and Joseph is struggling to believe that she has been faithful. Mary is full of confidence because an angel told her that she would be the Mother of Jesus...the same Jesus we've been telling you about...and Joseph struggled to believe her until an angel came to him. God honored their belief...and the world was changed forever by the birth of Jesus. Jesus came from His real reality (w/God) to our world, become full of so much unreality because of sin (reference: John 1:1-14).

1 Cor. 2:9 (NLT) That is what the Bible means when it says, “No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined what God has prepared for those who love him.”

Lucy was telling the truth...Narnia was real and the “reality” that the Pevensie children knew was not the only reality.

We also live in “unreality.” Our world can seem so real...yet it doesn't feel like home...people all around us...but an existence of loneliness and insecurity. The Bible tells us that we are to

“Fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

2 Cor. 4:17-18 (NLT) For our present troubles are small and won't last very long. Yet they produce for us a glory that vastly outweighs them and will last forever! So we don't look at the troubles we can see now; rather, we fix our gaze on things that cannot be seen. For the things we see now will soon be gone, but the things we cannot see will last forever.

So why should you believe I what you can't see? Why did Joseph and Mary believe? They had an angel...you have us...God has called each of you to this place...this week...to show you how much He loves you. We can tell you about this unseen world and life we've experienced with Jesus – but you won't believe until you experience the adventure for yourself. You will experience some struggles this week (not unlike the wardrobe) – but our goal is to help you get to the point that you start to see the unseen – the reality that will blow your mind. We're not asking you to believe us – but to believe in the God whose love you will experience here for yourself. Not *our* love – God's love, sometimes coming through us. That's reality—a reality many do not see. How about you?

Dismiss the campers to their small groups.

Small Group Debrief Questions:

1. Why do you think it was hard for Joseph to believe that Mary would have a child?
2. What's an example of something that seems solid or permanent, but isn't as 'real' as it seems? (Starters: balloon, a movie set, meringue or whipped cream, Twinkies).
3. Do you believe in things you can't see, touch or measure? What would be an example? (Starters: emotions/feelings, the wind, a vacuum, space, a black hole).
4. What 'evidence' is there for the existence of something we can't see?
5. The chapel today gave us the idea that there are some things we can't see that are more real than what we can see. Do you believe that? Why or why not?

Chapel 3: GOD IS PREPARING YOU TO BE A HERO

Main point: ALTHOUGH WE MAY FEEL LIKE WE ARE NOT WORTHY TO WALK WITH GOD...HE IS USING OUR CURRENT SITUATIONS TO PREPARE US TO DO GREAT THINGS.

Intro:

How many of you have heard of David and Goliath?

Who was David?

If you had to pick someone to slay a giant...would David be your first choice?

1 Samuel 16:7 (NIV) *But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."*

1 Samuel 17:34-37 (NIV) *But David said to Saul, "Your servant has been keeping his father's sheep. When a lion or a bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock, I went after it, struck it and rescued the sheep from its mouth. When it turned on me, I seized it by its hair, struck it and killed it. Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, because he has defied the armies of the living God. The Lord who delivered me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine."*

With that in mind...let's catch up with the kids in Narnia see how they respond to being given a task that feels impossible.

Video Clip: 27:41 minutes (46:50 – 1:14:31)

The Beavers and other Narnia creatures welcome Lucy, Susan, Edmond and Peter to Narnia with the expectation that they will destroy the Witch and restore the Kingdom for Aslan's return.

Object Lesson:

Lucy, Susan, Edmond and Peter see themselves as just normal kids. The Narnia creatures, however, believe that the children are more than that and have the ability to defeat the witch and restore Narnia.

Lesson Biblical Story: Quickly summarize the story of David and Goliath – just like Lucy, Susan, Peter and Edmond, David was young and perhaps not physically equipped to combat Goliath. But David, who represents Jesus, despite appearances (unreality) is fully able to defeat all enemies. Trusting in him (true reality) we become fully able to defeat all enemies.

Message summary: Our young campers (and maybe some not so young staffers) may feel little and insignificant. But God's reality is greater than our fears. He is preparing our youth to be the next generation of his leaders (heroes). Many times, God calls people who, like David, would not be the "obvious choice" to be his heroes... Wouldn't you have picked someone big, strong and experienced in battle to fight Goliath? Yet God told Samuel "Do not consider his appearance or his height. The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." Wouldn't you assume someone other than young Lucy, Susan, Edmond and Peter would be better to take on the witch? God is calling us, no matter how young we are, no matter how insignificant we may seem—how short or weak, or how we may look, to be heroes by trusting in the true hero of all of our stories—Jesus. Even though we feel completely unable...Jesus is able. No Goliath is able to stand against him and thus against those who put their trust in him. God says we can do everything through Christ.

Philippians 4:13 (NLT) *For I can do everything through Christ who gives me strength.*

Small Group Debrief Questions:

1. What is a hero? What does that sort of person do?
2. What goes into making someone a hero? What kind of qualities does someone have to become a hero? (Try to get specific: courage, the willingness to sacrifice, endure hardship, etc)
3. Are there every day heroes that do difficult things as a matter of course? Who are they? Were the beavers heroes?
4. If you were to set out to prepare yourself for 'heroic' situations, what would you do? How could you prepare?
5. Are you willing to be a hero even if no one else notices or ever gives you credit?
6. How is it that Jesus is the ultimate hero for us all?

Chapel 4: WHO WILL YOU BELIEVE?

Main point: THERE ARE MULTIPLE VOICES IN YOUR LIFE...WHO WILL YOU LISTEN TO?

Review:

Yesterday we saw the children in Narnia struggling to believe their new identities. Can you relate to them? Let's catch up with the story and see how they respond.

Video Clip: 19:06 minutes (1:14:31 – 1:33:37)

The more time they spend in Narnia, the more Lucy, Susan, Peter and Edmond realize it will be up to them to watch out for one another, prepare themselves for battle, and choose who they will believe concerning who they are and what their purpose is.

Object Lesson:

What did the wolves tell Peter?

What lies does society feed us?

You're not...pretty enough, strong enough, thin enough, smart enough...

What are we telling you God says?

I have a plan for you...you were created perfectly...there is purpose to your life

Jeremiah 29:11 What's your purpose? Are you bored...God has things for you to do.

Tomorrow...we'll see exactly why we can trust God's voice over any other voices.

Small Group Debrief Questions:

1. Whose voices shape your opinion of yourself?
2. Where do these thoughts come from? (magazines, internet, MTV, TV shows?)
3. Are those realistic comparisons? Is that *reality*?
4. Do you have any of God's voice in your life? Where does his voice come from, to you?
5. Who do you believe...it's going to depend on who you spend time with...(plant seeds for bible, worship music, church connection)

Chapel 5: THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE

Main point: CHRIST MADE THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE FOR US

Intro: We've been talking about heroes...being willing to sacrifice yourself for others...let's watch the ultimate sacrifice as the story of Narnia continues to unfold:

Video Clip: 21:17 minutes (1:33:37 – 1:54:54)

As battle lines are drawn, just when it appears that all hope is lost, Aslan makes the ultimate personal sacrifice. The model he sets through his sacrifice prepares the four children to do battle and ultimately reign over Narnia.

Object Lesson:

When Aslan chose to die in Edmond's place he was not only sacrificing himself for Edmond, but for all of Narnia as well.

The last thing that the white witch said to Aslan was, "You know Aslan, I'm a little disappointed in you. Did you honestly think by all this you could save the human traitor? You are giving me your life and saving no one. So much for Love." After Aslan was resurrected he explained to the girls, "If the witch knew the true meaning of sacrifice she might have interpreted the deep magic differently. That when a willing victim, who has committed no treacheries, is killed in a traitor's stead, the stone table will crack and even death itself will turn backward."

The witch didn't understand the truth of the prophecy...just like so many people around us don't understand who God is and how much He loves us. For them, lies to the contrary are their reality. But we are invited to focus on God's ultimate, true reality.

Discuss the differences between the love and sacrifice of Aslan as compared to that of Jesus Christ:

John 3:16 (NIV) For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

God wants to give us more than what we have in the unreality that constitutes so many lives...

Altar call/baptism: This would be a great time to encourage campers who want to express their personal trust in Jesus as Savior to do so by raising their head or hand (with all heads bowed) or by coming forward for prayer, or other appropriate action. Those who respond can then be invited to a counseling session in which the issue of baptism can be addressed. See the GenMin Manual on camp protocol for onsite baptisms.

Small Group Debrief Questions:

1. What is a sacrifice? How does sacrifice happen?
2. Why did Aslan offer himself -- the obviously superior one over both the white witch and Edmond -- to clear Edmond's fault?
3. Who has given up something to make your life better? Why?
4. Is it hard to believe that Jesus really died for you?

Chapel 6: WHICH REALITY WILL WE CHOOSE?

MAIN POINT: NOW THAT WE'VE SEEN A GLIMPSE OF GOD'S REALITY, WHICH REALITY WILL WE CHOOSE?

Intro: Let's watch how the story ends

Video Clip: 16:35 minutes (1:54:54 – 2:11:29)

Aslan restores the Kingdom of Nania under the rule of Lucy, Susan, Edmond and Peter.

Object Lesson:

What ultimately became of Susan, Lucy, Peter and Edmond? They had faith in the prophecy...they trusted Aslan...and they were victorious over the witch.

What happens in our lives when we choose to believe and embrace the reality that God shows us—a reality different from the one we see all around us that God labels *unreality*?

Was this week at camp the same kind of environment/routine that you're used to at home?

Summary: At camp. We've seen a glimpse of the ultimate reality that God intends for us all as his children:

- Everyone encouraging
- Love expressed
- Strangers becoming close friends
- Smiling faces
- Growing leadership skills

We've had a chance to see God's reality at camp this week...

Now we're going back through the wardrobe...

What will we choose...to live in the awareness of God's reality...or go back to our "unreality"?

Which one is real? Which one feels real?

Decide who you'll listen to...magazines, Hollywood, movies...or...God, bible, church

Decide to stay in touch with campers/staff/Christian support

Decide to keep your eyes focused on what is unseen...

2 Corinthians 4:18 So we fix our **eyes not** on what is **seen**, but on what is unseen. For what is **seen** is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

Call for commitment

Since there is not time typically after the last chapel for a debrief, instead hand out at the close of the chapel message a business card on which you have printed on the front the lion/theme logo (see first page) and on the back the following questions (leaving room for campers to write short answers):

- Given what you've learned this week, what has changed in your thinking about yourself and your life?
- What is one decision you want to take home from camp that will make a difference in your life back home?
- Has God made himself more clear to you this week?

Then encourage the campers to take this card home with them—keeping it in their purse/wallet and referring to it frequently. You might want to provide the email or Face Book/My Space address of the director or chaplain (or both) so they can contact you if they wish to.

IDEAS FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING CLASSES

The following gender separated class ideas flow out of the Narnia movie, using the gifts given to Susan, Lucy and Peter by Father Christmas as discussion starters.

Girls Christian Living 1 – Susan’s Arrows

Based on the analogy of the arrows as illustrated by John Eldridge’s book “Sacred Romance” and Anne Stapleton’s correlating Prayer Journey, discuss the concept of the arrows that have been shot at us and the arrows we have shot at others. It’s so important for all women to learn to turn to God for love and affirmation and allow their identities to be developed by Him. If they aren’t careful...they will start to see themselves by the negative comments they are constantly receiving from others/society...and these will lead to the “unreality” of negative self-perceptions held by others that overthrow the reality of how God sees them.

Girls Christian Living 2 – Lucy’s Healing Fire Flower Juice

Father Christmas gave Lucy the gift of healing...of offering comfort and restoration to those who were hurting and injured. When we choose to listen to God and receive His love...we are full of confidence and beauty and have His love flowing through us to others. If we choose to listen to the negative voices in this society...we become insecure and needy and are constantly looking to others to make us feel better about ourselves. We all have a deep need for love and acceptance...when we allow God to meet that need...He will use us to offer His love and healing to those who are hurting and desperate for Him. And in the process...we will find the peace we are looking for.

Boys Christian Living 1 – Peter’s Shield

It’s a fact of life that we will run into trouble from time to time. Sometimes it seems like everything is out to get us. At those times, it’s easy to lose courage and start doubting that we will get through it. We start to doubt ourselves, and we doubt that God is real, or is going to help us. But God has given us a gift to help in those times, to protect us from defeat: that gift is faith (Eph. 6:16). (Visual aid: Try protecting yourself from your buddy throwing pinecones at you, using just your hands as a shield. Then use a shield of some kind, and see the difference.) Faith doesn’t make trouble disappear; it helps us get through trouble intact. (Visual aid: build a ‘Roman shield’ about 4 feet high and 2 feet wide, perhaps of plywood on a frame, and covered with hide. Let the boys try it out.)

Boys Christian living 2 – Peter’s Sword

God wants us to be able to defend ourselves in a spiritual way, when we are attacked by our spiritual enemy. The only offensive weapon in Ephesians 6:11-17 is ‘the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God’ (verse 17). We need to learn that this word, our weapon in warfare, is Jesus, the living word of God (John 1:1, 14), who tells us of himself in Scripture, the written word of God (Heb. 4:12). As ‘Knights of the King’, similar to Peter and Edmond in the movie, we are encouraged to enter the real spiritual battle that Jesus is fighting and join him as protectors of others—ourselves, our families and our friends. (See also John Eldridge, Wild at Heart.) (Visual aid: build wooden swords.)