



WHAT JUST HAPPENED?

LEADER PREPARATION

This 'Get into the Bible' activity will help to set the scene after returning to BB following lockdown. By no means has Coronavirus disappeared but the new normal has begun.

Overnight our world has been turned upside down, we feel this as adults and our children and young people will also be aware of this. We need to be mindful of our children and young people's emotions during these strange times.

Be mindful of the following:

- Talking about Coronavirus may be upsetting for some young people. Be sensitive when discussing.
- Some young people will have been shielding during lockdown and found it very difficult.
- Some young people may have had a family member very sick due to Coronavirus or lost a family member to the disease.
- Some young people may have had a very difficult experience of lockdown.
- Anxiety and worry will have increased with some young people.
- Avoid any humour around or about Coronavirus.
- Many young people may be alarmed by what they have heard about Coronavirus.

'Urban Saints Energize Resource' helped with the input to this session. Energize is a resource containing thousands of engaging and adaptable biblical sessions, training articles and support resources. Available for every leader and helper in your church or group. Start your free trial today and discover why over 10,000 people use Energize - check out www.energize.uk.net

The key takeaway: "You are not alone; God is with you"

BIG IDEA

To explore some of the things that the Bible says about fear and anxiety and suggest we can choose what we allow to influence our thought processes.

INTRODUCTION

Use this opportunity to ask the young people about what has happened over the last 6 months, how they found lockdown and how they are adjusting to the new way of doing things. You could ask questions like, has anyone taken up a new sport/hobby, been on a staycation or tried out a new hairstyle?

Give the young people opportunities to share both positive things they have enjoyed about lockdown, but also those things they have struggled with too.

WHAT JUST HAPPENED?

THE WORD

Suggest that Christians aren't immune to fear and anxiety, but the Bible is full of encouragement and advice about how to cope with our fears. Share some of the following verses or read them together from the Bible:

Psalm 56:3

When I am afraid, I put my trust in you.

Isaiah 41:10

So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

Philippians 4:6-7

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

John 14:27

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

LESSON

Share the verses above with the group and ask them the following.

- What do you think each verse is saying?
- What do these verses mean for us?
- How hard do you think it is to put our trust in verses like these in the face of situations like Coronavirus?
- Discuss the choice a Christian has when faced with fear and anxiety

Suggest that, in the face of uncertain circumstances, it's not always easy to put our trust in God but explain that when faced with difficulties we have a choice. We can choose not to let fear and anxiety rule our life, or we can choose to reject fear and anxiety. This isn't easy but the more we practice the better we are likely to be. Be clear that a Christian who experiences fear and anxiety has not 'failed' but God has a better plan for our lives than living in that place.

Share with the group **Deuteronomy 31:6**

"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the LORD your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you."

Highlight that through good times and hard times that God is always with us "He will never leave you nor forsake you" even in the most difficult times, such as these strange times.

Ask the group if they had the choice just before they went to sleep at night, as to whether they looked at the newspaper headlines or one of the verses from the Bible, which would give them the most comfort (and a good night's sleep?).

PRAY

Close with a prayer.