

DIXIE JACKSON ARKANSAS MISSIONS OFFERING

STUDENT LESSON PLAN

PRAYER

- Ask God to give you insight into our theme passage, **Ephesians 3:20–21**. If this passage is familiar to you, ask the Holy Spirit to teach you something timely and new.
 - Whether you're meeting in person or online, managing a gathering of kids brings special challenges right now. Pray for wisdom, patience and creativity as you prepare and then share your lesson.
 - Pray for a clear understanding of how the Holy Spirit leads you to respond to the 2020 Dixie Jackson Arkansas Missions Offering and Week of Prayer.
 - Pray for each student in your group by name:
 - That they'll be attentive during your meeting, and obedient in whatever way the Holy Spirit leads them to engage with the Dixie Jackson Arkansas Missions Offering and Week of Prayer
 - That they'll connect with missions in a personal way
 - That they'll have a fresh understanding of God's power and willingness to do immeasurably more than we ask or even imagine
- Paul's clear and beautiful picture of who God is, His sovereign power, and His heart for relationship with us and unity among believers.
- **If you're meeting online**, consider how you could make the most of the screen-share feature on your platform. It might be helpful to your students if you put our theme verses on a slide. In addition to the BCM segment, to supplement the lesson you might also use a short video (like this one: [youtube.com/watch?v=bN4tqrCgWwc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bN4tqrCgWwc)) that tells the story of Paul's conversion.
 - Touch base with your students ahead of time to be sure they know when and where you'll meet; **if you're meeting online**, send them a link. If you have access to an ad-free Spotify or SoundCloud account, put together a play list of worship songs that celebrate God's power to share with your students as a way of prompting them to think about our theme for the 2020 Dixie Jackson Arkansas Missions Offering and Week of Prayer, *Immeasurably More*. You might ask them to journal or create art based on their thoughts about God's power.

PREP

- Explore the 2020 Dixie Jackson Arkansas Missions Offering and Week of Prayer resources available at absc.org/dixiejackson. Decide how you're going to share the BCM video segment during your meeting, and plan accordingly.
- Dig into Ephesians. Read the first four chapters together, paying special attention to our theme passage. Think about these verses in context: Their impact is really amplified when you take in all of

A large graphic consisting of the letters 'D' and 'J' in a bold, white, sans-serif font. The letters are positioned on a solid orange rectangular background. The 'D' is on the left and the 'J' is on the right, both centered vertically within the orange area.

PLAN

With restrictions in place due to the coronavirus, are your students struggling with disconnection? Restlessness? Fear? Loneliness? The truth Paul shares about God's sovereign power could resonate in a special way right now, and his message of unity reinforces our connection to other believers.

Your goals for group time: Use Ephesians 3:20–21, together with the story of Wei Lun Tay and Baptist Collegiate Ministries, to help students

- Consider what it means that God can do *Immeasurably More* than we could ask or imagine.
- Think about the community of Arkansas Baptists they're part of and how they can get involved in missions through the Dixie Jackson Arkansas Missions Offering and Week of Prayer.

Use this lesson plan word for word or simply as a guide—however it offers you the best support as you lead. For instance, the discussion questions are only meant to help you start a conversation. Don't feel pressured to cover all of them. You could focus on a few, change them, add questions of your own. Read through the plan and adapt it based on what works for the time and format available, as well as the personality, age-range and attention span of your group.

- **Start with a game** that offers a fun way to think about power. You'll find instructions at the end of the lesson.
 - **If you're meeting in person**, the game is "Giants, Wizards, Elves."
 - **If you're meeting online**, the game is "Rock, Paper, Scissors."

- **Introduce the text, Ephesians 3:20–21.**

You could say: The Bible teaches us a lot about God's power. It tells us that God's power is actually the greatest power there is!

Our Scripture comes from Ephesians, which is a letter written by the apostle Paul to the Christians in a town called Ephesus. Paul dedicated his life to worshipping and sharing Jesus everywhere he went. He spent a lot of time in prison because of his ministry. In fact,

he's living alone under house arrest when he writes Ephesians. He knows what it means to be lonely and isolated, but he also knows that God's power is stronger than anything that happens to him or any problem he has. He wants us to know it, too.

- **Invite the students to look up Ephesians 3:20–21, then read it to the group. If you've prepared a slide, share it now:**

"God can do anything, you know—far more than you could ever imagine or guess or request in your wildest dreams! He does it not by pushing us around but by working within us, his Spirit deeply and gently within us.

Glory to God in the church! Glory to God in the Messiah, in Jesus! Glory down all the generations! Glory through all millennia! Oh, yes!" —*The Message*

(If students are reading along from different translations, give them a chance to share anything that stands out to them that's different about their version of the text.)

- **Talk about the Scripture.**

You could say: Paul wrote a lot of the New Testament—including several letters to churches, like Ephesians. When Paul talks about God's power, we should pay extra-close attention. Because this is a guy who knows firsthand exactly what he's talking about.

- **Introduce a video** about Paul's conversion, or summarize the story. Suggested response prompts are included for use if your format allows.

Before Paul met Jesus, he was a devout Jew who spent most of his time and energy punishing Christians. On a trip to a town called Damascus, where he planned to track down believers and put them in prison, Paul was literally blinded by a bright light that stopped him cold. Right there on the road, in the middle of nowhere, he heard a voice from Heaven: "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting."

- Put yourself in Paul's place for a second. What do you imagine he was thinking? Feeling?

For three days, Paul couldn't see. He didn't eat or drink anything, but he prayed. And God put a plan in motion: He tapped a believer in Damascus named Ananias to find Paul and restore his eyesight. Ananias knew Paul was famous for being horrible to Christians. He might

have thought that God was sending him on a kamikaze mission!

- Has God ever nudged you way out of your comfort zone to help someone? That can be really scary! How did you respond? How did God help you?

God's plan covered all the bases: God had told Paul to expect a visit from Ananias, so the coast was clear. Ananias obeyed God, and God's power alive in Ananias gave Paul back his vision. For the rest of Paul's life, he was devoted to Jesus.

In our theme verse, Paul says that God's power is also working inside of us. It's like a supernatural lithium ion battery that energizes us to do anything God asks us to do. Ephesians 1:19–20 says it's the same power that brought Jesus back to life!

Even when we can't see what God is up to, He's working around us all the time trying to connect with us, to show us that He loves us and wants to have a relationship with us. He wants the whole world to know Jesus, His Son. When we're working together with God to share Jesus with others, His power alive in us can do more than we could ask or even imagine.

- **Share the 2020 Dixie Jackson Arkansas Missions Offering BCM ministry video.**
- **Explain how Arkansas Baptists partner with one another through the Dixie Jackson Arkansas Missions Offering and Week of Prayer to support ministries like BCM all over our state.**

You could say: Think about how God worked it out for Wei Lun Tay to have a community of Christian friends through Baptist Collegiate Ministries before Wei Lun had ever even heard of the University of Central Arkansas, and how God has worked it out for some of those friends to travel with Wei Lun to Malaysia where they'll get to share Jesus in Wei Lun's hometown. That's God's power at work, doing immeasurably more than we could ask or imagine!

Later in Ephesians, Paul talks about how everyone who follows Jesus is part of a giant family. You have a church family—the people you know and worship with all the time. But you also have a Church family that connects you to Christ-followers everywhere—like Wei Lun, his friends at BCM, Baptists all over our state and

believers around the world.

In that giant family, we're meant to pray for and encourage each other, to help each other know Jesus better and tell others about Him. The Dixie Jackson Arkansas Missions Offering is named for a lady who loved Jesus and understood how important it is for churches to pray, give and volunteer together in order to share Jesus in our state. If God's power can do immeasurably more through one person, just think what He could do through Arkansas Baptists working together!

■ **So what does that mean for us?**

You could say: There's a lot of distance and disconnection in the world right now. But God's power is way bigger than that. There are so many people in need. God is still at work all around us, and He still wants us to join Him.

- With social distancing restrictions in place, how can we be creative about working together to help people in our town and our state?
- What are some ways we could get involved in the ministries that are supported by the Dixie Jackson Arkansas Missions Offering?
- What should we be praying for right now? How do we want to see God do immeasurably more than we can ask or imagine in our student ministry? In our church? Around Arkansas?
- **Wrap up your group time with some closing thoughts and a prayer.**

OPENING GROUP GAME: GIANTS, WIZARDS, ELVES

- Divide the students into pairs; if you have an uneven number of students, join the game!
- **Review the characters** and practice a few times until everyone is familiar:
 - **Giants** stand on their tiptoes, raise their arms and growl.
 - **Wizards** stoop a little bit, wave their fingers as though they're casting a spell and yell "SHAZAM!"
 - **Elves** crouch down, cup their hands around their ears and make a high-pitched "EEEEEEK!"

Review the rules:

- On the count of three, each pair will turn around to face each other and immediately demonstrate a character.
 - **Giants beat elves** because they can squash them.
 - **Elves beat wizards** because they can outsmart them.
 - **Wizards beat giants** because they can cast a magic spell on them.
- The winners in each pair then pair up with a different winner, and the losers sit out.
- The last player standing wins the game.
- **To start the game**, ask the players to spread out so that there's distance between each pair and enough distance between the players in each pair to jump around and face each other. Give them a count of three when you're ready to begin.

**OPENING GROUP GAME:
ROCK, PAPER, SCISSORS**

- The students all play against you, the group leader.
- Each student gets three lives; if your play beats theirs, they lose a life. Ask them to keep track of their losses in the chat.
- Make sure everyone is clear on the count: it's rock-paper-scissors-SHOOT.
- Last player standing wins.