

Mid-Atlantic Gospel Camp

Week 1: Where Are You?—Hiding from God

Dear saints, let us use the first week of the Gospel Camp in the following manner:

* During the Mid-week gathering in the week of June 1-5, we want to begin with the most positive thing in the universe: that God created man in a special way for His own purpose. Even though the purpose of this camp is to call out the children by exposing their fallen condition, we need to start with what was in the beginning, i.e., God's glorious purpose for man. It is rather easy for our eyes to see man's fallen condition, but it requires the infusion of faith to see the positive intent of God's creation of man, and that this intent would not change even after man fell into sin.

* During Message 1 on Saturday, June 6, we will build upon that foundation by showing how man has fallen away from God, and God is calling man again with the question: "Where are you?" We want to impress the children with what is in God's heart in asking this question: He still loves man and wants to redeem the fallen man to Himself.

Synopsis

The synopsis below provides the chain of thought we will trace during the first week:

- God created man in His image and according to His likeness. Man is the peak of God's creation, and man is special in God's creation.
- God's goal is to enter into man and fill man with Himself and even to make Himself one with man. This is the meaning and purpose of our human life.
- Because we have fallen, we hide ourselves from God. We are afraid of God's righteousness, i.e., we fear that God will come in to judge and punish us.
- But God is coming to man with the intent to restore man to Himself by redeeming man from his fallen condition.
- Today, the children needs to respond to God's calling them "Where are you?" and open up to God so that He may save them.

Burden

This is the burden we sense from the Lord for this first week:

- That the children would know who God is to them: He is the God of purpose, He is full of love toward them, but He is also absolutely righteous.
- Even after man had been deceived by Satan and fallen into a sinful condition, God sought man out with the unmistakable prompting, "Where are you?", to make man realize where he is (in sin) and in what condition he is (fallen and far away from God). God's heart is one of love, to redeem and restore man back to Himself.
- Man hid himself from God because he realized that his sinful condition did not match God's righteousness. But God's heart is not to punish or condemn man due to his sin.

- Today, the children need to respond properly to God's seeking; they need to come to Him so that they can be saved and brought back into the enjoyment of God.

Reading materials

The reading material for mid-week gathering comes from three places:

- First excerpt: man, bearing God's image and likeness, is the peak of God's creation
- Second excerpt: man is a container to be filled with God exclusively
- Third excerpt: God's purpose of man is unchanged despite man's fall.

During the mid-week gathering, do not feel that you have to finish the entire passage. Follow the Lord's leading and emphasize the part that resonates most.

Songs

We plan to sing two songs for Message 1 (Saturday):

- "Why was a cup made?" (<https://www.hymnal.net/en/hymn/c/102>). This song speaks of the purpose of man: to have God inside him, filling him to the brim.
- "Fallen, that's the way we all begin" (<https://www.hymnal.net/en/hymn/ns/105>).

Key verses

Genesis 1:26-27; Zechariah 12:1; Genesis 3:8-10; 1 John 1:5, 9