



iGod pop culture superstar

OBJECTIVES

Main Objective

The world that we live in will try to package Jesus as one of the many ways that leads to God. This series will expose the true characteristics of God and help us understand that Jesus Christ is the only way to salvation.

Lesson Objective

In this lesson we want to convey that the world needs a Savior, *not* a buddy!

ITEMS NEEDED FOR THIS LESSON

- Jesus action figure (Search the internet for the best price)
- Jesus Bobble heads
- Jesus t-shirts

(If you cannot afford or don't have the time to order these items, find images of them online and use them for your PowerPoint presentation)

VIDEO IDEA

Dogma – DVD counter start 2:02 / counter stop 3:42

In this clip a Catholic priest holds a press conference to share that they have a new symbol to represent the church. Instead of the Lord Jesus on the cross crucified, they have made a new statue/symbol called the “Buddy Christ” in hopes to give the church a more positive image.

PROMOTIONS FOR THIS LESSON

The iGod video provided is a great promotion and transition piece. You can choose to use either the full clip or the shortened piece to raise awareness of this series and it's upcoming lessons.

ROOM DECORATION IDEAS

- iGod banners

-Pictures are provided to create banners for stage or for the front of the room. Through out this series you will be creating a “collage” of the misconceptions of who God is. Start the collage on a prominent wall in your youth space. This week use a few of the below ideas and then each week add to the collage until you have your wall covered in misconceptions of God. At the end of the five weeks you can remove all of the pictures that are negative perceptions of God, leaving only those images that you want to stick with your teens.

- iGod posters
 - Use the included images to create posters at your local print store, or have students create their own posters for your room.
- Jesus action figure and Jesus Bobblehead
 - Search the internet for the cheapest price of a Jesus action figure and Bobblehead.
- Popular Jesus t-shirts
 - Search the internet for t-shirts and possibly buy a couple or maybe just print out pictures and put them on the wall.

GAMES

Dancing A-go-go Contest-Hang a white sheet in your room that is back lit by a bright light or strobe light. Give two students the opportunity to dance behind the screen and allow the others to vote on the winner. This is a simple game with very little set up, but the teens love to watch and participate. (Note-a great song to use is “Gonna make you Sweat” by C + C Music Factory or “Crazy” by Gnarls Barkley)

LESSON OUTLINE

Overview

Our world has taken Jesus and made him a pop culture superstar. This has removed him from being God, and made him nothing more than just a remarkable man. The point of this message is to help teens understand that the world needs a savior, not a buddy!

- As a transition from worship to the message, show the iGod video provided.

Outline

Introduction

We are starting a new series called iGod. We are basing this series off the iPod theme that says, “which iPod are you?” The thought behind this is that there are a lot of views out there about who God is. Our culture continues to be fascinated with Jesus and pumps out their own philosophies on who God is. And through this series we want to help you understand who God really is. Our hope is that by the end of the series you will have an understanding of what the Bible says about God and not what pop culture and your friends are telling you about God.

So to start, we want you to divide into groups of about 5-8 people and we will give you each some paper and some markers. Your job is to draw your own Jesus superhero and you can give him one superpower. After about 5 minutes each group will get to present their “Jesus Superhero” to the group.

Message body

Pop culture tells us that Jesus is just our buddy

It’s a lot of fun to imagine what Jesus was like. And it’s really easy for us to make Jesus a superhero. It’s even easier for us to make Jesus a celebrity. But the problem with making Jesus a superhero or a celebrity is that when we do that, we start to make Jesus more of a human celebrity and less God. We start to view Jesus as just another great human celebrity and we put him in the same category of Kobe Bryant, Hilary Duff, or even Jessica Simpson. We make Jesus just

someone that was cool or a great man, but we forget that he lived on this earth for a purpose.

Our pop culture has changed Jesus from God to just a cool friend. I brought with me some things I found on the internet. (*Search the Internet for these items, you can buy them, or just copy pictures for your presentation*) I have a Bobblehead Jesus. You can go on the internet and buy this Jesus and put him on the dashboard of your car and it's like he's dancing to your music as you drive. Or watch this, I can ask Jesus a question like, "Jesus, do you think I'm the best looking guy in here?" And then I shake him and look his head says, yes. "Thank you Jesus."

On the internet they have all these t-shirts. Like these, Jesus is the fresh maker. He makes everything fresh. Jesus surfs. Or my favorite-Jesus saves and they have him as a goalie. They also have a t-shirt that says, my other Jesus is a Camaro. Which is basically saying, that my car is my God. I worship my car, just like I would worship God. Or of course, Jesus is my homeboy!

Or maybe a better example of how pop culture has changed Jesus into a just a great friend is this clip from a movie called Dogma. Check it out!

**Show Dogma Clip* (DVD counter start 2:02 / counter stop 3:42)*

I know this is over the top, but really that's how a lot of people view God. They don't like to think of the Jesus that died on the cross, that's too gruesome. They don't like to think of the Jesus that walked through the temple and turned over tables and was angry because people were sinning in the temple of God. They would rather think of Jesus when he was hanging out with his friends or the one that was having little children sit on his lap. People have a warped view of God.

Also a lot of TV shows are talking about God now. How many of you have seen the TV show "Joan of Arcadia"? The basic idea is Joan is this high school student that receives messages from God. She is just a regular student but then God will talk to her through the lunch lady, or the guy she likes, or the garbage man. They all the sudden turn into God and he talks to her. In one show God tells Joan to build a small boat, in another show he tells her to try out for cheer-leading, in another show he tells her to throw a party at her parent's house while they are out of town and all of these things seem to fit into God's plan for her. The show seems to be showing viewers who God is, but the creator of the show isn't showing the God of the Bible, actually she made up rules that her God has to follow.

The Ten Commandments of Joan of Arcadia

1. **God cannot directly intervene.**
2. *Good and evil exist.*
3. **God can never identify one religion as being right.**
4. *The job of every human being is to fulfill his or her true nature.*
5. *Everyone is allowed to say "no" to God, including Joan.*
6. *God is not bound by time. This is a human concept.*
7. *God is not a person and does not possess a human personality.*
8. *God talks to everyone all the time in different ways.*
9. **God's plan is what is good for us, not what is good for Him.**
10. *God's purpose for talking to Joan, and everyone, is to get her (us) to recognize the interconnectedness of all things? i.e., you cannot hurt a person without hurting yourself; all of*

your actions have consequences; God can be found in the smallest actions; God expects us to learn and grow from all our experiences. However, the exact nature of God is a mystery, and the mystery can never be solved.

Ten Commandments found on a Joan of Arcadia Trivia site, <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0367345/trivia>

The writer of the show made up Ten Commandments of Joan of Arcadia that her God has to follow and this made-up God is who she is presenting to TV watchers as the real God. So people watch it and say, “That must be the truth about who God is,” but really it’s not biblical. In her ten commandments she says that good and evil exist, that God is not bound by time (this is a human concept), that God is not a person and does not possess a human personality. And we know that is true. God is bigger than we can understand, but then she says God cannot directly intervene. And that is wrong. If God created us, then he surely has power to intervene in our world. She says that God cannot identify one religion as being right and that is simply not true.

The Bible tells us the truth about God

- Read John 14:6
- Read Deuteronomy 6:13-15
- Read 1 Corinthians 8:4-6

You see, the world tries to tell us who God is, but we need to know what the Word of God actually says about him. There is only one God. Starting thousands of years ago people started the debate about who God was. And they tried to make “gods” to fit them, just like we are doing now, and I want to read to you one of those stories from the Bible. You see, this story is a real event at a real time at a real place. People stopped worshiping God because they didn’t like everything about him, and they forgot about him and they created a God called Baal. They would worship Baal and sacrifice things to Baal, this god they made. And so this guy named Elijah comes along, a prophet of the true God, and he wants to prove that God, the God of Israel is the only true God.

- Read or use the provided Melodrama for 1 Kings 18:20-39

Point out in verse 21 where it reads “How long will you waiver between two opinions.” We do the same thing today. We have an altar to God and an altar to sports, or an altar to boy-friends/girlfriends, drugs/alcohol or other things and God says that we are not to waiver that we are to give our devotion to Him and Him alone.

The point comes in verse 39 which says, “When all the people saw this, they fell prostrate and cried, “The Lord - he is God! The Lord – he is God!”

The goal of this lesson is to help you understand that the Lord, He is God. Hollywood and pop culture tell you that Jesus is your buddy, but you need to understand that the Bible tells you Jesus was way more than a buddy. He is God.

(If you have time and the budget, go on the internet and purchase a Jesus action figure, if not, just find an image of it online and put it on your screens)

Here is a Jesus action figure. The advertisement told me I could collect all three Jesus'. This particular Jesus has movable arms and wheels on his feet for gliding action. I can pretend to make him walk on water, and I can have him heal all my Barbie dolls whose arms I accidentally ripped off when I was little. The back of this is interesting. Let me read it to you. "The name Jesus means, "God saves." The term for Christ is a title "anointed of God." For Muslims and some Jews, Jesus was a prophet. Buddhists say he was enlightened. Hindus call him an Avatar and Christians hail him as the Son of God. So who was he? He has been the topic of heated theological debates. Although he is understood in many different ways, everyone seems to agree that he was a remarkable man."

And I read that I and I think, "that is so sad." Even the Jesus action figure is not telling people who Jesus really is. They are afraid to come out and tell people that Jesus is the Son of God, they don't want to offend anyone. They are saying that Jesus is different things to different people, but the Bible says that Jesus is the Son of God, the only way to Heaven for all people.

CLOSING

The world tells us that God is whoever we want him to be. It tells us that Jesus is just our buddy; but Jesus isn't just our buddy, the world doesn't need another buddy, we have a lot of those. Jesus is our savior. Here is the main point of this lesson, **We don't need a buddy, we need a savior.**

Depending on your group demographics this may be a good opportunity to share the salvation message or close with this question:

"The world says Jesus was a remarkable man, do you believe that, or do you believe that he was so much more?"

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1) If you could design your own “Jesus t-shirt,” what would it say?
- 2) Have you ever been around someone that was making a joke about the person of Jesus? How did that make you feel?
- 3) What does the statement “the world needs a Savior and not a buddy” mean to you?
- 4) Was there anything that really stuck out to you about the story of Elijah at Mt. Carmel?
- 5) In your own words, who do you say Jesus is?
- 6) If Jesus is our Savior – what does he want you to do now?

PROMOTIONS FOR NEXT WEEK

Buy a roll of “police line do not cross” tape and cut it into small squares. Give one to each student to remind them that next week we will talk about how people view God as a policeman.

MELODRAMA

The Lord is God

Text

1 Kings 18:22-39

Cast

Narrator

Elijah

400 prophets of Baal (If you don't have 400, 4 will work)

An altar

A bull

A flash of fire

Props

A cup of water

A bottle of water

Our story

Once upon a time, in a land where this really did happen, there was this tough guy named Elijah. Everywhere Elijah went, he flexed his muscles, because he was a really confident dude. Elijah was confident, not only because he had stinkin' huge biceps, but also because he had God on his side. But Elijah was all alone, he was the only follower of God. He had a big rival in town, a so-called God named Baal. And Baal had tons of followers, who thought they were stinkin' tough too. But they weren't, they were really huge wimps.

One day Elijah walked up to the followers of Baal and put as many as he could in a head lock, and he said to them, "My God is the real God, and you're a bunch of wanna be's." So Baal's followers got all mad and jumped up and down and said, "Oh yeah, well your God's the one that's umm..... you're stupid." Elijah just laughed at them for their bad comeback, and then he challenged them to a duel between the God's. He went out and bought two huge bulls, one for the followers of Baal and one for God. Then he told them that they would each build an altar and put the bulls on the altars. The God that sent fire down from Heaven and burned up the bull would be the only true God.

Elijah was confident so he said to the prophets, "You losers can go first, I will get pleasure from watching you fail." The Prophets made an "L" with their hand and put it on their head and said back to Elijah, "You're the one that's going to umm... you're stupid." So the prophets went first. They went out and found an altar and placed it on the middle of the stage. Then they kicked the side of the altar to make sure it was sturdy. One of them even tested it with a flying elbow drop. And the altar didn't move. So they placed the bull on the altar and then began to dance around the altar, asking Baal to send fire from Heaven to burn up the bull. But nothing happened. So Elijah started taunting them, "Hey guys, maybe you need to dance a little crazier, maybe you need to do the funky chicken dance." The prophets of Baal put their thumb on their nose and their fingers in the air and responded, "Maybe you need to umm.... Just be quiet." But the prophets actually listened to Elijah and they began doing the funky chicken, but it didn't help. So Elijah said, "Maybe you need to start yelling to your God, he might be out going to the bathroom and he can't hear you because the ventilation fan is running." So the prophets responded with a really defeated look on their face, "You're the one that

should umm... come on stop making fun of us.” So then the prophets started yelling as loud as they could, but nothing happened so they just gave up.

Then it was Elijah’s turn. He walked up confident to the altar as he flexed his huge muscles, and he took a glass of water and then he dumped it on the altar. He wanted the altar to be wet, so that it was even harder for God to burn up the offering. Then he bowed his head and prayed, “O Lord answer me, so that these people will know that you O Lord, are God.” Immediately fire flashed down from Heaven and burned up the bull, it then chugged a bottle of water that was by the altar and flashed back into Heaven.

Immediately everyone watching said, “Now we know that the Lord is God.”

The End