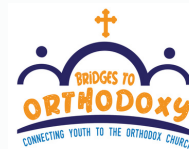


2021-2022



# One-Year Scope

BRIDGES TO ORTHODOXY



# CONTENT OVERVIEW

## **July/August**

*Orthodox Faith*

Building a House of Prayer

## **September**

*Spiritual Growth*

I Heard a Rumor...

## **October**

*Biblical Study*

Beyond Your Limits

## **November**

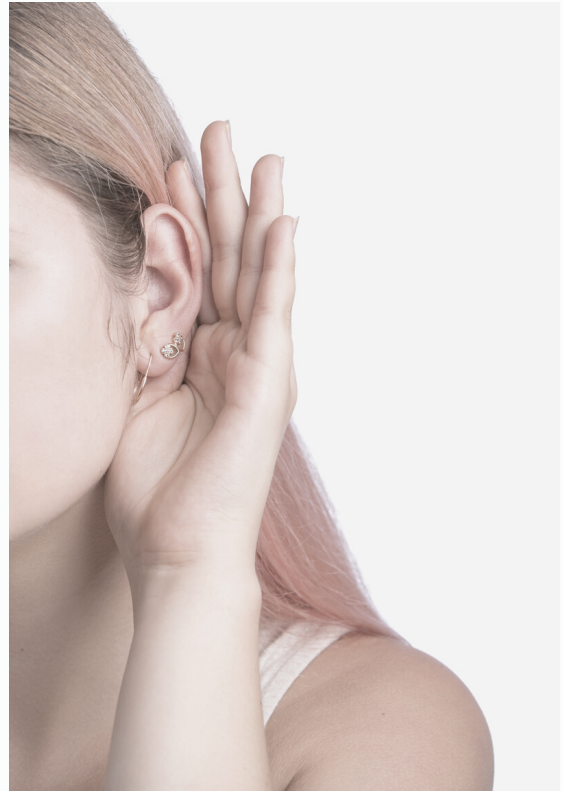
*Spiritual Growth*

A Stiff-Necked People

## **December**

*Orthodox Saint/Biblical Study*

Not Another Christmas Story



## **January**

*Orthodox Faith*

Got Church?

## **February**

*Spiritual Growth*

The Power of Forgiveness

## **March/April**

*Lent Prep*

Flipped!

## **May**

*Spiritual Growth*

Equally Yoked

## **June**

*Biblical Study*

The Do-Er

July 4 - August 29

# BUILDING A HOUSE OF PRAYER

A 2-month unit focused on building an Orthodox prayer life



When we hear the voice of our favorite actor, our President, or a singer we often hear on the radio, do we know who it is even if we cannot see the person? Can we, with the same confidence, say that we are able to recognize God's voice in our lives? That is what prayer is all about – building intimacy with God. It's going beyond knowledge of God and instead being able to recognize Him in everything. This summer, we hope to help our teens use the tools of our Orthodox Church to diligently build their House of Prayer.

Each week we will explore and build a new room until we eventually reach that dining room where we will dine with God and He with us in Liturgical prayer. As we make our way there, we hope our teens learn to recognize God's voice and align to His ways and His will.

*"For my house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations." Isaiah 56:7b*

September 5 - September 26

# I HEARD A RUMOR...

A 4-week unit on the problem with gossip



Words have a unique power. In fact, we see in Genesis that God literally spoke the world into existence. Unfortunately, words not only have the power for good; they have the power to tear people down and destroy life. When used incorrectly, words can dehumanize and destroy. The problem with gossip or whispering behind someone's back, whether it is true or false, is that it never amounts to anything good. Words also can never be taken back.

In this unit, we hope to encourage our teens to consider the responsibility of the language they use. It will even cover the use of words in the context of a seemingly innocent text or post on social media. Are they using their words to build others up and speak life, or are they using their words to destroy others? And why do we have this temptation to gossip? This month we hope to challenge all teens to consider: What worlds are we creating with our words?

*"Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking deceit." Psalm 34:13*

October 3 - October 31

# BEYOND YOUR LIMITS

A 5-week Biblical study unit on the life of Moses and on facing your fears



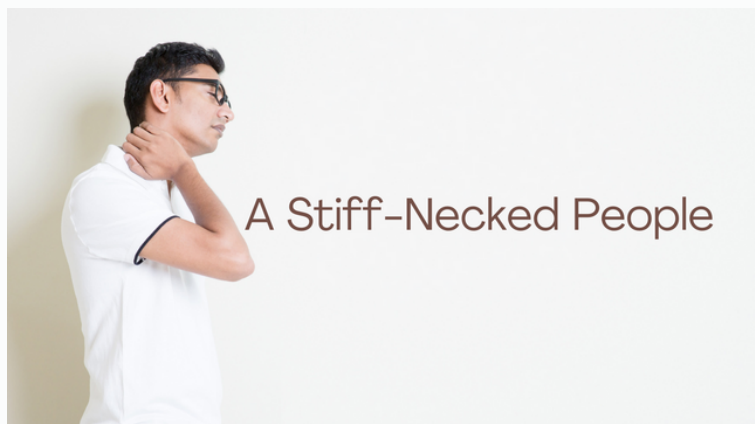
Many times, especially as kids, we don't think we are capable or equipped for very much. We let others' expectations define us, fears limit us, and past mistakes shame us. As we study the life of Moses in this unit, we hope our teens come to realize that when God is on our side, there is absolutely no ceiling on our abilities! Our courage is not the absence of fear, but knowing that our Lord, who sees us as much more than we see ourselves, will never leave us nor forsake us. Allowing ourselves to act through God's eyes, we truly can live beyond our own limits.

*"Be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid of them; for the Lord your God, He is the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you." Deuteronomy 31:6*

November 7 - November 28

# A STIFF- NECKED PEOPLE

A 4-week unit on the problem with complaining



God rescued the Israelites out of bondage in Egypt and they complained. He fed them when they were hungry and kept them safe from the hazards of the wilderness, and they complained. He gave them instructions on finding shelter and even on building a sanctuary so that God could dwell among them... yet, they complained. It is easy to criticize the Israelites, whom God called "a stiff-necked people," but, if we are not careful, we easily fall in the same trap.

How many times have we missed out on a current blessing because we were griping about something we didn't have or about how something used to be? This month we will take a close look at the dangerous mindset of those who were nicknamed "a stiff-necked people" and ways we can safeguard against the complaining and entitled mentality... because the truth is, we always have something to be grateful for and something to be generous with.

*"Do all things without complaining and disputing, that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as light in the world." Philippians 2:14-15*

December 5 - December 26

# NOT ANOTHER CHRISTMAS STORY

A 4-week unit on the Christmas stories you haven't heard often  
*(Week 4 is a party and not a traditional lesson)*



Most of us know the Nativity story by heart. We know the manger scene, the angels, the shepherds, the wise men, and of course baby Jesus. But there are parts of the Christmas story that are typically not told. They have zero Christmas songs about them, and they are far less popular than the little drummer boy (who, by the way, is completely fictional).

This month we will explore these lesser-told stories in hopes that our teens will get a newer appreciation of what the Christmas season is all about. We will hear about Christmas through the eyes of Ss. Joachim and Anna, through the eyes of St. Joseph, through the eyes of an old man named Simeon, who was told he would not die until he saw the Messiah.

*"Behold, this Child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against... that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." Luke 2:34-35*

January 2 - January 30

# GOT CHURCH?

A 5-week unit on getting the most out of the Divine Liturgy



There are certain people (but nobody in particular) that may not "get Church." They may find Divine Liturgy to be somewhat tedious and even boring. What's really interesting is that you can find the opposite, too! There are people who DO *get* Church, who can't seem to get enough of Church, and who are even willing to die for their faith. If you are one of those people that find church boring, you may wonder what it is you are missing about the Liturgy. There's got to be something really special about Liturgical worship to get such a passionate reaction out of so many faithful people over so many centuries.

That's why this month the teens will be answering a very important question in our new series: GOT CHURCH? This month is all about figuring out what "IT" is that we might be missing—that factor that helps us experience a deep spiritual connection to God and keeps Church from just being another thing we do out of obligation, habit, or ritual. Through this unit, our teens will see that Church IS Unity with Christ—and there's nothing boring about that.

*"And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them." Exodus 25:8.*

February 6 - February 27

## POWER OF FORGIVENESS

A 4-week unit on the power of the words “I forgive you”



“I forgive you” are three simple words that carry with it extreme power. Christians know they are “supposed” to forgive. But sometimes this is easier said than done, especially if the hurt is not gone yet, if the other person is not sorry, if the other person had hurt you before (a repeat-offender), or if the other person does not know they hurt you.

This month, we hope to clear up some misconceptions of this concept of forgiveness and explain why forgiving someone makes *you* ok even if it does not make *it* ok.

*“Bear with one another, and forgive one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do.” Colossians 3:13*

March 6 - April 10

## FLIPPED!

A 2-month unit on how Christ's teachings flipped the world's rules upside-down



This Lent, we are going to look at Christ's teachings and how His way, His words, and His actions all focused on principles that are the exact opposite of the world's “rules.” Jesus had a way of flipping the world's logic upside-down. In the seven weeks leading up to the Resurrection, we hope to show our teens the world through Christ's eyes. We hope it flips their world upside-down because when things are FLIPPED, we care more about God's praise than man's praise, we love our enemies, we celebrate mercy over justice, we find hope in hopeless circumstances, and we choose others' comfort over our own.

*“Do not think I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them, but to fulfill them.” Matthew 5:17*

May 1 - May 29

# EQUALLY YOKED

A 5-week unit on friendship



Regardless of our age, friendships are crucially important to us. Did you know God made us that way? We were designed to want to be in fellowship and to want to do life together. That is why we are devoting a whole month to figuring out what the “right” friendships to have in our life are and how to be the “right” friend to others. After all, our friendships tend to influence our character, our choices, and our mindset. Using Christ as a model, we hope teens learn that good friendships require careful consideration, boundaries where necessary, and a whole lot of forgiveness, grace, and love.

*“Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?” 2 Corinthians 6:14*

June 5 - June 26

# THE DO-ER!

A 4-week Biblical study unit on Nehemiah and on taking initiative and responsibility



Have you ever met a “Do-Er”? Someone who has a knack for walking in a room, noticing everything, and immediately being “on it”? They see the spilled orange juice and immediately wipe it up. Or they notice there are packets that need to be passed out, so they get to work right away doing that. A “Do-Er” is someone who is “on it” for everything without anyone asking. What if this ability is actually more about training yourself to open your eyes and pay attention versus a natural ability? And, when it comes down to it, seeing what needs to be done is not just training yourself to see what needs to be done: it’s actually getting up and doing something about it.

This month, we hope to convert a lot of teens into “Do-Ers” as we talk about the importance, in God’s eyes, of taking initiative, seeing a need and fulfilling it before being asked. There is no greater example of this than Nehemiah. A humble cupbearer, with a love of his country and his God, he saw a hard job that needed to be done, and he got up and did something about it. Let’s all strive to be more like Nehemiah and become the “Do-Ers”!

*“And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.” Colossians 3:23*