

# AMPLIFY

GROWING A  
FAITH THAT LASTS

AMPLIFY: GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS  
LESSON 1: THE GOOD GOD

**What we want students to learn:** That God defines righteousness, and He alone is perfectly good.

**What we want students to do with what they've learned:** To seek to be more like God, striving to daily live according to God's example and His Word.

**Scripture Focus:** Psalm 119:137, 142, 144, 172, Psalm 25:8, Mark 10:17-18, Romans 6:11-14

**Overview:** Righteousness is a churchy word that we often use, but many times our students don't know what it means. They may have a general idea, but if we're not careful, it can feel like an antiquated concept that doesn't have much to do with their 21st-century lives. This, of course, couldn't be further from the truth. God Himself personifies righteousness. He alone is good. And His perfect goodness covers all of our interactions with Him. As much as any of His attributes, God's righteousness is something we both count on and encounter in our relationship with Him. It's a concept your students truly need to be familiar with. In this lesson, your students will learn that God defines righteousness and that they're called to live lives of righteousness as they seek to be more and more like God. In lesson 2, students will learn that Jesus came to call sinners to righteousness, taking on their unrighteousness on the cross. Finally, in lesson 3, students will see that living a righteous life happens through faith in Christ, understanding that Jesus stands before God as our righteous Advocate.

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## TEACHER PREP VIDEO

Each **Amplify** lesson comes with a Teacher Prep Video. These are short videos designed to help you grasp the main point of the lesson as you prepare to teach.

To access your **God's Righteousness** lesson 1 Teacher Prep Video, login to your Lesson Manager, navigate to lesson 1 and click on the "Background" tab. You'll notice the Teacher Prep Video near the top of the Lesson Manager window.

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## BIBLE BACKGROUND

The **Bible Background** is designed to help you provide some context for the Scripture you'll be studying. The Details gives you background info for each book, The Setting informs you what's happening in and around the passage, and The Main Point gives you an overview of how the passage will be used in the lesson.

- **What do we mean by "context"?** In every **YM360** Bible study lesson, you'll notice we make a point to encourage you to provide the context for the passages you study. By "context" we mean at the very least helping students know **who** wrote the book, **when** it was written, and **why** it was written.
- **What's the big deal?** When we teach the Bible without giving context, students don't get a "big picture" understanding of the story of the Bible. But this view is vital to grasping the story of God's plan of redemption for humankind. As you teach, use the **Bible Background** to help summarize the context.

## THE DETAILS

[Psalms](#)

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- **Author:** God inspired various authors to write a majority of the Psalms in their era, including seventy-three by David, twelve by Asaph, eleven by the Korahites and two by Solomon. Heman, Ethan, and Moses each wrote one, while the authorship of fifty other Psalms remains unknown.
- **Timeframe:** The Psalms were written during different eras of Israel's history, spanning from 1100 BC (i.e., Psalm 29, 68) to 400 BC (i.e., Psalm 119).
- **Purpose:** The Psalms are inspired by God to poetically reflect humanity's journey with Him. Each psalm serves a different purpose, such as a personal or communal lament, hymn, song, reflection or declaration. Many of these were set to music and intended to be shared publicly, even when sharing a revealing confession (i.e., Psalm 51).

## Mark

- **Author:** The Gospel of Mark was written by its namesake. Mark, also known as John Mark, is believed to have received most of his information for his Gospel from Peter's firsthand accounts.
- **Timeframe:** Mark is thought to have written his Gospel in the mid 50's AD.
- **Purpose:** Mark was writing primarily for a non-Jewish audience. His Gospel explains Jewish customs to non-Jews in an effort to get them to see the big picture of Jesus' identity.

## Romans

- **Author:** Paul is the author of Romans.
- **Timeframe:** Romans was probably written from Corinth in the winter of 56-57 AD.
- **Purpose:** Since the church in Rome had not received comprehensive theological teaching on salvation and other implications of following Christ, Paul wrote Romans to ensure a good understanding of such things. In addition, since many Jewish Christians were rejecting some of the new Gentile converts, it was essential that a 'level playing field' be given to all Believers. This is what Paul was advocating for in Romans.

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## THE MAIN POINT

There is one main idea that you will communicate several times over the course of this lesson: Only God is perfectly good and righteous. The prevailing sentiment among teenagers is that people are basically good and that if we're good enough—or if our good actions outweigh our bad ones—then God will deem us "good enough" to be with Him in Heaven for eternity. The truth is that we don't attain righteousness through our actions. Since God is the only one who is perfectly righteous—and since He is the measuring stick of what it means to be righteous—it is impossible for us to be good enough to be considered righteous in His sight. If your students grasp that fact in this lesson, then you've laid the crucial groundwork for them to understand that we become righteous not by doing the right things, but by trusting in Christ who lived a perfectly righteous life and died on the cross in our place.

It's important as you teach this lesson that you understand the "road map" for this three-lesson series. As you teach your students that only God is good and righteous and that we have zero hope of ever measuring up to His righteousness, know that you're doing so in order that you can deliver great news in Lesson 27: That we can become righteous through Jesus, who imputes (clothes us with) His own righteousness when we trust in Him. Then in Lesson 28, you'll help your students understand that through a relationship with Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit, we can choose righteousness, but not as a way to earn a right standing with God, but rather in response to what Jesus accomplished for us on the cross.

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## LESSON PLAN

The **Lesson Plan** contains three elements: An introductory activity called **The Lead In**; the Bible study section called **The Main Event**; an application-focused segment called **The Last Word**.

### THE LEAD IN

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- **Goal:** To disrupt the commonly held idea that most of us are generally "good" people.
- **Set-Up:** You'll need a dry-erase board to record a few thoughts so that everyone in the group can see them.

FIRST, ask the group what they think it means to be a "good" person. Make sure to record the responses so that everyone can see them throughout the discussion. Encourage students to share their opinion—simply list their answers, but don't evaluate them. Once you have a lot of responses on your board, ask students the following:

- **When we look at all the responses, it looks like there are a lot of different opinions on what it means to be a "good" person. Why do you think that is?**
  - Answers will vary.
- **Did hearing someone else's answer cause you to want you to change your own answer?**
  - Answers will vary.

NEXT, read them this quote from Anne Frank, a Jewish girl who, because of Nazi Germany's persecution of Jews in the Netherlands, was forced into hiding with her family in 1942 and who eventually died in a concentration camp near the end of the war. Frank's diary—published after the war—chronicled the events of her family's time in hiding, and she wrote this a few weeks before her family was found by the Nazis and arrested:  
"Despite everything, I believe that people are really good at heart."

Then, ask:

- **Do you agree with that quote? Why or why not?**
  - Answers will vary.
- **Do you think that Anne would have said that after she had experienced the Nazi concentration camps?**

◦ Answers will vary.

FINALLY, explain that no matter what we think about how to define a "good" person (refer to the board where you wrote the responses), history shows us that people are capable of doing very bad things—and that if we're honest, we don't always live up to our own standards of what it means to be "good" or "righteous." Explain that today, your group is going to dive into what God's definition of "righteousness" is.

Transition into the **Main Event** portion of your lesson.

### THE MAIN EVENT

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- **Goal:** For students to understand that only God is righteous and 100% good and that no one is good by His standard.
- **Set Up:** None.

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FIRST, you'll want to make sure everyone is on the same page by defining the word righteousness. To do that, you are going to have your students look at four verses from Psalm 119. Ask four students to read Psalm 119: 137, 142, 144, 172 (one verse each). After everyone reads, ask:

- **What is a theme that runs through each of these four verses?**
  - Possible answers: That God is righteous, that all His laws (or statutes or commandments) are righteous.
- **Okay. But what does it mean that God is righteous?**
  - Possible answers: That God is right, that His rules are perfect, that He is good.

Camp on this question for a minute or two and try to help your students think through what it means that God is righteous. For instance, if someone says that for God to be righteous means that He is good, press further and ask:

- **What exactly does it mean that God is good? Give me some examples?**
  - When you feel like they've thought through the issue, move on to the next point.

Say something like:

- **I think we're on the right track. The thing is, "righteousness" is a really difficult word to nail down in a short definition. When we look at how the Bible describes the idea of God's righteousness, God's righteousness refers to the truth that everything about God—His actions, His plan, His character—is perfectly good. God is all good, all the time. He is completely incapable of anything not good! In fact, He is the very definition of good. God's righteousness is a way of describing this overwhelming, all-encompassing goodness.**

NEXT, your goal is to help students to understand that not only is God righteous and the standard for what it means to be good, but that no other being besides God measures up to His standard. Read (or have a student read) Psalm 25:8. Then, ask:

- **Remember our discussion about what it means for someone to be good at the beginning? Do you think that any human being actually lives up to the standard of being good 100% of the time? I mean, we all know some wonderful, loving people, but do you know anyone who is perfectly good, who never has "one of those days"?**
  - Answer: The point of this question is to set up the fact that God is righteous, but that everyone else is not. You may hear the sentiment expressed in this discussion that there are varying degrees of goodness: God is perfectly good, some people are really evil, and then there's a group of people who may not be perfect, but they're basically good people that God is pleased with. Gently push back on that sentiment if you hear it by asking good questions such as, "How good do you need to be for God to consider you 'good'?"

Explain that the truth is that every human being is in a different category from God. Say:

- **This verse in Psalm 25 says that God is good, and because of that He tells sinners how to live life. But "sinners" doesn't refer to those people down the street who are worse than us. "Sinners" refers to all of us. It's a truth that is hard to hear but know that I'm in the same boat as you. If God is righteous, if His goodness is the standard by which we tell whether or not we're good, then nobody's good. Jesus actually addressed this idea head-on once when someone asked Him a question.**

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THEN, read Mark 10:17-18. As you read, pause briefly after verse 17 and point out that the man asked a very straightforward question, and that Jesus starts out by answering a totally different question. Then, ask:

- **Now, later on in this passage, Jesus does answer the man's question. Tell me why do you think Jesus started off by asking, "Why do you call me good? No one is good—except God alone."**
  - Answer: It's difficult to get to the bottom of why exactly Jesus asked the man this question, but it's probably a mix of two factors: 1) Jesus—though the Son of God—was in the habit of deflecting glory and honor to God the Father, and 2) Jesus wanted to make the point that God alone is good, and therefore no human being could be good enough to inherit eternal life on their own efforts. This second one is key as you begin to finish up this lesson.
- **Jesus echoes what we just read in a couple of psalms that God alone is perfectly good. And if we're honest, the idea is that it's only God that's good, and then there's us: way, way, way down on the goodness scale, not even close to where God is. I don't think it's that hard for us to admit that God is perfectly good, but a lot of times we like to think that we're kind of a close second to Him: not perfect, but not bad, either. Do you think that's true?**
  - Make sure you follow up one-word answers by pressing for an explanation.
- **If it's really true that none of us are really good, that we're not even close to God's level of goodness, how does that impact how we feel (or should feel) about ourselves?**
  - Answers will vary.
- **How does it impact how we relate to God (how we talk to Him, what we think about Him, etc.)?**
  - Answers will vary.
- **How does it impact eternity? If God is the only one who is 100% good, can anyone be good enough to earn the right to be with Him in Heaven?**
  - Answer: Of course, the answer is "no." But make sure that your students grasp this fact before you move on. Know that you'll also return to this idea in Lesson 27.

NEXT, you're going to give your group a glimpse of the amazing news that will be the topic of Lesson 27: that even though we can never be righteous on our own, we can be righteous through Jesus.

- **So, we now know that no matter how good we think we are, we don't measure up to God's standard and His infinite goodness and righteousness. However, this isn't the end of the story. In a sense, we had to cover the difficult news this week, so we could cover the great news next week. But I do want to give you a sneak peek at that great news before we finish.**

Read Romans 6:11-14. You won't spend a ton of time on these four verses, so know that your goal is to help your students get this one idea out of the passage: Though we can't be righteous or choose righteousness on our own, we can seek it, and we can identify with Christ's righteousness. Since it's Jesus that makes us righteous rather than our own efforts (which you'll talk a lot about in Lesson 27), we count ourselves as dead to sin (not-righteousness) and alive to God in Christ Jesus (who is righteousness). Then ask:

- **How can I count myself dead to sin if I know that I sinned yesterday, I sinned today already, and if the sun comes up tomorrow, I'll sin then, too?**
  - Answer: Counting ourselves as dead to sin isn't about being perfect. It's about no longer identifying ourselves with sin. There's a difference between trying, failing, trying again and living as though there is no standard and no God who will ever hold us accountable.




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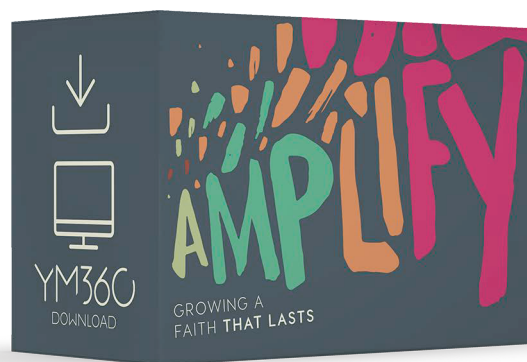
GROWING A  
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We hope you have enjoyed this sample of this **Amplify: Growing a Faith That Lasts** study. Each **Amplify** lesson has a Leader Guide in PDF and DOC format that you can adjust to fit the needs of your group.

Do you have questions about this study? We're here to help! Contact our world-class Customer Care team at (888) 969-6360, email us at [customercare@ym360.com](mailto:customercare@ym360.com), or Live Chat us through our website.



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SERVICE  
HUMILITY  
KNOWING GOD  
PRAYER  
STEWARDSHIP  
THE UNCHANGING GOD



This study is one of the 3-lesson studies in the Amplify curriculum.

Amplify is a 52-lesson youth ministry Bible study curriculum that will help your students lay the foundation of a lasting relationship with God through a study of the core concepts of their faith.

### Included in each Amplify 3-lesson study:

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