

© 1: Unseen Power

Exploring the visible power of our invisible God.

Scripture:

- John 1:18—No one has seen God.
- John 4:24—God is Spirit.
- Luke 24:36-39—Jesus returned as a real Being.
- 1 Timothy 1:17; 6:15b-16—God is invisible.
- Genesis 1:1—God created the earth.
- Romans 1:20—Creation reveals God.
- Psalm 19:1-6—Nature declares God’s existence.
- Psalm 14:1—Those who don’t believe God are foolish.

| ACTIVITY OVERVIEW | | |
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| Activity | Summary | Pre-Session Prep |
| Activity 1: Forces Are With You | Experiment with unseen forces of nature. | You’ll need one balloon for each family member, a ball, one or more refrigerator magnets, and Bibles. |
| Activity 2: Creative Creator | Examine creation for evidence of God. | Video or picture books of creation, and Bibles. |
| Activity 3: Not a Chance! | Compare creation to a task dependent on chance. | Paper, pencil, and Bible. |

Main Points:

- God is invisible, real, and powerful.
- Though we can’t see God, we can learn about God through creation.
- To deny God’s order and creation is to deny God’s existence.

LIFE SLOGAN: “Just like air, God is there!”

Make it your own

In the space provided below, outline the flow and add any additional ideas to guide you through the process of conducting this family night.

Prayer & Praise Items

In the space provided below, list any items you wish to pray about or give praise for during this family night session.

Journal

In the space provided below, capture a record of any fun or meaningful things which happened during this family night session.



WARM-UP

Gather family members and explain: Today we're going to begin a new tradition in our home called "Family Night" to help us learn more about God. To do this, we'll all be participating in experiments, projects, activities, discussions, and more. In fact, there's no telling what we might do while we learn about God!

Establish the Ground Rules:

Take a few moments and have each family member share what he or she hopes to get out of this series. Then ask all family members to agree to some basic guidelines for family nights. For example, you might suggest that everyone promises to participate in all activities and discussions, and that all involved promise not to be unkind or put down one another.



Open in Prayer:

When everyone is ready, have a family member pray, asking God to help everyone in the family understand more about Him through this time. Then move on to activity #1.

ACTIVITY 1: Forces Are With You

Point: God is invisible, real and powerful.



Supplies: You'll need one balloon for each family member, a ball, one or more refrigerator magnets, and Bibles.



Opening question: How can God be real when we can't see him?

Share: Let's do some experiments to examine other things which are real, but that we can't see . . .

Activity: Stand on a chair and stretch your arm out at shoulder level, with your palm open and facing the floor. Tell family members to examine closely the area between your palm and floor and to report what they see there. Affirm kids for their responses.



Share: There's something important between my hand and the floor that we can't see—gravity! Even though we can't see it, we can see the effect it has.

Place a ball in your outstretched palm, and then drop it to the floor. Ask the children what they saw. Then drop the ball again and have the children quickly pass their hand through the path of the falling ball. Ask what they felt. If children are interested, have them do the same thing. Explain: **Just because we can't see or feel gravity, it doesn't mean it does not exist. It's the effects of gravity we see, like how it pulls this ball to the floor—and keeps us on the ground.**

Age Adjustments

FOR OLDER CHILDREN, check out a library book with further experiments on air or wind, gravity or magnetic forces. Lead your family in one or two of these more elaborate tests of invisible forces.

FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN, focus only on the balloon and magnet experiments given here. Let children enjoy chasing the deflating balloons and playing with the magnets. **SPECIAL NOTE:** Balloons can pose a choking hazard to young children. Keep balloons and their fragments out of small children's hands and mouths!

Activity: When children are ready, pass out the balloons, and have each person inflate his or her balloon. (Younger children may need help with this.)

Share: We can't see the air we blow into these balloons, but the power of that air is so strong, it can stretch the elastic of these balloons. Though we cannot see the air, we can sure see the effects of the air (what it does). Watch what else the balloon can do!

Release the opening on your balloon and let it fly around the room. Have family members take turns releasing the balloons and watching them fly around the room. Just for fun, inflate the balloons again and again, seeing which balloon goes the highest and the farthest.

Activity: Have the children take turns pulling magnets off the refrigerator and replacing them. Test how far away from the refrigerator can you hold the magnet and have it still pull toward the refrigerator instead of dropping to the floor.

Place two magnets on the floor and see how far away from each other they must be before they rush together. Or, use the positive and negative ends to push magnets away from each other. Be sure each family member has an opportunity to feel the magnetic push and pull.

Share: When the magnet sticks to the refrigerator or pushes away, we can't see the magnetic force, but we can feel and watch its effects.

Ask:

- **Even though you can't see it, do you believe in air? Gravity? Magnetic force? Why or why not?** (*Answer: Yes! You can see and feel it.*)
- **How is that like believing in God?** (*Answer: God is real, even though He is invisible.*)

Share: Let's look at what the Bible has to say about this. (*Depending on the age of your children, you may want to have them look up the following passages or you might reference and interpret them for the children.*)



Read Bible and discuss:

John 1:18: We learn that **no one has seen God the Father.** He made Himself known through Jesus, His son. Even Moses and other Old Testament characters never say God, they only saw the "Glory of God").

John 4:24: **God is a Spirit,** not limited by time and space like we humans are. That's why He can be everywhere at once.

Luke 24:36-39: Jesus' heavenly body was not just a restored human body like ours, **He is real** and able to appear and disappear as He did here behind locked doors.

Share: Just as gravity, air, and magnetic force are invisible, God is invisible. But also like these forces, God is real, powerful, and active in our lives.

ACTIVITY 2: Creative Creator

Point: Though we can't see God, we can learn about God through creation.



Supplies: You'll need a video or picture book from the library featuring the beauty of nature. Look for materials displaying national parks or parts of the world with spectacular mountains, waterfalls, greenery, and so on. Or find examples of unusual fish, lizards and other creatures God's created. You'll also need Bibles.



Opening Scripture: Read Genesis 1:1 aloud together.

Age Adjustments

FOR OLDER CHILDREN, plan a hiking excursion in a local outdoor area. Visit mountains, deserts or even a large park, and explore the beauty and creativity of God firsthand! Take your Bible along and read Psalm 148 together in the middle of God's creation.

FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN, visit the zoo or a pet store. Marvel at the incredible variety found in creation. The colors, the sounds, the textures of various animals is incredible! Talk about how creative and powerful God must be to have made all these animals.

Share: In the beginning, God created everything out of nothing. Man can't do that, can he? Let's take some time to look more closely at the world God has made.

Activity: Show the video or pictures you've gathered, taking time together to comment on and appreciate the beauty of what God has created.

Share: The Bible tells us even more about God's creation.



Read Psalm 19:1-6 and Romans 1:20 aloud together.

Psalm 19:1-6—David points out that God reveals Himself through His creation.

Romans 1:20—Through general revelation, nature shows us God's wisdom, power, and perfection in detail.

Question:

- **How do you think the sky tells us about God?** (*Answer: It shows us God's vast, huge, awesome reach because we are all just a speck in comparison.*)
- **How is God's power shown through creation?** (*Answer: There are things man cannot control, like the weather; we cannot control how hot it gets, how much it snows, the power of earthquakes or tornadoes, etc.*)
- **How does creation around us let us know God is God?** (*Answer: God has a purpose and order for His creation. God gave animals instincts that help them survive, like the birds that know when and where to fly to escape the cold, and the lions that know how to hunt for food. God also made the earth rotate and be positioned a certain distance from the sun so that there are seasons. These facts show us that God knew what He was doing when He created the earth and ordered the way things work.*)


Share: We can't see God, but we can learn a lot about Him through the things He has created—including us humans!

Take a moment to affirm your family members by completing this sentence about each person: "God created (name), and through (name) I am reminded that God is (blank)." For example, "God created Tony, and through Tony I'm reminded that God is full of joy!" Be sure to say something affirming to each child and to your

spouse. If family members feel comfortable, have them do the same thing. Then move on to the final activity.

ACTIVITY 3: Not A Chance!

Point: To deny God's order and creation is to deny God's existence.

 **Supplies:** 10 small pieces of paper, a pencil, and a Bible.

Share: There are some people who don't believe in God, and they explain creation as happening simply by chance. Let's try a project to see if that's true.


Activity: Have a family member write the numbers 1 through 10 on individual pieces of paper. Mix the numbers in a pile, then explain that each person will get an opportunity to line up the numbers using only random chance to do it.

Invite each family member to toss the numbers into the air and see how many they can get to land in proper order (1,2,3 and so on). Let each person take several turns, then congratulate the person who got the most numbers in order.



Share: The chance of these numbers landing on the ground in order is very small, if not impossible for you and I! The way the numbers landed when we threw them is called random chance. Some people think the world was created by random chance.

 Read Psalm 14:1 aloud.

 **Question:** Why do you think the Bible calls these people fools? (*Answer: The person who can't see the evidence of a Creator God in the mountains and sunsets is a fool!*)

Activity: Have the children now line up the numbers in different orders that you provide (1-10, even then odd numbers, etc.)

Share: If we use our hands to line up the numbers properly, we no longer rely on chance for them to be orderly. In the same way, the

world was created and works in an ordered way because our invisible God created and directs the world.



WRAP-UP

Gather everyone in a circle and have family members take turns answering this question: **What's one thing you've learned about God today?**

Next tell kids you've got a "Life Slogan" you'd like to share with them. Explain: **A Life Slogan is a little phrase, or jingle, we can use to help us keep in mind what we've learned.**

Life Slogan: Today's Life Slogan is this, "Just like air, God is there!" Have family members repeat the slogan two or three times to help them learn it. Then encourage them to practice saying it during the week so they can talk about it at your next family night session.



Close in Prayer: Allow time for each family member to share prayer concerns and answers to prayer. Then close your time together with prayer for each concern. Thank

God for listening to and caring about us.

You might want to start a family prayer journal so that prayer requests can be kept track of and answers can be recorded as evidence of God's working.

Additional Resources:

Where is God? by Karen King (ages 4-8)

This is God's World by Charlotte Stowell (ages 1-4)

Have You Seen the Wind? by Jan Godfrey (ages 4-8)

Age Adjustments

This activity may be too abstract for younger children. As a substitute activity you might try this: Take a family photograph and place it under a sheet of clear plastic. Then give children markers or crayons and allow them to draw on the photograph. When the children are finished, remove the plastic to show the picture is unharmed.

SHARE: Just as the unseen plastic protected the family picture, our unseen God has power to protect our real family.