

*Mission Study Lessons for Adults, Students, Children, and Preschoolers*

*2011 supplement*

# *Leader's Mission Study*



*free  
to live*

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**Alma Hunt**  
Offering for Virginia Missions

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# adult lesson

***It is absolutely clear that God has called you to a free life...  
[so] use your freedom to serve one another in love; that's how freedom grows.  
Galatians 5:13 (The Message)***

## *Culture Study*

God has indeed called all believers to a free life, and God calls us as believers to use our freedom to serve one another in love. Each person's response to God takes on a different form. At CrossRoads Camp and Conference Center, people of various ages and from diverse backgrounds have found opportunities to respond to God's call on their lives. Whether professing faith in Christ for the first time, developing God-given gifts as summer staffers, or sharing as missionaries to motivate others to serve, people who have been touched by CrossRoads have served one another and enabled freedom in Christ to grow.

[Post a map of Virginia. Find Lowesville and place a pin there to indicate the central location of CrossRoads Camp and Conference Center.]

In 2010, CrossRoads celebrated 25 years of missions camping. Since 1985, thousands of people have experienced Christ in the serene, beautiful surroundings of the George Washington National Forest. The Little Piney River offers the soothing sounds of nature as it flows down the mountain and through the camp. Many people who have been there describe CrossRoads as a place where “the silence is so loud, you can hear God.”

CrossRoads, a ministry of WMU of Virginia, opened in 1985 following the closure and sale of three previous camps around the state (Viewmont, Baptist Lodge, and the Cedars). A grassroots effort from Virginia Baptist churches, through their WMU organizations, brought about the fundraising that was critical to the building of the camp. Since it opened, countless children and students have been able to get away from the everyday routine of their lives to focus on God while enjoying God's creation and being nurtured and taught by Christian counselors. Missionaries from around the world come to the camp to share their stories and develop relationships with campers. Staffers come from high schools and colleges around Virginia to explore God's will for their lives while modeling and teaching Christ's love to the campers. CrossRoads also offers year-round opportunities for churches, groups, and individuals to “get away” from the bustle of everyday life and attend events, retreats, and other gatherings.

**Ask:** What memories do you have of CrossRoads? Has the camp touched your life or that of someone you know? Why is it important sometimes to go to a quiet, reflective place to focus on God?

## *Old Testament*

Ask a volunteer to read Isaiah 30:21 (NIV preferred). Explain that this verse is inscribed on the cornerstone at Hunt Hall, the dining hall at CrossRoads (named for Alma Hunt). Distribute index cards and pens or pencils, and ask participants to respond privately to some or all of the following questions by writing on their cards:

- When in your life have you heard God giving you specific direction?
- How did you respond to God's direction?
- What is something you think God might be calling you to do for Him now?
- How can you set aside time to listen to God each day in your life?

## *New Testament*

Ask a volunteer to read Galatians 5:13. On index cards or note paper, ask participants to write this verse in their own words and share their version with a partner. Raise these questions for group discussion:

- What do you think it means to live free lives the way God wants us to live?
- What are some real ways you have served others?
- What are some needs you know of right now that you (and/or our church) can respond to?
- What would the world look like if all believers took seriously this call from God—to live free lives in service to one another?

## *Case Study*

Tell in your own words the story of CrossRoads Camp and Conference Center as described here in the Culture Study. For more information, videos, and photos, visit [www.crossroadsecc.com](http://www.crossroadsecc.com). Before your session, find someone who has had a personal experience with CrossRoads (a camper, volunteer, staffer, etc.) and ask him/her to tell about it when your group meets.

**Optional:** Use the story in the Alma Hunt Offering prayer guide about CrossRoads and the camper whose life was changed there.

Lead adults to discuss how a retreat or camp experience can greatly enhance a person's focus on God and relationship with God. Talk together about the importance of taking time to listen to God. Help participants understand that God wants us as believers to live free lives and to freely serve one another. Discuss what that means in the life of your church and its members.

## *Involvement*

Hearing about CrossRoads may re-establish some people's interest in the camp by helping them recall memories of how it (or other Christian camps) have been instrumental in their lives. CrossRoads is a vibrant, vital ministry of WMUV, and the camp can always use the help of volunteers.

If your church doesn't send summer campers to CrossRoads, consider doing so. Visit [www.crossroadsecc.com](http://www.crossroadsecc.com) to learn about all kinds of opportunities for everyone in your church. Consider taking a group on a retreat at CrossRoads. Or if you're looking for a mission opportunity, contact Reuben Todd, Camp Director, through the website to inquire about service at CrossRoads. Individuals and groups can go as volunteers working with camp programs, construction and renovation projects, and many other things.

## *Commitment*

Lead your group to pray for CrossRoads. No matter what time of year you are doing this study, there is something going on at the camp. People are there seeking God's will and learning to respond to Him in service to one another. The staff is there working daily to enable others to hear God's voice and respond to His call. Pray specifically for what you and your church might do to support this ministry. Thank God for all He does at CrossRoads and around Virginia through the Alma Hunt Offering for Virginia Missions.

# student lesson

## *Culture Study*

**Ask:** Have you ever been to a Christian summer camp? Have you gone on a retreat at another time of year? Have you ever heard of or been to CrossRoads Camp and Conference Center?

[Post a map of Virginia and show students where Lowesville (the location of CrossRoads) is.]

**Say:** Did you know that right here in Virginia, God is touching people and changing their lives at this camp?

**Ask:** When have you spent time focusing on God? During that time, what was it like? What did you sense God telling you? How did you respond? Do you think it's necessary to get away sometimes in order to focus on your relationship with God?

Use the information in the Adult Lesson (Culture Study) to explain more about CrossRoads and its ministry.

Try to enlist someone to tell about a personal experience at CrossRoads during your session.

## *Old Testament*

Divide students into pairs, and give each pair one blindfold or bandanna. Instruct them to play a version of "Follow the Leader" in which one leads another who is blindfolded, around the room, giving verbal instructions only to the one who can't see. After a few minutes, reverse positions and allow the other person to give the instructions. Once they've done this, call the group back together.

**Ask:** What was it like to be the one who was blindfolded? Was it easy or hard to listen for instructions? How did you feel while you were being led?

Ask a volunteer to read Isaiah 30:21 (preferably from the NIV). **Ask:** What does this say about how God will lead us when we listen?

Discuss with the students what it's like to listen for God's voice and direction. Tell a personal story if possible about how you have listened to God. Help them understand that they need to take time out, in a quiet place, regularly to listen for God's direction.

## *New Testament*

Ask a volunteer to read Galatians 5:13. Post a large piece of paper (or use a whiteboard) and ask the students to write words or phrases about what it means to live a free life and what it means to use your freedom to serve others. Debrief with them by discussing what they have written. Help them understand that God wants every believer to use his/her freedom to serve one another in His name. Talk about ways you can do that.

## *Case Study*

Use the Alma Hunt prayer guide to read the story about CrossRoads and the camper whose life was changed there.

**Ask:** Has your life been changed by a particular person or place? Do you know someone who could benefit from some time away in order to experience God? Could you be that person?

Distribute notebook paper and pens or pencils. Play quiet music in the background and direct students to write a letter to God, asking for His direction. Direct them to write a prayer to God, asking for courage to follow His call.

### *Involvement*

Hearing about CrossRoads may motivate some of your students to want to go there as a camper or work there as a staffer. Visit [www.crossroadsccc.com](http://www.crossroadsccc.com) for more information about helping your students pursue this.

### *Commitment*

Lead your students to pray now for CrossRoads. No matter what time of year you are doing this study, there is something going on at the camp. People are there seeking God's will and learning to respond to Him in service to one another. The staff is there working daily to enable others to hear God's voice and respond to His call. Pray specifically for what you and your church might do to support this ministry. Thank God for all He does at CrossRoads and around Virginia through the Alma Hunt Offering for Virginia Missions.

# children's lesson

**Optional room setup:** Bring in a tent and other items that suggest a camping theme. Enlist someone who plays guitar to lead in popular Christian camp songs.

## *Culture Study*

**Ask:** Have you ever been to a Christian summer camp? Do you know someone who has? Have you ever heard of or been to CrossRoads Camp and Conference Center? When you are 10 years old, you are old enough to go there and have a great week of fun and focusing on God!

[Post a map of Virginia and show students where Lowesville (the location of CrossRoads) is.]

**Say:** Did you know that right here in Virginia, God is changing people's lives at this camp?

**Ask:** When have you spent time focusing on God? What are some ways you can do that? Have you ever felt like God is telling you something? How did you respond? Do you think it's necessary sometimes to focus on your relationship with God and get to know Him better?

Use the information in the Adult Lesson (Culture Study) to explain more about CrossRoads and its ministry.

Try to locate someone (especially a child if possible) who has been to CrossRoads, and enlist him/her to tell about that experience during your session.

## *Old Testament*

Play a game of "Simon Says" with the children. Once you've done that, ask them what the hardest part of the game is (they will likely say something like listening to the instructions or following the directions without getting confused).

Explain to the children that when we try to listen to God, we probably won't hear Him saying actual words. So it's even more important for us to focus and concentrate when we pray—and not just talk to God. We must listen. When we do that, we can often sense what He is telling us by a feeling we get. (Tell a story about how you have listened to God and followed His direction at some point in your life.)

Read Isaiah 30:21 (preferably from the NIV). Talk about the meaning of the verse. Help the children understand that when they focus on God and seek His direction, He will show them what He wants for their lives.

## *New Testament*

Ask a child to read Galatians 5:13. Distribute white paper and markers or crayons. Direct children to draw a picture of a way they can serve (or help) another person. Debrief with them by discussing what they have drawn. Help them understand that God wants every believer to use his/her freedom to serve one another in His name. Talk about ways they can do that even as children. Teach them that God wants all of us to help others to show His love for them.

## *Case Study*

Use the Alma Hunt prayer guide to read the story about CrossRoads and the camper whose life was changed there.

**Ask:** Has your life been changed by a particular person or place? Do you have a favorite place you like to go to pray or read your Bible?

Distribute index cards, one per child, and instruct the children to write on their cards the name (or names) of someone they know who might not know about Jesus. Tell them to silently pray for that person and take their card home to keep praying for that person.

### *Involvement*

Hearing about CrossRoads may motivate some of the children to want to go there as a camper. Visit [www.crossroadsgcc.com](http://www.crossroadsgcc.com) for more information about helping them pursue this.

### *Commitment*

Lead your students to pray now for CrossRoads. (You might want to form a circle and ask each child to say a sentence prayer related to something they learned.) No matter what time of year you are doing this study, there is something going on at the camp. People are there seeking God's will and learning to respond to Him in service to one another. The staff is there working daily to enable others to hear God's voice and respond to His call. Pray specifically for what you and your church might do to support this ministry. Thank God for all He does at CrossRoads and around Virginia through the Alma Hunt Offering for Virginia Missions.

# preschool lesson

**Optional room setup:** Bring in a tent and other items that suggest a camping theme. Enlist someone who plays guitar to lead in popular Christian camp songs.

## *Culture Study*

**Ask:** Have you heard about a summer camp? Do you know someone who has been to summer camp, like an older brother or sister? There is a special summer camp right here in Virginia called CrossRoads Camp and Conference Center. When you are 10 years old, you are old enough to go there and have a great week of fun and focusing on God!

[Post a map of Virginia and show students where Lowesville (the location of CrossRoads) is.]

**Say:** Did you know that going to summer camp can be a way to learn more about God?

Use the information in the Adult Lesson (Culture Study) to explain more about CrossRoads and its ministry.

Try to locate someone (especially a child if possible) who has been to CrossRoads, and enlist him/her to tell about that experience during your session.

## *Old Testament*

Explain Isaiah 30:21 to preschoolers by telling them that God has special plans for their lives, and if they pray and learn more about God, God will help them understand those plans as they get older.

Play a game of “Follow the Leader” or “Simon Says.” When you’re finished, tell the preschoolers that just like they were following the leader’s instructions, they should always try to follow God’s instructions. As they grow older, they will learn about listening to God.

## *New Testament*

Explain Galatians 5:13 to preschoolers by telling them that God loves them so much that He wants everyone who believes in Him to be free—and to freely help others.

If your classroom has a Homeliving area, direct the preschoolers to act out ways they can help each other there (ex: taking care of babies, washing dishes, etc.).

## *Case Study*

Call the preschoolers to Large Group Time, having them sit in a circle. Sing easy-to-learn camp songs like *Kum Bah Yah*, *Jesus Loves Me*, etc. Tell the preschoolers that singing around a campfire is a fun thing to do at camp.

Ask preschoolers if they’ve ever been camping, and have them tell about their favorite things to do while camping.

Suggest to preschoolers that when they go to camp, or even just outside in their backyards, they can look at things God made (like grass, flowers, and trees) and thank God for them. If possible, take your group outside to notice these things. While outside, say thank-you prayers to God for making such beautiful things in nature. Ask God to help everyone be still so they can focus on Him.

### *Involvement*

Preschoolers can't yet attend summer camp at CrossRoads, but hearing about the camp may make them want to go in the future. If your church is sending children to camp this summer, or students on a retreat at another time, consider directing your preschoolers to decorate bookmarks with Isaiah 30:21 on them so you can give them to those who will go to camp. This can help preschoolers make a connection to others in your church and share some of their experiences.

### *Commitment*

Lead preschoolers in simple sentence prayers, asking God to bless and guide everyone who will go to CrossRoads or work there now and in the future. Pray for your preschoolers, asking God to show them the way He wants them to go both now and in the future.