

**One truth shared:** God gives us all we need to know about him in his Word.

*Then the LORD came down in the cloud and stood there with him and proclaimed his name, the LORD. And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation."*

*Moses bowed to the ground at once and worshiped. "Lord," he said, "if I have found favor in your eyes, then let the Lord go with us. Although this is a stiff-necked people, forgive our wickedness and our sin, and take us as your inheritance."*  
**Exodus 34:5-9**

### God Speaks for Himself

Play out this scenario in your head: You start a new summer job not knowing anyone there. You get to know people slowly as the weeks go by. You really get to know them in the lunch break room. On Friday they share their weekend plans. You share yours. They catch on that you go to church most Sundays. It confuses them. They ask, "What's so special about God that you would plan your weekends around him?"

How would you answer?

You've been put on the spot to explain why God is so awesome you feel the need to worship him. They are asking a *big* question! There are so many ways you can describe God because the Bible is a big book with lots of details about him.

If God was in the lunchroom, how would he respond? Well, in Exodus 34 Moses begged God for more of an explanation. Moses just wanted to know more about God. He wanted to see his glory. And as God passed by, God defined himself.

He uses the name *LORD*. This name means that he is the only God. He is eternal. He is the Lord. He is the one who saves. He is the one who saves you. He is *your* Lord.

Your Lord stoops down to see how you are doing and picks you up when you've fallen. Your Lord doesn't treat you like your sins deserve, he loves you regardless of them. Your Lord doesn't jump at you to accuse. Instead, he overflows with love that will never run out and will always be there when you need it. Your Lord doesn't love a select few, he loves all his creation, all his people, all his children, all of *you*.

Your Lord forgives. Yes, he punishes sin. He doesn't just turn a blind eye. But he doesn't punish you. He sent his one and only Son to die in your place so you would be with him forever.

That is how God describes himself. Would you say it the same exact way in the break room? Probably not. But you can say it! And you *do* know who your Lord is. Whether your answer is long or short, God speaks for himself now through you. Through you, others can know how God is defined by his compassion and grace.

**Prayer:** LORD, thank you for describing yourself in a way that assures me I am constantly loved and I always yours.  
Amen.

## Foundation Teen Facilitators Guide

### Year A – Proper 16

#### The Church God Wants

**One truth shared:** God gives us all we need to know about him in his Word.

### God Speaks for Himself

**Starting the Discussion:** *This first section is intended to be light and easy, to engage and get the conversation going. Have a little fun with these questions.*

- Have you ever been put on the spot to describe God? How did it go? What would you have done differently?
- Come up with a couple of reasons why Christian teens (not just adults) need to be ready to share their faith.

**Connecting:** *This section serves as a bridge between the opening conversation and the body of the study/discussion. It should get the group thinking about the topic/text even before they've looked at it.*

What would you say if someone asked you "What's so special about God that you have to go to church?"

**Digging In:** *Here we want to dig into some texts or the text for the day and see what Scripture says. The questions are meant to be open ended to give a beginning of a scriptural conversation. These are a guide for a spiritual and scriptural conversation.*

- List at least five of the ways God describes himself in verses 6 and 7.
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- Now go back and discuss what you think each means in your own words.
- Now, let's apply when you might be able to share those descriptions of God with someone. Match each one up with a time someone may need to hear it most.

**Conclusion:** *Here we want to wrap up the discussion, perhaps circling back to the "connecting question" above.*

An "elevator pitch" is something that describes the amount of time you have to engage in conversation with someone during a short elevator ride of 30-45 seconds *max*. As a small group or in pairs, create an evangelism "elevator pitch" about God that you might use in real life. Consider using Exodus 34:6-7 as your basis. You have three minutes to do it (starting now).