

**WEEK 3**  
**LESSON GUIDE**

**THE MAKING OF**

**BIG IDEA**

With God, difficult moments can help our character grow.

**BIBLE**

John 15:16–22; Psalm 27:7–14;  
Romans 8:28

**ABOUT THIS WEEK**

The stunt teams in movies know how getting the right shot can mean putting themselves into challenging situations over and over. This week, we'll hear Jesus' words to his disciples as he prepared them for a future without his physical presence. Jesus' words can help us stay focused on what's important by reminding us that **with God, difficult moments can help our character grow.**

*WHAT? What are we talking about today?*

**VIDEO | Previously Seen on *The Making Of***

- Hey everyone! Welcome back to Week 3 of our series, *The Making Of*. We're so excited you're here with us.

**QUESTION | "What's Your Favorite Action Scene?"**

- For the last few weeks, we have noticed similarities between growing with God and making a movie. So I am curious about your opinions on movies.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Have everyone turn to their neighbor and answer the two questions below. After a few minutes, invite a few people to share their thoughts with the group and share your own.*
  - **What is one of your favorite scenes in a movie?**
  - **What's your favorite action scene in a movie?**
- There are so many incredible stunts featured in movies. Whether it's jets flying through a canyon, a car chase through city streets, or an intense lightsaber battle, these stunts keep us glued to the screen.
- These sequences take a lot of time to prepare, but unpredictable circumstances can lead to changes on filming day. The weather might be off, or they might lose light faster than expected. Sometimes, they'll only get one take. Other times, the stunt person will need to persevere through multiple takes of a complex scene.
- There are many ways stunts can get messed up and must be repeated. Every time we mess up and push through a difficult moment, we can grow and understand how to do it better the next time.

**VIDEO | A Clip of Tom Cruise's Stunt Work**

- Actors like Tom Cruise have become known for their love of performing their own stunts. Instead of using stunt doubles to act out physical scenes, Tom Cruise will perform very dangerous activities for his movies.
- He puts his body on the line until the director feels they have the shot they need. Let's see an example.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *As a teaching tool, play a short clip from a video [like this one](#) (3:10–4:14) of a behind-the-scenes look at Tom Cruise's stunt work for the movie *Rogue Nation*. We always suggest viewing the clip beforehand to make sure you think it's a video that will be a good fit for your context! For more information on how to legally use copyrighted material for educational purposes, [read this!](#)*
- Can you imagine hanging on to the outside of an airplane? How about doing it eight times? Stunt actors are amazing, persistent people who will do whatever is necessary to help achieve the director's vision for a scene.
- A good stunt person puts their bodies through discomfort to make the best movie ever. Have you ever felt like that, though? You are trying hard to make the right decision or create good moments for the people around you, but it requires multiple takes.
- What is God up to in moments like this? Let's take a look at a few passages from the Bible to find some insights for us.

**SO WHAT? Why does it matter to God and to us?****SCRIPTURE | John 15:16–22**

- There's a story in the Bible in which Jesus' early followers start to wrap their minds around what it really means to follow him. Jesus is about to be arrested, and he knows it. He used this intense moment to tell his disciples never to give up, even when the storyline takes a difficult turn.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read John 15:16–22. (Telos Bible Pg 1052)*
- Jesus' words here weren't meant to scare his disciples and friends. Jesus reframed the next chapter in their lives. He was genuine and honest about what they might experience in the future and reminded them not to give up hope.
  - Jesus said, "Look, life was hard for me, so it might be hard for you, too. When trials arise, that doesn't mean that God has left you. Instead, know that God is with you and will help you grow, even in the most challenging moments."
  - This was an unexpected twist in the story. The disciples heard Jesus talk about a new kingdom, a more fair life for everyone. They probably thought they were about to rise to a new level of power and authority. Then Jesus tells them they need to be ready for discomfort and persecution.
- Thankfully, because of the choices they saw Jesus make, they didn't panic. Jesus had already shown them what was possible in the face of hardships.

**IMAGE | Easter Eggs**

- Have you ever heard of "Easter eggs" in films? *Easter eggs* are the name for hidden images or references in the background of a scene. They are meant to reveal more of the story than just what's happening in the foreground.
- They're like clues to the story's meaning. Filmmakers include Easter eggs to reward audiences for paying close attention, and you get a sense of accomplishment when you spot one.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *As a teaching tool, when the teaching indicates, show [this Easter egg](#) from the movie *Tron*, [this Easter egg](#) from *Toy Story 3*, and [this Easter egg](#) from *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. Use these or others you find for the teaching below.*
  - Do you notice anything unexpected in the photo from the 1980s version of *Tron*? The director added an image of the video game *Pac-Man* to the circuit screen.
  - Do you see the Easter egg in this picture of *Toy Story 3*? Do you recognize the shirt the garbage worker is wearing? If so, you'll know that this is grown-up Sid, the kid villain in the first *Toy Story* movie.
  - Do you recognize the two hieroglyphics in this *Indiana Jones* movie? These are images of R2D2 and C3PO from *Star Wars*. George Lucas created both movies and slyly brought them together in the background of this scene with Indiana Jones, aka Han Solo.

- Easter eggs make us want to look deeper once we know to expect the unexpected. The same can be true when we face difficulties. A random message, connection, or surprise can be found in every challenging season.
- This isn't to minimize the pain or stress of a difficult time. But when we know that God can always bring light in the darkest situation, we start to look for evidence of God's presence. We look for opportunities to grow into the person we're made to be.

**SCRIPTURE | Psalm 27:7–14**

- Jesus' story is a good example of a seemingly bad situation that turned into a great one for the world. If only his disciples saw the true meaning behind Jesus' words.
- In the Old Testament, before Jesus arrives, we see God working in people's lives. Even then, God was present in challenging situations and brought light to dark situations.
- The book of Psalms in the Old Testament is filled with songs and poems written by people who experienced the whole spectrum of human emotion. There are pieces about joy, love, and hope, as well as sections about pain, confession, and the question, "When will all of this suffering be over?" When everything seems out of control and upside down, the Psalms remind us to look for the Easter eggs of God's presence and invitations to grow.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read Psalm 27:7–14. (*Telos Bible Pg. 535*)
- In this psalm, the author, David, is honest about what he hopes God will do. He wants God to keep guiding him through his uncomfortable experiences.
- Even though his circumstances are overwhelming, he trusts that God will provide strength in surprising ways because he knows God well. He trusts that God hasn't fled the scene when difficulty strikes.
  - I love the end! David was confident that God would help him see goodness and help him grow through this experience. He made a request and felt safe to confidently wait and see how God would work—both in the situation and in him.
  - Although we'll sometimes be knocked down by life, God doesn't want us to suffer in silence. God invites us to share our feelings and to be open and honest about our thoughts.
- Even Jesus had an honest conversation with God during one of the most challenging moments in his life. Right before he was crucified, he prayed to God. He shared his most raw thoughts and feelings. He did this because he knew he was connected to a God who listened.
- When we go through difficult times, we can trust that we are connected to a God who listens. God hears our cries of pain, our questions, and our frustrations. God not only listens but brings light to the darkest situations.
- God invites us to chase after the light. Every victory and difficult moment can be a space for us to learn, grow, and develop as people and followers of Jesus. **With God, difficult moments can help our character grow.**

**NOW WHAT?** *What does God want us to do about it?*

- When things are going well, believing God guides us and gives us what we need to be more like Jesus is easier. But when hard times hit, we can quickly get distracted, discouraged, or disengaged from the story God is writing for our lives. What can we do to stick to the script, which is God's path for us?
- Here are a few ideas to consider for any season of life. Even when things are going well, these practices help create habits that carry us through life's challenging scenes.
  - **TALK TO GOD:** When you experience a challenge, talk with God. Like David in the Psalms and Jesus, before he was crucified, we can go to God with our difficult moments — big or small. We don't have to edit anything out with God. God will hear us when we call out, whether we feel stretched, tired, or hurt. We can look to God to guide us and show up for us.
  - **ASK FOR HELP:** There are people in your life who can support you. Your small group and the leaders here can walk alongside you as you grow personally and in your faith. You don't have to go through challenges alone, but it's up to you to open that door and share with others. You might be surprised at how many people relate to what you're going through or can offer you help and resources. Make sure you're seeking out trusted companions, those who have your back, and those who know what it's like to walk with God through hard times.

- **KEEP GOING:** We can easily make a home in a pit of discouragement when feeling hurt or burnt out. We may stay far from anything challenging because we're afraid to fail. Jesus shows us that difficult moments are chances to keep growing in our character. Rather than give up, we can learn from our mistakes and try again. God gives us what we need to face challenges.
- **With God, difficult moments can help our character grow.**
- When we intentionally build habits that connect us with God and each other, we will start building and shaping who we become tomorrow.

#### **RESPONSE | A New Twist On A Classic Script**

- To help remind us of the ways God is near us, let's write Psalm 27 in our own words.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For this response, you will need a half page of blank card stock and display the slide Psalm 27:7-14, [included in this week's series materials](#). Have teenagers rewrite the psalm in their own words.*
- Take this version of Psalm 27 and place it anywhere you look daily. Let it remind you of how God is with you in difficulties, growing and shaping you. Remember, **with God, difficult moments can help our character grow.**