

High Schoolers

God

Because God is holy, He is altogether separate from and infinitely above people who are sinful, and He deserves our reverence and obedience.

Activities for God's Separation and Uniqueness

"Minefield" Relay (Separation)

Set up obstacles (mines) representing worldly temptations/sins. Students navigate blindfolded, guided by a partner's voice (representing God's guidance), to show how sin separates us but God's voice leads us to holiness.

God as the Focal Point (Craft)

Students draw radiating lines from a central dot (God) on paper. Discuss how God's holiness is the unique, perfect center from which everything else (our lives) is measured, highlighting His unique nature.

Severed Rope (Sin's Effect)

Use a long rope, cut it, and show how sin severs the connection to God, making it hard to reconnect without intervention (Jesus).

"Holy" vs "Common" Objects

Bring in everyday items (e.g., a dirty sock, a fancy candle, a Bible). Discuss what makes something "holy" - set apart for a specific, sacred purpose. Contrast God's inherent holiness with things we just *use*.

Activities for Reverence and Obedience

ACTS Prayer and Breath Prayers (Reverence/Obedience)

Teach the ACTS (Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication) or PRAY (Pause, Rejoice, Ask Yield) models. Use breath prayers (e.g., Inhale "Lord, you are holy," Exhale "empty me of sin") to practice focused reverence.

Charades (Imitation/Obedience)

Act out godly traits vs. sinful traits. Discuss how holiness isn't just outward show but internal alignment with God's character, leading to obedient imitation of Christ.

Honoring God's Name Discussion

Discuss modern uses of "holy" (holy cow, OMG) vs God's sacred name (Exodus 20:7). Explore how we can show reverence in speech and actions.

Story Sharing and Scripture Connection

Have students share personal struggles or triumphs, then connect them to Biblical narratives where God's holiness and faithfulness were present, showing His supreme worth.

Key Discussion Points

Set Apart

God isn't just *more* holy; He's in a different *category* of being (unique, perfect, not made in our image).

Sin's Barrier

Sin isn't just breaking rules; it separates us from a perfectly holy God (Isaiah 59:2).

Jesus as the Bridge

Because He is holy, only Jesus (the holy God-man) could bridge the gap through His sacrificial obedience (Hebrews 4:15).

Reverence and Awe

His holiness demands awe, not casualness. We show reverence by honoring His name and seeking His will (Psalm 99:9)

God is Creator, all creation is a result of His work, and He created people in His image and as His crowning achievement to enjoy a relationship with Him and reflect His glory.

God as Creator and the Value of Creation

Creation Graffiti Wall

Provide large poster boards, magazines, scissors, glue, markers, and other art supplies. Challenge students to create a collage or draw pictures that showcase the incredible breadth of God's creation, from the Grand Canyon to little-known animal facts. Encourage them to use their phones to research inspiring facts about the world.

Discussion: Use the finished artwork to discuss what creation reveals about its Creator (power, creativity, love, intentionality) and how God invites us to enjoy it.

Nature Hike and Reflection

Take the group on a nature hike or walk in a local park. At various stopping points, lead a discussion on how the natural world reflects God's attributes.

Discussion: Use questions like, "What does this specific piece of nature (a tree, a river, an insect) tell us about God?" Discuss the human responsibility of being stewards of the earth and choose one concrete action the group can take to care for creation, such as organizing a park clean-up.

Humans as God's Crowning Achievement ("imago Dei")

"Mirrors and Ambassadors" Discussion

Use the analogy that humans are created as "mirrors" and "ambassadors" of God.

Discussion:

Mirrors

Discuss how our abilities (love, creativity, compassion, moral conscience, self-awareness) reflect God's nature and character.

Ambassadors

Explore the idea that our actions should represent God's rule and care for creation. Brainstorm practical ways to live out these qualities in their own lives.

“Created in His Image” Mirror Craft/Activity

Give each student a small, inexpensive mirror (or foil as a reflective surface) and have them decorate the frame. As they look at their reflection, have them list words or phrases that describe God around their image.

Discussion: Read Genesis 1:27 and Psalm 139:13-16. Discuss that their inherent worth comes from being intentionally created by God in His image, not from achievements, looks, or social status. This counters feelings of worthlessness and emphasizes their unique value.

“What Makes You, YOU?” Identity Chart

Have students list factors that influence who they are (age, gender, race, family, experiences, personality, talents) on a piece of paper or digital chart.

Discussion: Discuss how, despite all these unique differences, everyone shares the commonality of being made in God’s image. This activity emphasizes unity in diversity and the sanctity of all human life.

Enjoying a Relationship with God and Reflecting His Glory

Worship Through Creativity

After exploring the themes of creation and human value, provide time for a creative response. Students can write a psalm, poem, song of praise, or draw a sketch that celebrates God’s creation or their relationship with Him.

Discussion: Encourage students to share their creations and discuss how using their God-given creativity is a form of worship and a way to reflect His glory.

Journaling/Reflection on God’s Presence

Encourage students to keep reflective journals where they process their thoughts and experiences related to their faith.

Discussion: Guide them to reflect on where they have seen God at work in their lives recently and how having a relationship with God affects their daily decisions and perspectives. This helps them see how their relationship with the Creator impacts their everyday life.

God is omnipresent (all places at all times), omnipresent (all places at all times), omniscient (all-knowing), and omnipotent (all-powerful), and exercises sovereignty over all creation.

Omnipresence (Everywhere)

“Where Can’t God Go?” Game

Start with the idea that parents can’t be in two places at once, but God can. Have students list places/situations (e.g., hidden in a locker, in their thoughts, during a private moment, in another country). Discuss how God is present in *all of* them, offering comfort and awareness.

Discussion: How does knowing God sees your hidden struggles (anxiety, temptation) change how you act?

Omniscience (All-Knowing)

“Divine Detective” Scripture Study

Give groups different Bible passages (e.g., David in Psalm 139, Jesus knowing the disciples’ thoughts). Have them find verses showing God’s knowledge of the future, heart, or hidden things. This is a sentence that contains a potential follow-up query.

Discussion: How does knowing God knows your future help you face uncertainty?

Omnipotence (Rule Over All)

“Kingdom Mapping” and “What If?” Scenarios

Discuss Psalm 103:19 or Isaiah 46:9-10. Map out areas of life (school, social media, global events) and brainstorm how God’s rule applies, even when things seem chaotic.

Discussion: How does accepting God’s sovereignty change your response to bad news or personal setbacks?

Synthesis Activity

Anchor in the Storm

Ask students what lives rent-free in their minds (anxiety, social media, etc.). Then, present God’s “omni” attributes as the ultimate, constant anchor for those thoughts, using visuals like an anchor or a compass.

Discussion: How can leaning on God's omnipresence, omniscience, omnipotence, and sovereignty provide peace and direction in your daily life?

God communicates to us through His Word and hears and answers when we pray, and our spiritual maturity depends on these spiritual disciplines.

Bible and God's Word Activities

Bible Journaling/SOAP Method

Students read a passage, SOAP it (Scripture, Observation, Application, Prayer), and journal their insights, making it personal.

Sermon/Podcast Challenge

Assign listening to a specific Christian podcast or sermon series and have them report back with key takeaways or challenges.

God's Word in My Pocket

Teens memorize key verses (e.g., promises, commands) and write them on cards to review, using them as reminders during the week.

Verse Mapping

Deep dive into a verse by exploring its context, original language, and cross-references, revealing deeper meaning.

Scripture Scavenger Hunt

Hide verses around the room/campus related to themes like listening to God or prayer, then discuss how they apply.

Prayer Activities

Prayer Stations

Set up different areas for specific prayer types (Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication - ACTS) or using models like PRAY (Pause, Rejoice, Ask, Yield).

Prayer Partners/Groups

Pair students or form small groups for accountability and shared prayer time.

Breath Prayers

Teach short, rhythmic prayers (e.g., “Holy Spirit, fill me” on inhale, “Sin, leave me” on exhale) for focus.

Silent Prayer/Listening

Go for a walk in nature or sit quietly, practicing listening for God’s voice/leading, not just talking.

Testimony Sharing

Invite leaders or older students to share personal stories of how God answered prayer or spoke through His Word.

Connecting Disciplines and Maturity

“Spiritual Diet” Analogy

Compare God’s Word to food (nourishment) and prayer to communication (relationship); explain that skipping them stunts growth.

“Growth Chart” Activity

Have teens visually track their engagement with Scripture and prayer over a month, linking consistent practice to spiritual “strength.”

Scenario Discussions

Present scenarios (temptation, difficult decision) and ask how Word and Prayer would equip them, referencing relevant Bible passages.

Goal Setting

Encourage setting small, achievable goals (e.g., read 1 Psalm daily, pray 5 mins before bed) and discuss challenges and breakthroughs.

God relates to His people according to His covenant promises, and even though we are not always faithful to Him, God keeps His promises and always has and always will be faithful to us.

The “Broken” vs “Unbreakable” Promise Object Lesson

This activity helps visualize the difference between human promises (which can be broken) and God’s promises (which cannot).

Materials

Two pieces of paper (or a piece of paper and a sturdy object like a smooth rock), a pen.

Procedure

- Start by asking the high schoolers what a promise is and how it feels when someone breaks one.
- Write the word “promise” on a piece of paper and then dramatically tear it in half, explaining that this is what happens to human promises sometimes.
- Next, write the word “covenant” or “God’s promise” on the other paper or the rock. Try to tear the paper (if using a sturdy kind) or attempt to “break” the rock. When you can’t, explain that God’s covenants are like this: they are built on His character and are unbreakable.
- Read from a verse like 2 Timothy 2:13. Emphasize that His faithfulness doesn’t rely on our ability to be faithful, but on His own nature.

The “Covenant Timeline” Visual Project

This activity helps students see how God’s covenants unfold throughout the entire Bible and culminate in Jesus.

Materials

A long roll of paper or a whiteboard, marks, sticky notes.

Procedure

- Draw a long timeline representing all of Scripture.
- Introduce key Old Testament covenants
 - **Noahic Covenant** (Genesis 9:15-16) Mark with a rainbow symbol. God promises never to flood the earth again.

- **Abrahamic Covenant** (Genesis 15:1-6, 17:1-8) Mark with a star or map symbol. God promises a great nation, land, and that all the earth will be blessed through his offspring.
- **Davidic Covenant** (2 Samuel 7:12-16) Mark with a crown symbol. God promises a descendant who will have an everlasting kingdom.
- Discuss how the people often broke their end of the agreement, yet God remained faithful to His promises.
- Finally, mark the **New Covenant** (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 8:8-13) with a large cross symbol. Explain that Jesus is the fulfillment of all these promises, and the New Covenant is written on our hearts, not stone tablets.
- This shows how all of Scripture speaks to us now in light of Christ.

The “Trust Walk” Experiential Activity

This game builds trust and illustrates the importance of relying on God’s guidance, even when our own “path” is unclear or we stumble.

Materials

Blindfolds (or simply ask participants to close their eyes) and a safe, simple obstacle course (use chairs, ropes on the floor, etc.).

Procedure

- Pair up students. One person is blindfolded, and the other must guide them through the obstacle course using only verbal instructions.
- After everyone has a turn, sit down and discuss the experience.
- Discussion Questions
 - How did it feel to be the one blindfolded? Was it hard to trust your partner?
 - How does this relate to trusting God’s promises and guidance in our lives, especially when we can’t see the future?
 - Read **Lamentations 3:22-23** (“The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness”). Discuss how, like gravity is dependable, God’s faithfulness is a constant force we can rely on.
 - Emphasize that God’s character is the foundation of His promises, making them completely trustworthy.

God is loving and righteous, grieves the impact of sin on the world, and will one day make right all that sin has damaged.

God's Love and Righteousness

Paper Doll Chain

Create paper dolls representing diverse people, symbolizing Jesus came for *everyone*, and discuss sharing the Gospel.

Target Game (Missing the Mark)

Use archery or beanbag toss; explain sin means "missing the mark," then discuss how Jesus helps us hit the mark, connecting to Romans 3:23

Righteous Rejoicing

Use music and impromptu worship to feel God's goodness and righteousness

Sin's Impact and Grief

The Weight of Sin

Have students carry the heavy backpacks on a short walk to feel the burden of sin; discuss how confession lights it.

Dirty Laundry

Hide smelly, dirty clothes to represent sin's "stench" to God, showing how He wants to deal with it.

Sin Object Lesson (Water/Bleach)

Use clear containers for "You," "Sin" (water + iodine), and "Jesus" (water + bleach) to show how Jesus cleanses sin.

"Don't Sin in Anger" Masks

Create a mask with an angry face on one side and a kind, heart-filled face on the other, showing the choice to be loving.

God Makes Things Right (Restoration)

Scripture and Discussion

Focus on Romans 6:23 and John 3:16, discussing Jesus as the ultimate solution.

Prayer Requests

Have students write and pray for each other's struggles, acknowledging sin's damage and asking for God's restorative power.

Forgiveness Craft

Use the "Sin" object lesson (bleach) to visually demonstrate how Jesus washes sin away, creating a clean slate.

Storytelling (e.g., "Ricky the Raccoon")

Use stories like this to illustrate how temptation (pride) leads to traps, but God offers redemption.

God is worthy of our worship, and to misplace attention or affections to worldly things which are rightly owed to God is idolatry.

Interactive Activities

Modern Idols Brainstorm (The "New Gods" List)

Have students list things they (or people) spend significant time, energy, or money on (e.g., sports, social media, grades, popularity, money, self-image, music, video games).

Discussion: Ask "If God is worthy of our *undivided* attention, when do these things take His place? What needs does this item fulfill that only God can?"

Scripture: Exodus 20:3

"Heart Check" Self-Reflection

Provide prompts for journaling.

- What brings me ultimate comfort/joy?
- Who/What do I seek approval from most?
- What am I afraid of losing?
- If I couldn't have [X], who would I turn to?

Discussion: Connect these answers to modern idols (power, pleasure, possessions) and how they distract from God.

Scripture: Psalm 25:5

Worship vs Idolatry Comparison Chart

Create two columns “Worshipping God” and “Modern Idolatry.” List characteristics: God gives purpose/identity vs. idols give fleeting satisfaction; God provides true security vs. idols create anxiety; God transforms us vs. idols corrupt us.

Discussion: Focus on how desires for *good things* (career, family) become bad when they rule the heart more than God.

“The Almighty vs. the Almighty Phone” Scenario

Present scenarios

- You have a big test, but your phone is buzzing with texts/likes.
- You’re struggling, but a video game offers escape.

Have students discuss what they *do* (worship God first, or turn to the idol?) and why.

Scripture: Colossians 3:1-2

The “Idol” Craft/Object Lesson

Bring in everyday items (a favorite brand shirt, a phone case, a sports trophy). Discuss how these *things* become symbols of identity/worship (e.g., “I’m a [team] fan,” “My phone is my life”).

Discussion: Explain that the object isn’t evil, but the *heart’s devotion* to it over God is idolatry (like worshipping the *image* instead of the Creator).

Key Takeaways for Teens

God Wants Your Heart

He wants your *undivided* love and loyalty, not a divided allegiance.

Modern Idols

They aren’t just statues; they are jobs, money, success, people, or even good things when placed *above* God.

It’s About Priority

Whatever you esteem, rely on, or give your primary time/effort to (more than God) becomes your idol.

God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) is eternal, and although He is not bound by time, He chooses to operate in it in order to relate to us.

Activities for Eternity and Time

The Time Capsule/Eternal Box

Have students brainstorm things representing “eternity” (love, God’s Word) and “time” (a specific event, a photo). Place “time” items in a box, then write a letter *from* an eternal perspective (God’s unchanging love) to their future selves, emphasizing God’s consistent presence across time.

The Trinity Bracelet/Necklace

Use beads (gold for Father, red for Son/sacrifice, clear/white for Spirit/purity) to create a bracelet/necklace. Discuss how the circle is endless (eternity) but each bead represents a distinct role within the one God, connecting to Jesus’ sacrifice (Son) and the Spirit’s guidance.

Activities for the Trinity (One God, Three Persons)

Use these with caution, explaining the shortcomings of each analogy

Fidget Spinner Trinity

Decorate a fidget spinner with symbols for Father (Creator), Son (Savior), and Holy Spirit (Guide). Show how each arm is distinct but works together as one balanced unit when spinning, representing God acting simultaneously.

Water Analogy

Demonstrate ice, water, and steam. Explain that while water changes form, God is one *Person* in three *Persons* (Father, Son, Spirit) *simultaneously*, unlike water which can’t be all three at once. This highlights His dynamic presence within time (Son on Earth).

Bible Study and Discussion Points

Jesus’ Baptism (Matthew 3:16-17)

The Father speaks, the Son is baptized, the Spirit descends as a dove—all present at one moment, showcasing the Trinity in action within time.

John 14:9

Jesus, the visible one, reveals the invisible Father, showing how God bridges the eternal/temporal gap.

2 Corinthians 13:14

The apostolic blessing invokes all three Persons, showing their eternal relationship and involvement in believers' lives.

Connecting It All

The “Why”

Discuss *why* God steps into time (love, relationship, salvation) rather than just remaining distant and eternal. He *chooses* to interact, making eternity relevant to our finite lives.

Scriptural Role

Father (Promise-Maker), Son (Promise-Keeper/Word), Spirit (Amen/Faith-Giver).

There is one eternal God who reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and each person of the Trinity has distinct personal attributes.

Interactive Analogies and Visuals

Three-Link Chain

Have students make paper chains with strips labeled Father, Son, Holy Spirit. Show they're three distinct colors/parts but form one connected chain (unity).

Water (H₂O)

Discuss how water can be solid (ice), liquid, or gas (vapor)—one substance, three forms (though note this analogy falls short as parts aren't fully God).

Sun Analogy

Father=Son (source), Son=Light (reveals), Spirit=Heat (felt presence). Highlight flaws (Son/Spirit as creations) but discuss the *roles*.

Shamrock

Three leaves, one stem (classic, but simplistic).

Scripture and Application Activities

Bible Verse Study (Matthew 3:16-17)

Analyze Jesus' baptism scene: Father speaks from heaven, Son is baptized, Spirit descends as dove - all three present and distinct.

Trinity in Action Chart

Create a chart for key actions (Creation, Redemption, Sanctification). Father plans/initiates, Son accomplishes/mediates, Spirit applies/empowers. (e.g., Creation: Father made, Son created through, Spirit gave life).

Role-Playing Missions

Assign roles: Father (sending), Son (coming to earth, dying), Spirit (empowering believers to go). Discuss how each person's role is vital and unique in salvation.

Deeper Discussion and Nuance

Augustine's Model

Introduce "being, knowing, willing" (Father as Being, Son as Word/Knowing, Spirit as Love/Willing). Show how these internal relations are distinct yet unified in God, reflecting our own inner life.

One in Essence, Three in Person

Emphasize this core doctrine. Use a whiteboard to diagram one circle (Essence/Being) with three distinct, equal figures inside (Persons). Stress they aren't *parts*, but *fully* God.

Prayer Pattern

Discuss praying *to* the Father, *through* the Son, *in* the Holy Spirit (Jude 1:20-21), showing relational engagement.

BEING: All people are created in God's image to reflect Him and live in relationship with Him. Sin damaged that image and brought separation, but Christians are new creations with the distinct privilege of enjoying restored relationships with God and reflecting His character to the world in a special way.

Activities for God's Image and Identity

Self-Portrait (Then and Now)

Students draw a self-portrait, one half showing how they see themselves/think others see them (insecurities, strengths), and the other half adding words/images reflecting God's view (potential, worth in Christ).

Discussion: How does sin distort our self-image? How does Christ renew it?

Mirror and Ambassador Scenarios

Divide into small groups. Present scenarios where students act as "mirrors" (showing God's compassion/creativity) or "ambassadors" (Representing God's rule/justice) in tough situations (e.g., bullying, social media conflict).

Discussion: What does it mean to reflect God's character (love, justice) when things are hard?

"Who Am I In Christ?" Therapeutic Art

Use downloadable silhouette art or simple drawings. Students fill it with identity statements (roles, gifts, growth areas) and meditate on their *true* identity in Christ, placing it where they'll see it daily.

Discussion: Our identity isn't just roles; it's rooted in being God's unique creation, renewed in Him.

Serve the "Unseen" Challenge

Task groups with reaching out to someone lonely, excluded, or marginalized in their school or community (e.g., inviting someone to lunch, helping a new student).

Discussion: How does extending kindness and friendship to others reflect God's universal love and value for *all* His image-bearers, even when they're different?

“Broken Image” Object Lesson (Play-Doh/Clay)

Have students mold a simple human figure (representing the original image). Then, have them intentionally “break” or deface parts of it (sin’s effect) and then try to “fix” it, discussing how only Christ truly mends and restores the image.

Discussion Points (Integrating Core Concepts)

Value

We are valuable because we’re *made* in God’s image (Genesis 1:26-27), not for what we do.

Separation

Sin breaks our relationship with God, making us forget our true worth and image.

Restoration

Jesus makes us “new creations,” restoring the image and relationship (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Reflection

Our lives should *point* to God’s love, creativity, and justice to the world.

DOING: Because we are created to reflect God and live in relationship with Him, we should continually pursue God in His Word and through prayer, live in continual fellowship within the church, and evangelize those who do not know Him.

Reflecting God and Living in Relationship with Him

“Made in His Image” Self-Portraits

Have students draw or paint self-portraits and write a list of positive things God says about them, reflecting on how their unique qualities reflect God’s design.

Nature Worship Walk

Take students outdoors to a park or natural area to observe God's creation. Encourage them to use this time to reflect on God's artistic expression and greatness (Psalm 19, 29; Job 38-41) and praise Him.

"Two Truths and a Testimony" Icebreaker

This game helps students learn about one another and provides an opportunity for those comfortable to share how God has worked in their lives, demonstrating personal relationship.

Pursuing God in His Word and Through Prayer

One-Verse Bible Study

Choose a verse relevant to current teen struggles, spend time understanding it together, and then pray specifically about how God wants to apply it in their lives.

Prayer Stations

Set up different "prayer stations" around your meeting space with various prompts (e.g., adoration, confession, thanksgiving, supplication) to guide students through different forms of prayer.

"Make Time for God" Commitment Cards

Provide index cards and encourage students to find a consistent time in their busy schedules for daily scripture reading and prayer. Have them write down their commitment and place the card in a visible spot to remind them of their goal.

Locker-to-Locker/Campus Prayer Walk

Take the teens to their school campus and walk around, praying for their friends, teachers, and that God would provide opportunities to share their faith.

APOLOGETIC: Many today believe there are many gods and many ways to heaven, and that we are free to define God according to our personal perspectives. However, Scripture teaches there is one God with only one way to heaven through trust in His only Son, Jesus. God Himself defines who He is and not people.

Scriptural Study and Worldview Comparison

Guided Bible Study

Lead students in a guided study of relevant Biblical passages to understand the Christian perspective on the nature of God, sin, salvation, and Jesus' unique role. Key verses to explore could include John 14:6, Romans 3:23, and John 3:16.

"Truth Claims" Analysis

Have students examine how the Bible defines truth and wisdom and why it claims to be the ultimate source of truth. Discuss the idea that God defines who He is, not people, using scriptural evidence to support this claim.

Comparative Worldview Analysis

Use a structured curriculum or resources that examine other world religions and belief systems from a Christian apologetics viewpoint. This helps students understand the differences and learn to articulate and defend their own faith in a respectful manner.

Discussion and Reflection

Storytelling and Parables

Utilize stories from the Bible (e.g., the Parable of the Good Samaritan, the Unmerciful Servant) to make theological concepts relatable and memorable. You can also encourage students to find ways Jesus expressed love in the four Gospel accounts.

Guided Discussion on Pluralism

Facilitate discussions around the cultural idea of religious pluralism. Help students distinguish between God's deep love for all people and the Biblical understanding of sin that separates people from God, which is a key component in addressing the "many ways to heaven" perspective.

Q&A and Critical Thinking

Ask open-ended, thought-provoking questions to encourage critical thinking about their faith and the world around them. Guide them to explore how their theology shapes their decision-making, convictions, and engagement with culture.

Practical Application

"Faith in Action" Projects

Engage students in service projects to demonstrate God's love in a practical way. Activities could include collecting food for a local pantry, making care kits, or other acts of service for the community.

Personal Identity Exploration

Use an identity chart activity to help students reflect on their own personal identities, including their religious identity, and how their faith informs who they are. This can help become more comfortable and adept at articulating their beliefs.