

IN MEMORY OF SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

September 11, 2001

Remembering. Understanding. Hoping.

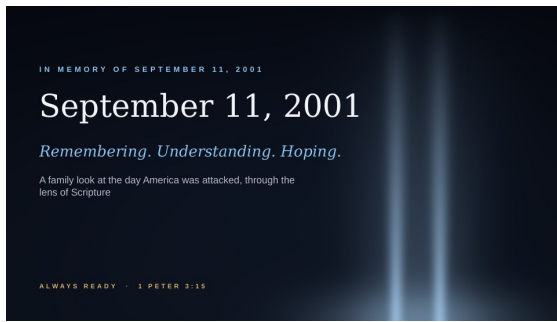
Slide notes for parents and leaders

Every slide of the family presentation, with the presenter's notes: what to say, questions to ask, honest answers to hard questions, extra depth for older kids, and the source and in/out points for each video clip.

How the notes are marked. SAY = words you can read or paraphrase. ASK = a question to pause on. IF ASKED = likely questions and honest answers. OLDER KIDS = extra depth for about ages 9–12. CLIP = source, link, in/out points, and what the child will see and hear. Preview every clip before children see it.

Running time. About 70–80 minutes with clips and discussion, or split across two evenings: slides 1–23, then 24–45.

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SLIDE 1

September 11, 2001

OPENING

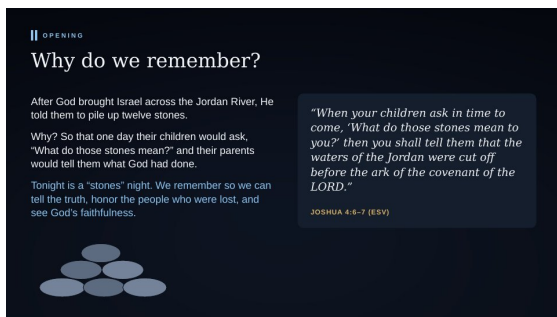
HOW TO USE THESE NOTES

SAY = words you can read or paraphrase. **ASK** = a question to pause on. **IF ASKED** = honest answers to likely questions. **OLDER KIDS** = extra depth for roughly 9–12. **CLIP** = exact source and in/out points (preview every clip first; see the Clip Sheet).

RUNTIME: About 70–80 minutes with clips and discussion. For younger kids (5–8), or for a shorter evening, you can split it: Parts 1 and the Helpers one night, Parts 2–3 another night.

BEFORE YOU START: Dim the lights, have tissues and Bibles nearby, and let kids sit close to a parent. Tell parents to watch faces, not the screen.

SAY: "Tonight we're going to talk about something that happened before any of you were born — on September 11, 2001. It was one of the saddest days in our country's history. We're going to talk about what happened, why it happened, and how God wants us to think about it. It's okay if parts of it feel sad. We'll go slowly, and we'll end with hope."



SLIDE 2

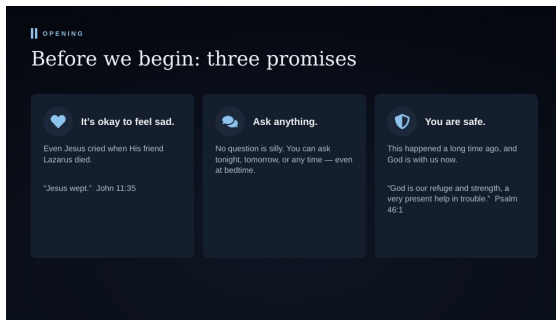
Why do we remember?

OPENING

SAY: "In the Bible, God told His people to build a pile of stones so their kids would ask questions — and the parents would answer. Remembering is something God wants families to do together. Psalm 78 says, 'We will not hide them from their children, but tell to the coming generation.'"

ASK: "What are some things our family remembers every year?" (Birthdays, Christmas, Easter, Memorial Day.)

SAY: "Tonight is a remembering night. We remember the people who died, the helpers who were brave, and the God who was faithful even on a terrible day."



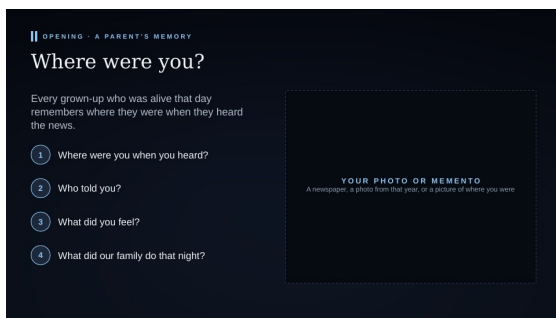
SLIDE 3

Before we begin: three promises

OPENING

SAY: "Before we start, three promises. First, it's okay to feel sad — Jesus Himself cried. Second, you can ask me anything, any time. Third, you are safe. This happened back in 2001, and God is our refuge."

PARENTS: Younger children tend to personalize ("Could that happen to our house?"). Reassure concretely: where you are, who protects them, and that this is a story about the past. It's normal for kids to ask the same question several times over the next few days. Answer it again each time.



SLIDE 4

Where were you?

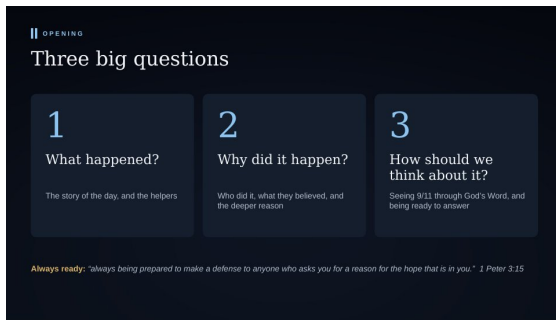
OPENING

THIS IS YOUR SLOT. Replace the dashed box with a photo or memento, or delete it.

TIPS FOR YOUR STORY (2–3 minutes):

- Be concrete: where you were standing, who told you, what you saw on TV.
- Be honest about feelings — fear, confusion, anger, sadness. Kids learn it's okay to feel those things.
- Tell how you turned to God (or didn't, and what you learned).
- If you knew anyone affected, say their name.
- If other parents are present, invite one or two to share a sentence each.

ASK: "This week, ask a grandparent or another grown-up you love: 'Where were you on September 11?'"

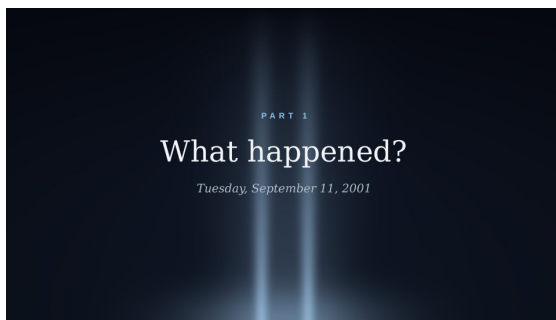


SLIDE 5

Three big questions

OPENING

SAY: "We're going to answer three questions tonight. What happened? Why did it happen? And how should we think about it as people who love Jesus? By the end, you'll be ready to answer a friend who asks you about 9/11 — that's what 1 Peter 3:15 means by being 'always ready.'"



SLIDE 6

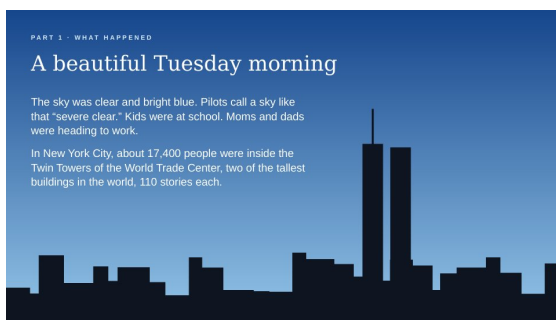
Part 1 — What happened?

PART 1 • WHAT HAPPENED

OPTIONAL OVERVIEW FILM: The 9/11 Memorial & Museum's short "9/11 Timeline Film" outlines the six key times of the attacks and is recommended by the Museum's Grade 3–5 guide as a starting point.

<https://www.911memorial.org/digital-learning-experience-911-timeline-video> (preview first; it may use archival news images).

SAY: "Let's go back to that morning."



SLIDE 7

A beautiful Tuesday morning

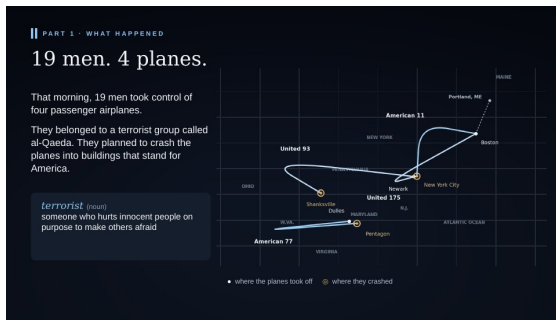
PART 1 • WHAT HAPPENED

SAY: "September 11, 2001 was a Tuesday. It was one of those perfect fall mornings — cool, sunny, not a cloud in the sky. The 9/11 Commission later wrote that the day 'dawned temperate and nearly cloudless.' People were doing ordinary things: going to school, catching trains, getting coffee."

ASK: "What's an ordinary Tuesday like for us?"

FACTS: About 17,400 people were in the towers at 8:46 a.m. (NIST). Each tower was 110 stories.

SOURCES: 9/11 Commission Report, ch. 1; NIST WTC investigation FAQs.



SLIDE 8

19 men. 4 planes.

PART 1 · WHAT HAPPENED

SAY: "Nineteen men got on four different airplanes as if they were normal passengers. Once the planes were in the air, they took control of them. They were part of a group called al-Qaeda. A terrorist is someone who hurts innocent people on purpose to make everyone else afraid."

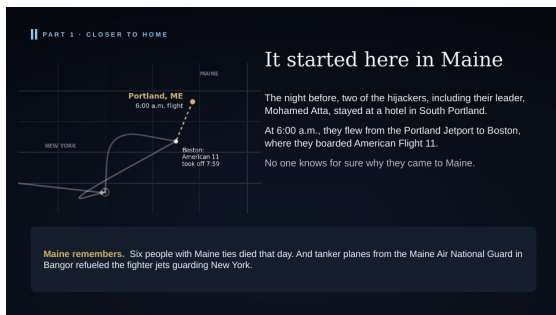
WALK THE MAP (point as you go):

- American 11: Boston to Los Angeles (5 hijackers) — North Tower, New York
- United 175: Boston to Los Angeles (5) — South Tower, New York
- American 77: Washington Dulles to Los Angeles (5) — the Pentagon
- United 93: Newark to San Francisco (4) — field near Shanksville, Pennsylvania

(Routes on the map are simplified.)

IF ASKED "Why did they use planes?" — "Planes full of fuel for a long flight across the country were like giant bombs. That's why they picked cross-country flights."

SOURCE: 9/11 Commission Report, ch. 1.



SLIDE 9

It started here in Maine

PART 1 · WHAT HAPPENED

SAY: "This story touched our state. The night before the attacks, the leader of the hijackers and another man stayed at a hotel in South Portland. Early that morning they went through security at the Portland Jetport and flew to Boston. Nobody knew what they were planning."

FACTS:

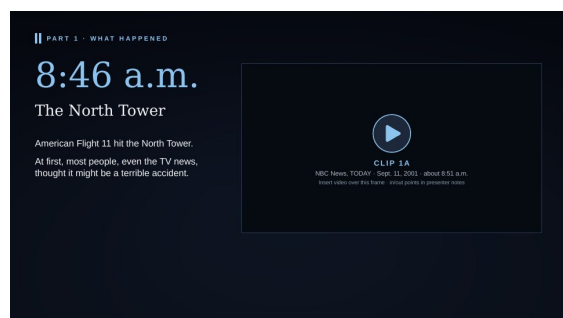
- Mohamed Atta and Abdulaziz al-Omari stayed at the Comfort Inn, South Portland, on Sept 10 (Portland Press Herald; Spectrum News Maine).
- (Commission staff report, 2005) They reached the Portland Jetport security checkpoint at 5:45 a.m.; Colgan Air Flight 5930 (US Airways Express) left on time at 6:00 a.m. and reached Boston about 6:45.
- The Commission: "No physical, documentary, or analytical evidence provides a convincing explanation of why Atta and al Omari drove to Portland, Maine, from Boston on the morning of September 10."
- TSA has preserved the Portland walk-through metal detector and X-ray machine used that morning.

THE SIX MAINERS / PEOPLE WITH MAINE TIES (Maine DOE; WABI):

Robert Jalbert (Lewiston) and James Roux (Portland), United 175; Robert and Jacqueline Norton (Lubec), American 11; Cmdr. Robert Schlegel, USN (Gray), Pentagon; Stephen Ward (Gorham), North Tower.

MAINE HELPERS: The 101st Air Refueling Wing ("MAINEiacs," Bangor). Tanker "Maine 85" was sent over Manhattan and refueled F-15s; another tanker refueled fighters guarding the East Coast (Bangor Daily News).

OLDER KIDS: Atta was randomly flagged for extra screening, but under the 2001 rules only his checked bags got extra handling. Airport security changed a lot after 9/11.



SLIDE 10

8:46 a.m. — The North Tower

PART 1 • WHAT HAPPENED

SAY: "At 8:46, the first plane flew into the North Tower. Smoke poured out. News stations started showing it live. Nobody knew yet that it was on purpose. Let's watch the moment the news first found out."

CLIP 1A — NBC News, TODAY (Matt Lauer, Katie Couric), via Internet Archive TV News Archive (WRC-Washington feed)

URL: https://archive.org/details/WRC_20010911_110000_Today/start/6660/end/6780

IN 1:51:00 → OUT 1:53:00 (2:00). Timing computed from NBC's transcript and the Archive's clock labels; preview ±1 minute.

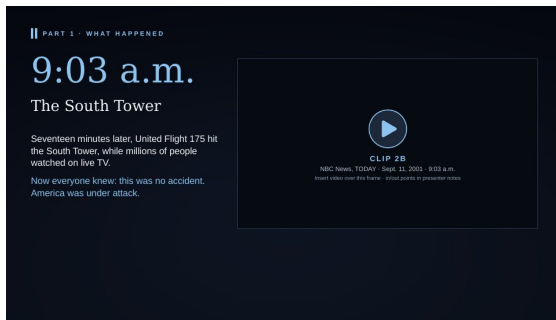
Shows: wide, distant shot of the smoking North Tower; anchors calm and uncertain; a phone witness may describe a fire.

Flags: none expected. Brief local cut-in possible.

ALTERNATE 1C — CNN, Carol Lin "This just in":

https://archive.org/details/CNN_20010911_110000_CNN_Live_at_Daybreak/start/6480/end/6600 (1:48:00 — 1:50:00).

FACT: Impact 8:46:40 a.m. (9/11 Commission, ch. 1). 87 passengers and crew (not counting hijackers) were aboard.



SLIDE 11

9:03 a.m. — The South Tower

PART 1 • WHAT HAPPENED

SAY: "While everyone was watching the first tower burn, a second plane flew into the other tower. That's when people understood — this was on purpose."

CLIP 2B — NBC News, TODAY, via Internet Archive (WRC feed)

URL: https://archive.org/details/WRC_20010911_110000_Today/start/7360/end/7480

IN 2:02:40 → OUT 2:04:40 (2:00). Computed; preview ±1 minute.

Shows: wide, distant shot; the fireball on the second tower; NBC producer Elliott Walker on the phone: "Oh, another just hit! Something else just hit!" An audible gasp in the studio.

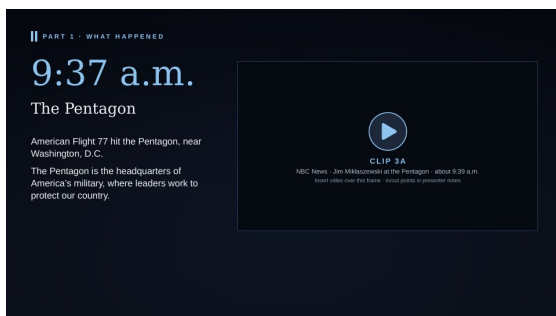
Flags: END BEFORE THE FIRST REPLAY (networks replayed the impact within 1–2 minutes). DO NOT run past about 9:15 on this feed — around 9:20 a disturbing phone report is relayed.

ALTERNATE 2A — ABC (Diane Sawyer, Charles Gibson):

https://archive.org/details/WJLA_20010911_130000_Live_With_Regis_and_Kelly/start/160/end/280

ASK (after the clip): "How do you think people felt when they saw the second plane?"

FACT: Impact 9:03:11 a.m. (Commission). 60 passengers and crew aboard (not counting hijackers).



SLIDE 12

9:37 a.m. — The Pentagon

PART 1 • WHAT HAPPENED

SAY: "About half an hour later, a third plane hit the Pentagon — a huge five-sided building near Washington, D.C., where our military leaders work."

CLIP 3A — NBC News, Jim Miklaszewski reporting from inside the Pentagon, via Internet Archive (WRC feed)

URL: https://archive.org/details/WRC_20010911_110000_Today/start/9525/end/9705

IN 2:38:45 → OUT 2:41:45 (3:00; trim to 1:30–2:00). Computed; preview.

Shows: "Katie, I don't want to alarm anybody right now, but apparently... there was an explosion of some kind here at the Pentagon." About 9:41, first live pictures of smoke rising from the Pentagon, from a distance.

Flags: the screen may split with the burning towers. PREVIEW FOR TIGHT ZOOMS on the towers' upper floors during this window and trim if needed.

ALTERNATE 3B — ABC, Peter Jennings:

https://archive.org/details/WJLA_20010911_130000_Live_With_Regis_and_Kelly/start/3000/end/3090

FACT: 184 people died at the Pentagon: 59 on the plane and 125 in the building (Commission; 9/11 Memorial).



SLIDE 13

10:03 a.m. — United Flight 93

PART 1 · WHAT HAPPENED

SAY: "The fourth plane, United 93, was late taking off. By the time the hijackers took over, passengers were calling their families on phones — and they found out what had happened to the other planes. So they made a plan. They decided to fight back. The plane crashed in an empty field in Pennsylvania. Everyone on board died — but they stopped the terrorists from hitting their target, probably the U.S. Capitol or the White House."

COMMISSION REPORT (ch. 1): "According to one call, they voted on whether to rush the terrorists in an attempt to retake the plane. They decided, and acted." "At 9:57, the passenger assault began." The hijacker-pilot's objective was "the Capitol or the White House. He was defeated by the alerted, unarmed passengers of United 93."

CLIP 4A — NBC News, via Internet Archive (WRC feed)

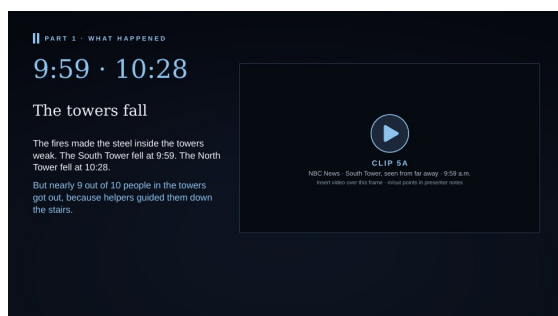
URL: https://archive.org/details/WRC_20010911_140000_News_4_at_10/start/2370/end/2490

IN 39:30 → OUT 41:30 (2:00). Computed; the line may fall 40:00–41:30.

Shows: "We now have an A.P. news alerts out of Pittsburgh. Officials at Somerset County Airport are confirming the crash of a large plane just north of the airport." No crash-site footage.

Teaching point: early reports often get details wrong (some called it a 747; it was a 757).

FACT: 40 passengers and crew died (33 passengers, 7 crew). Crash at 10:03:11 a.m.



SLIDE 14

9:59 · 10:28 — The towers fall

PART 1 · WHAT HAPPENED

SAY: "The fires burned so hot that the steel holding up the towers got weak. First the South Tower fell, and then the North Tower. Many people inside, and many firefighters and police officers who had gone in to help, died. But here's something important: most people got out. Almost 9 out of every 10 people in the towers escaped — especially those below where the planes hit."

CLIP 5A — NBC News, via Internet Archive (WRC feed)

URL: https://archive.org/details/WRC_20010911_110000_Today/start/10710/end/10798

IN 2:58:30 → OUT 2:59:58 (end of file; 1:28). Computed; preview.

Shows: distant skyline; the South Tower disappears into a gray cloud. NBC: "We just saw live picture of what seemed to be a portion of the building falling away from the World Trade Center." Anchors confused and quiet.

Flags: END WITHIN ABOUT 30 SECONDS OF THE COLLAPSE. Some feeds cut to street-level dust and people running afterward.

ALTERNATE 5B — North Tower, NBC:

https://archive.org/details/WRC_20010911_140000_News_4_at_10/start/1665/end/1785

FACTS: South Tower collapsed 9:58:59; North Tower 10:28:25 (Commission ch. 9). NIST: about 17,400 occupants; approximately 87 percent — "including more than 99 percent of those below the floors of impact" — evacuated.

IF ASKED "Did people die when the buildings fell?" — "Yes. Some people were trapped above the fires, and some helpers were still inside. That's the saddest part of the day. God knows every one of their names."



SLIDE 15

102 minutes

PART 1 • WHAT HAPPENED

SAY: "From the first plane to the moment the second tower fell was 102 minutes — less time than a movie. In that short time, our whole country changed."

POINT OUT 9:42: "For the first time ever, every airplane flying over America — more than 4,500 of them — was told to land at the nearest airport. The sky went quiet for days."

FACTS: Order to land all aircraft at 9:42 (9/11 Commission; many sources say about 9:45). More than 4,500 aircraft were in the air; U.S. airspace was clear by about 12:16 p.m. (National Archives). WTC 7 also collapsed at 5:20 p.m.; no one died there (NIST).

II PART 1 • WHAT HAPPENED

Every number is a name

2,977	90	343	60
people died	countries they came from	firefighters	police officers

Each one had a name. Each one was someone's mom or dad, son or daughter, brother, sister, or friend.

"The LORD is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit."

PSALM 34:18 (ESV)

SLIDE 16

Every number is a name

PART 1 • WHAT HAPPENED

SAY: "Almost 3,000 people died that day. They came from 90 different countries. 343 of them were New York City firefighters, and 60 were police officers. But every number was a person with a name. God knew every one of them by name, and He is close to the people who were left behind with broken hearts."

FACTS (9/11 Memorial & Museum; 9/11 Commission ch. 9):

- 2,977 victims (not counting the 19 hijackers): 2,753 in New York, 184 at the Pentagon, 40 on Flight 93.
- FDNY 343; NYPD 23; Port Authority Police 37 (23 + 37 = 60 police officers).
- You may see 2,983 on the Memorial — that includes the 6 victims of the 1993 WTC bombing.

IF ASKED "Did any kids die?" — Answer gently and honestly: "Yes. Eight children were on the planes. That's one of the saddest parts. And more than 3,000 children lost a mom or dad that day." (9/11 Memorial; the 3,000+ figure is a survivors'-group count.) Then point to Psalm 34:18.

OLDER KIDS: Thousands more first responders and survivors have since died of illnesses linked to the dust at Ground Zero.

MEMORIAL NOTE: On each victim's birthday, the 9/11 Memorial places a white rose in their name on the bronze parapet.

II PART 1 • THE HELPERS

Look for the helpers

On the worst day, thousands of people ran toward danger to help others — firefighters, police officers, soldiers, boat captains, co-workers, and total strangers.

"Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends."

JOHN 15:13 (ESV)

agapē ah-GAH-pay self-giving love

SLIDE 17

Look for the helpers

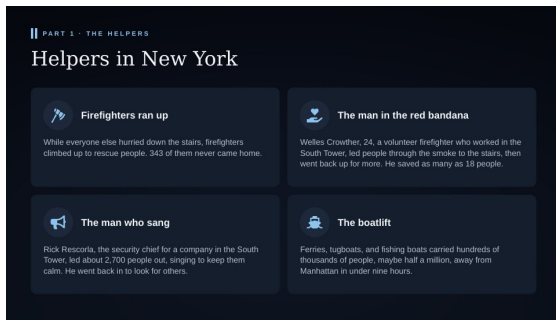
PART 1 • WHAT HAPPENED

SAY: "Fred Rogers — Mister Rogers — said that when he saw scary things in the news as a boy, his mother told him, 'Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.' On 9/11 there were thousands of helpers. Jesus said the greatest love is laying down your life for your friends. The Greek word for that kind of love is agapē (ah-GAH-pay): love that gives itself away for someone else."

ASK: "Why do you think the helpers ran toward danger instead of away?"

CONNECT TO JESUS: "Every helper that day was a small picture of what Jesus did for us. He didn't just risk His life — He gave it, on purpose, to save people who didn't deserve it (Romans 5:8)."

NIST: About 87% of the roughly 17,400 people in the towers evacuated — more than 99% of those below the impact floors.



SLIDE 18

Helpers in New York

PART 1 · WHAT HAPPENED

TELL THE STORIES (pick the ones your kids will remember):

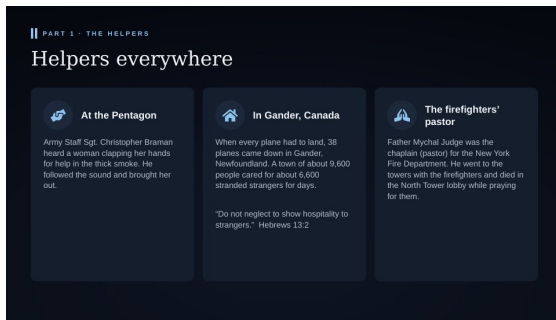
WELLES CROWTHER — "The man in the red bandana." He was 24, an equities trader in the South Tower and a volunteer firefighter back home in Upper Nyack, NY. He'd carried a red handkerchief since he was a boy. In the 78th-floor sky lobby, survivors remembered a young man with a red bandana over his face who "spoke in a calm voice and guided them to a stairway." He made three trips, saving as many people as he could, until the tower fell. His mother recognized him from a newspaper story about the unknown rescuer. On September 8, 2026, he was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom. (9/11 Memorial; Boston College; CBS News.) Number saved: "as many as 18" — the exact number isn't documented.

RICK RESCORLA — Morgan Stanley's head of security; a British-born U.S. Army veteran of Vietnam. On 9/11 he led nearly 2,700 employees out, and witnesses remember "a calming voice singing 'God Bless America' over a bullhorn." He was last seen climbing back up the stairs to sweep for stragglers. He was 62. (9/11 Memorial; NewsNation.)

FIREFIGHTERS — The FDNY lost 343 members that day (firefighters, plus its chaplain and paramedics) — the largest loss of firefighters in a single day in U.S. history.

THE BOATLIFT — Around 10:45 a.m. the Coast Guard called for "all available boats." Roughly 150 boats and 800 mariners evacuated what is usually estimated as nearly 500,000 people in under nine hours — larger than the Dunkirk evacuation of WWII. (Estimates vary; "hundreds of thousands" is safest.) (HISTORY; USNI News.)

ASK: "Which helper's story would you most like to hear more about? Why?"



SLIDE 19

Helpers everywhere

PART 1 • WHAT HAPPENED

PENTAGON — Staff Sgt. Christopher Braman, an Army cook, heard Sheila Moody clapping because the smoke had left her unable to call out. He followed the sound and got her out. He received the Soldier's Medal. Lt. Col. Ted Anderson went back in through a broken window to rescue people: "You don't leave your comrades on the battlefield. To me, this was the battlefield." (U.S. Army, army.mil.)

GANDER — Town of Gander: 34 airliners with about 6,600 passengers and crew, plus 4 military flights (38 aircraft). The town had 9,651 people at the time; passengers came from 95 countries and stayed up to about a week. Churches, schools, and homes opened their doors. (gandercanada.com.) Hebrews 13:2 in full: "Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." (ESV)

FATHER MYCHAL JUDGE — A 68-year-old Franciscan friar and FDNY chaplain. He was praying for firefighters at the command post in the North Tower lobby when debris from the South Tower collapse killed him. He is listed as victim "0001" — the first death certified by the Medical Examiner (not the first person to die). (9/11 Memorial; OSV News.)

MAINE TIE-IN (see the Maine slide): the Maine Air National Guard tankers from Bangor refueled fighter jets over New York.

ASK: "What's one way we can be helpers — this week — for someone who's hurting?"



SLIDE 20

"Let's roll."

PART 1 • WHAT HAPPENED

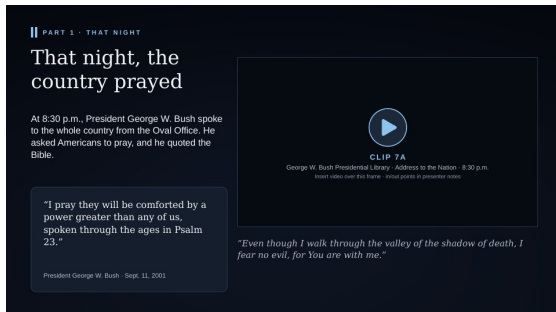
SAY: "One of the passengers on Flight 93 was a man named Todd Beamer. He had two little boys at home, and his wife was expecting a baby girl. He called the airplane phone operator, Lisa Jefferson, and told her what was happening. She says he asked her to pray with him — the Lord's Prayer and Psalm 23. Then she heard him say to the other passengers, 'Are you guys ready? Okay. Let's roll.' He trusted God, and then he did something brave."

ACCURACY NOTE: The call wasn't recorded. The prayers and "Let's roll" come from Lisa Jefferson's account (the National Park Service confirms the Lord's Prayer and "Let's roll"; Psalm 23 comes from Jefferson's account and the Congressional Record). Safe phrasing is on the slide: "She said..." Beamer was 32, of Cranbury, NJ, a Wheaton College graduate; sons David (3) and Andrew (1); daughter Morgan born January 2002. (NPS; Congressional Record, 2001.)

OPTIONAL: Pray the Lord's Prayer together right now, the same words Todd prayed.

TOWER OF VOICES: About 93 feet tall with 40 wind chimes — "a living memorial in sound." (NPS, Flight 93 National Memorial.)

ASK: "What does it mean that God is 'with us' even in the valley of the shadow of death?"



SLIDE 21

That night, the country prayed

PART 1 • WHAT HAPPENED

SAY: "That night the President spoke to the country. Near the end, he asked everyone to pray, and he quoted Psalm 23 — the same psalm Todd Beamer prayed on Flight 93."

CLIP 7A — George W. Bush Presidential Library (official YouTube): "WHTV 593 09112001 Address to the Nation from the Oval Office"

URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dHI45SMTSKU>

Whole address ≈ 4½ minutes (raw White House TV; may have pre-roll — start at "Good evening"). For the Psalm portion, play the final ~65 seconds: from "Tonight, I ask for your prayers" to "God bless America." Timing estimated; scrub to the line.

ALTERNATES: PBS NewsHour <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WA8-KEnfWbQ> ; NBC feed via Internet Archive https://archive.org/details/WRC_20010912_000000_Fear_Factor/start/2030/end/2105

Flags: none; no attack images. The speech mentions "thousands of lives."

VERIFIED TEXT (White House archive): "Tonight, I ask for your prayers for all those who grieve, for the children whose worlds have been shattered, for all whose sense of safety and security has been threatened. And I pray they will be comforted by a power greater than any of us, spoken through the ages in Psalm 23: 'Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me.'"

ASK: "Why do you think the President turned to the Bible on a night like that?"

II PART 1 · THAT NIGHT

Standing together

That same evening, members of Congress from both political parties stood together on the steps of the U.S. Capitol and sang "God Bless America."

Three days later, the nation's leaders gathered at the National Cathedral to pray. Churches all over America filled up.

Optional: Clip 10A, the National Day of Prayer and Remembrance, Sept. 14 (see notes)

SLIDE 22

Standing together

PART 1 · WHAT HAPPENED

SAY: "People who usually argued with each other stood side by side. Members of Congress — Republicans and Democrats — sang 'God Bless America' together on the Capitol steps. For a while, the whole country felt like one family."

CLIP 8A — C-SPAN (official YouTube): "September 11, 2001 - Congress Sings God Bless America on Capitol Steps"

URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sq1OT5sh5nI>

Likely usable whole (about 1–1½ minutes of singing). If it opens with leaders' statements, start where the singing begins. Timing estimated — preview. C-SPAN allows non-commercial use of its coverage of federal events with attribution ("Video: C-SPAN").

OPTIONAL CLIP 10A — National Day of Prayer and Remembrance, Washington National Cathedral, Sept. 14, 2001 (CBS feed via Internet Archive)

URL: https://archive.org/details/WUSA_20010914_163000_The_Young_and_the_Restless

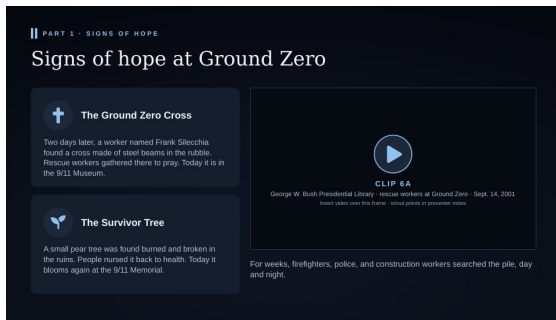
President Bush's closing with Romans 8:38–39 ≈ 36:00 – 37:15 (/start/2160/end/2235). "Battle Hymn of the Republic" (closing hymn): scan ≈ 37:00 – 43:00. Estimated; preview.

Also: Billy Graham's message from that service (BGEA):

<https://billygraham.org/sermon-clips/billy-grahams-911-message-from-the-washington-national-cathedral> —

"For the Christian, the cross tells us that God understands our sin and our suffering, for He took them upon Himself in the Person of Jesus Christ."

WE'LL COME BACK TO THIS: the church-attendance surge was real but short (see "When the churches filled up" in Part 3).



SLIDE 23

Signs of hope at Ground Zero

PART 1 • WHAT HAPPENED

SAY: "In the days after, thousands of workers dug through the pile of steel and concrete, looking for survivors. Two days after the attack, a worker named Frank Silecchia found a steel-beam cross in the rubble. Workers started gathering there to pray, and a priest blessed it. And a little pear tree, burned and broken, was found in the rubble. People took care of it, and now it blooms every spring at the memorial. God specializes in bringing life out of ruins."

GROUND ZERO CROSS — Found Sept. 13, 2001 by construction worker Frank Silecchia near 6 World Trade Center: a 17-foot steel T-beam cross. Blessed Oct. 3, 2001; workers cut small crosses from the steel to carry. Moved into the 9/11 Memorial Museum in July 2011; a lawsuit to remove it failed in 2014. (Washington Post; 9/11 Memorial; CNN.)

SURVIVOR TREE — A Callery pear found in October 2001 with "snapped roots and burned and broken branches," nursed back by NYC Parks and returned to the Memorial in 2010. (911memorial.org.)

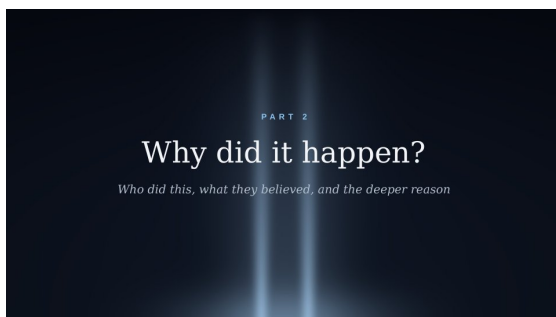
CLIP 6A — George W. Bush Presidential Library (official YouTube): "WHTV 609 09142001 Remarks from Ground Zero" (raw footage)

URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1N-3pMR18QA>

Pick 60–90 seconds of workers, flags, and the debris pile BEFORE the bullhorn remarks (the bullhorn is used later as optional Clip 9A). Estimated — preview. Expect rubble and smoke; no injured people expected.

SAFE SUBSTITUTE: public-domain FEMA photos of Urban Search & Rescue teams:

<https://www.dhs.gov/medialibrary/collections/37672>



SLIDE 24

Part 2 — Why did it happen?

PART 2 • WHY IT HAPPENED

SAY: "Now let's talk about the hardest question: why? Why would anyone do something like this? We'll look at who did it, what they believed, and what the Bible says is the deepest reason of all."

PARENTS: This section names the ideology plainly, while distinguishing the attackers from Muslim neighbors. For deeper adult background, see the Parent & Leader Guide, section 4.

II PART 2 · WHY IT HAPPENED

Who did this?

The attack was planned by al-Qaeda, a terrorist group led by a man named Osama bin Laden.

They were angry about American soldiers in the Middle East and our friendship with Israel, and they saw America as the enemy of God.

In 1998 they announced that killing Americans, anywhere in the world, was a religious "duty."

"To them America is the font of all evil, the 'head of the snake,' and it must be converted or destroyed."

The 9/11 Commission Report, ch. 22, describing bin Laden and his followers

SLIDE 25

Who did this?

PART 2 · WHY IT HAPPENED

SAY: "The men who did this were part of a group called al-Qaeda. Their leader was Osama bin Laden. They were angry about American soldiers in the Middle East and our friendship with Israel — but most of all they saw America as evil and wanted to destroy it. Years before 9/11, they announced that killing Americans was a duty."

FACTS (9/11 Commission Report, ch. 2): In February 1998, bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri published a "fatwa" in the name of a "World Islamic Front." The Commission summarizes: "Claiming that America had declared war against God and his messenger, they called for the murder of any American, anywhere on earth, as the 'individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in any country in which it is possible to do it.'" Grievances cited: U.S. troops in Saudi Arabia, sanctions on Iraq, and U.S. support of Israel.

IF ASKED "Did America do something to deserve it?" — "No. Nations can make mistakes, and people can disagree about what our country does. But nothing makes it right to murder thousands of innocent people who were just going to work. God says 'hands that shed innocent blood' are something He hates (Proverbs 6:17)."

IF ASKED "What happened to bin Laden?" — We'll get there on the justice slide (Part 3).

II PART 2 · WHY IT HAPPENED

What did they believe?

They believed that if they died while killing their enemies, God would be pleased with them and reward them with paradise.

They called it "martyrdom." They were taught "that the highest honor was to die during the jihad" (holy war).

They were sincere. They were also sincerely wrong.

"There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death."

PROVERBS 14:12 (ESV)

Quote: The 9/11 Commission Report, ch. 5

SLIDE 26

What did they believe?

PART 2 · WHY IT HAPPENED

SAY: "The hijackers really believed that killing Americans — and dying while doing it — would make God happy and earn them a place in paradise. They weren't pretending. They were sincere. But being sincere doesn't make something true. You can sincerely believe the stove is off and still get burned. The Bible says there's a way that seems right to a person, but it leads to death."

FACTS (9/11 Commission Report):

- Ch. 5: "Binalshibh proclaimed that the highest duty of every Muslim was to pursue jihad, and that the highest honor was to die during the jihad." Hijacker-pilot Jarrah told his girlfriend "there was no greater honor than to die for Allah."
- Ch. 7: KSM said the most important quality for an operative was "willingness to martyr himself"; operatives were filmed for "a martyrdom video."
- Ch. 2: Bin Laden "repeatedly calls on his followers to embrace martyrdom."

FOR PARENTS ONLY (not for young kids): The handwritten "last night" instructions found in Atta's luggage and at the Flight 93 site told the hijackers to pray and to "ask God to grant you martyrdom," promising that "you are

heading toward eternal paradise." (DOJ, Sept. 28, 2001; translation published by The Observer/NYT, reproduced by PBS FRONTLINE.) See Parent & Leader Guide, section 4.

OLDER KIDS: This is why we test what we're taught against God's Word (Acts 17:11). Sincerity is not the test of truth; Scripture is.

II PART 2 · WHY IT HAPPENED

Are all Muslims like this?

No.

The attackers claimed to follow Islam, but most Muslims around the world reject killing innocent people. Many Muslim leaders condemned the attacks, and dozens of Muslims died in the towers that day.

Bin Laden drew on "a long tradition of extreme intolerance within one stream of Islam (a minority tradition)."

The 9/11 Commission Report, ch. 12

"...what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?"

MICAH 6:8 (ESV)

Two things are true at once. Christians believe Islam is wrong about who Jesus is. And Jesus calls us to love our neighbors, including our Muslim neighbors.

SLIDE 27

Are all Muslims like this?

PART 2 · WHY IT HAPPENED

SAY: "The men who did this said they were Muslims — followers of Islam. But most Muslims in the world believe killing innocent people is wrong, and many Muslim leaders said so right after 9/11. Some of the people who died in the towers were Muslims too. So we never blame a whole group of people for what some did."

SAY (the apologetic balance): "At the same time, we're honest: Christians and Muslims believe very different things. Islam teaches that Jesus was a prophet but not God's Son, and that He did not die on the cross. We believe Jesus is the Son of God who died and rose again — and that's the best news in the world. So we can disagree about what's true AND be kind neighbors. Both are true."

FACTS:

- 9/11 Commission, ch. 12: "a long tradition of extreme intolerance within one stream of Islam (a minority tradition), from at least Ibn Taimiyyah, through the founders of Wahhabism, through the Muslim Brotherhood, to Sayyid Qutb." Ch. 2: "Most Muslims prefer a peaceful and inclusive vision of their faith, not the violent sectarianism of Bin Laden."
- Condemnations: Saudi Grand Mufti (Sept. 15, 2001): these acts "cannot be tolerated by Islam, which views them as gross crimes and sinful acts." CAIR and other U.S. Muslim groups condemned the attacks the same day. (Compiled by Charles Kurzman, UNC.)
- Muslim victims: no official count; "dozens" (about 60 is a press estimate).
- Pew (2013): in most countries surveyed, roughly three-quarters or more of Muslims reject suicide bombing and violence against civilians.

ASK: "Do you know any Muslim kids at school or in town? How can we be a good neighbor to them?"

II PART 2 • THE DEEPEST WHY

The deepest “why”: the human heart

The Bible says the problem isn't only “bad guys out there.” The problem is sin, and it lives in every human heart.

The very first murder happened in the very first family, when Cain killed his brother Abel.

That's why everyone, including us, needs a Savior.

“And the LORD said, ‘What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground.’”

GENESIS 4:10 (ESV)

“...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

ROMANS 3:23 (ESV)

SLIDE 28

The deepest “why”: the human heart

PART 2 • WHY IT HAPPENED

SAY: “The deepest reason 9/11 happened goes all the way back to the beginning. When sin came into the world, it didn't take long for someone to kill someone else. Cain killed his own brother Abel because of anger and jealousy in his heart. God saw it, and He said Abel's blood was crying out to Him. God sees every act of violence — including every life taken on 9/11.”

SAY: “Here's the hard part: the Bible says sin isn't only in terrorists. It's in every heart — including mine and yours. We don't fly planes into buildings, but we get angry, we want our own way, we hurt people. James 4:1 says fights come from ‘your passions ... at war within you.’ That's why we don't just need better people; we need a Savior.”

MORE SCRIPTURE (ESV): Jeremiah 17:9 — “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?” James 4:1 — “What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you?”

OLDER KIDS: Evil isn't just a lack of education or opportunity; the hijackers included educated men. Scripture's diagnosis is moral and spiritual.

II PART 2 • THE DEEPEST WHY

When a tower fell in Jesus' day

“Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them: do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.”

LUKE 13:4-5 (ESV)

pyrgos POOR-gos tower (Luke 13:4)

- 1 The people who died were not worse than anyone else.**
Suffering doesn't prove someone was a worse sinner.
- 2 None of us knows how long we have.**
So everyone needs to turn to God (repent) now, not later.

SLIDE 29

When a tower fell in Jesus' day

PART 2 • WHY IT HAPPENED

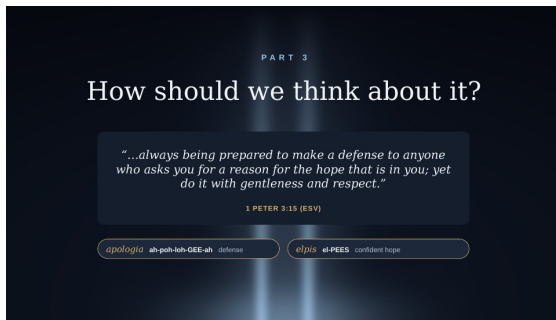
SAY: “Did you know Jesus talked about a tower falling? One day some people told Jesus about a group of Galileans who had been killed. Jesus brought up another tragedy everyone knew about: a tower in Siloam, in Jerusalem, had fallen and killed 18 people. Then He asked, ‘Do you think they were worse than everyone else?’ And He answered: ‘No.’ The people who died on 9/11 weren't worse than anybody else. But Jesus also said something serious: ‘Unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.’ That means none of us knows how much time we have, so the most important thing is to be right with God today.”

GREEK: pyrgos (POOR-gos), “tower” — the same ordinary word for a tower or fortified structure.

ASK: “What does ‘repent’ mean?” (To turn around — to stop going our own way and turn to God, trusting Jesus.)

CAUTION FOR PARENTS: Avoid any suggestion that 9/11 was God's specific judgment on particular people or on America. Jesus explicitly refuses that reasoning in Luke 13. The right application is personal readiness, not blame.

FULL PASSAGE: Luke 13:1–5 (ESV) is printed in the Parent & Leader Guide, section 5B.



SLIDE 30

Part 3 — How should we think about it?

PART 3 · HOW SHOULD WE THINK ABOUT IT

SAY: "Now the most important part: how should people who love Jesus think about 9/11? Peter says we should always be ready to explain our hope. The word 'defense' is apologia (ah-poh-loh-GEE-ah) — it doesn't mean saying sorry; it means giving good reasons. And 'hope' is elpis (el-PEES) — not wishful thinking, but a confident expectation of something God has promised. And notice how: 'with gentleness and respect.'"

This is the heart of the Always Ready curriculum's first mandate — Defense (1 Peter 3:15). We'll end with the second — Multiplication (2 Timothy 2:2).



SLIDE 31

Two very different kinds of "martyr"

PART 3 · HOW SHOULD WE THINK ABOUT IT

SAY: "The hijackers called themselves martyrs. But in the Bible, the word 'martyr' comes from the Greek word martyrs (MAR-toos), which means 'witness.' A witness tells the truth about what he's seen. In Acts, Stephen was the first Christian killed for his faith. While people were throwing stones at him, he prayed, 'Lord, do not hold this sin against them' (Acts 7:60). A Christian martyr is killed for telling the truth about Jesus — he never kills anybody."

SCRIPTURE: Acts 1:8 "you will be my witnesses"; Acts 22:20 "the blood of Stephen your witness"; Revelation 2:13 "Antipas my faithful witness, who was killed among you." The word slid from "witness" to "one who witnesses by dying."

EARLY CHURCH (c. 100–350):

- Tertullian, Apology 37 (AD 197): "For what wars should we not be fit, not eager, even with unequal forces, we who so willingly yield ourselves to the sword, if in our religion it were not counted better to be slain than to slay?" (ANF vol. 3)
- Justin Martyr, First Apology 39 (c. AD 155): "we who formerly used to murder one another do not only now refrain from making war upon our enemies, but also ... willingly die confessing Christ." (ANF vol. 1, trans. Dods & Reith)
- Athenagoras, Plea 11 (c. AD 177): "when struck, they do not strike again." (ANF vol. 2)

Note: "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church" is a popular paraphrase; Tertullian's actual words (Apology 50) are "the blood of Christians is seed."

FAIRNESS NOTE: The Arabic shahid also means "witness" and in mainstream Islam covers more than death in battle (Britannica). The contrast here is with the jihadist use of it, not with every Muslim's belief.

II PART 3 • ALWAYS READY

Earn it, or receive it?

They took lives
to try to earn paradise.

"For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast."

EPHESIANS 2:8-9 (ESV)

charis: KHAH-rees grace: a gift we don't deserve

Jesus gave His life
to give us heaven as a free gift.

"...but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

ROMANS 5:8 (ESV)

SLIDE 32

Earn it, or receive it?

PART 3 • HOW SHOULD WE THINK ABOUT IT

SAY: "Here's the biggest difference of all. The hijackers thought you could earn paradise by what you do — even by killing people. The Bible says nobody can earn heaven. Not by being good, and certainly not by being violent. Heaven is a gift. The word is charis (KHAH-rees) — grace — a gift you don't deserve and can't pay for. The hijackers took other people's lives to try to get to heaven. Jesus gave His own life to bring us to heaven."

MORE SCRIPTURE (ESV): John 10:10–11 — "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep." Romans 6:23 — "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." 2 Corinthians 5:21 — "For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."

OLDER KIDS: Galatians 1:8 — "even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed." Any message that says we earn God's favor by our works — especially by violence — is a different gospel. (Apply this to doctrine, not to people groups.)

ASK: "What's the difference between earning something and receiving a gift?"

GOSPEL MOMENT: If your children haven't trusted Christ, this is a natural place to invite them — gently, without pressure.

II PART 3 • ALWAYS READY

Where was God on September 11?

God hated what happened.

"There are six things that the LORD hates... hands that shed innocent blood."

PROVERBS 6:16-17

God was near the hurting.

"The LORD is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit."

PSALM 34:18

God was at work through the helpers.

Every helper who risked their life was a small picture of Jesus, who laid down His life for us.

JOHN 15:13

God can bring good even out of evil.

"As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good."

GENESIS 50:20

SLIDE 33

Where was God on September 11?

PART 3 • HOW SHOULD WE THINK ABOUT IT

SAY: "People sometimes ask, 'Where was God on 9/11?' Here's what the Bible tells us. First, God hated it. He hates violence against innocent people. Second, God was close to everyone who was hurting — He still is. Third, God was working through the helpers; every brave act of love reflected His love. Fourth, God can take what evil people mean for evil and bring good out of it — just like He did for Joseph, whose brothers sold him as a slave."

ASK: "Can you think of any good things that came after 9/11?" (People helped strangers; the country prayed; families hugged; people like Welles Crowther inspired others to serve.)

CAREFUL: Don't say "God caused 9/11 to teach us a lesson." Scripture holds evil people responsible for their evil (Genesis 4; Genesis 50:20 — "you meant evil") while God remains sovereign and good. Hold both truths.

EXTRA (ESV): Psalm 11:5 — "The LORD tests the righteous, but his soul hates the wicked and the one who loves violence." John 11:35 — "Jesus wept." Billy Graham at the National Cathedral, Sept. 14, 2001: "For the Christian, the cross tells us that God understands our sin and our suffering, for He took them upon Himself in the Person of Jesus Christ."

II PART 3 • ALWAYS READY • OLDER KIDS

"But why didn't God stop it?"

We don't know all of God's reasons. But we know what He has told us:

- 1 People are responsible for their choices.**
God held Cain responsible, and he holds every evil person responsible. Evil comes from sinful hearts, not from God.
- 2 God has already done the most important thing about evil.**
At the cross, Jesus took the punishment for sin and broke the power of death.
- 3 One day God will end all evil forever.**
No more tears, no more death, no more towers falling.

"The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever..."

DEUTERONOMY 29:28 (ESV)

"For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."

2 CORINTHIANS 5:21 (ESV)

SLIDE 34

"But why didn't God stop it?"

PART 3 • HOW SHOULD WE THINK ABOUT IT

THIS IS THE QUESTION FRIENDS WILL ASK. It's a form of the classic "problem of evil." Keep it honest and humble.

SAY: "Sometimes we want to know why God didn't just stop the hijackers. The honest answer is: we don't know all His reasons. Deuteronomy says the secret things belong to God. But He has told us some things. People are responsible for the evil they choose. God didn't ignore evil — He dealt with it in the most costly way possible, by sending Jesus to die for sinners. And He has promised that one day He will wipe away every tear and end death forever."

WHAT NOT TO SAY: "Everything happens for a reason" (true in a sense, but it can sound cold), or "God needed another angel." Neither is how Scripture comforts.

LUKE 13 CALLBACK: Jesus Himself refused to explain the tower of Siloam as special punishment. He turned it into a call to repent and trust Him.

FOR BELIEVERS: Romans 8:28 — "And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose." (Note the scope: "for those who love God.")

REVELATION 21:4 is on the Hope slide.

II PART 3 · ALWAYS READY

Is it wrong to want justice?

No, God gave governments the job of stopping and punishing people who do evil.

America went after al-Qaeda. In 2011, Osama bin Laden was found and killed.

But we don't take revenge ourselves. We leave that to God.

ekdikēsis ek-DIK-ay-sis vengeance (Rom 12:19)

"...he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer."

ROMANS 13:4 (ESV)

"Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay,' says the Lord."

ROMANS 12:19 (ESV)

SLIDE 35

Is it wrong to want justice?

PART 3 · HOW SHOULD WE THINK ABOUT IT

SAY: "Is it okay to want the bad guys caught? Yes! Wanting justice is right, because God is just. God gave governments — like police, courts, and the military — the job of stopping evil and punishing wrongdoers. Romans 13 says the government 'does not bear the sword in vain.' After 9/11, America went after al-Qaeda, and in 2011, American special forces found and killed Osama bin Laden. But God tells you and me not to take personal revenge. The word is *ekdikēsis* (ek-DIK-ay-sis) — vengeance — and God says, 'Vengeance is mine.' He will make everything right."

FACT: Bin Laden was killed by U.S. Navy SEALs in Abbottabad, Pakistan — early on May 2, 2011 Pakistan time, which was still May 1 in the U.S. (Britannica; FBI.)

OPTIONAL CLIP 9A — President Bush with the bullhorn at Ground Zero, Sept. 14, 2001 (ABC News official YouTube)

URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OkvsjOEzhzQ> (Alt: Bush Library raw footage
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1N-3pMR18QA>)

Verified words: "I can hear you. I can hear you. The rest of the world hears you. And the people who knocked these buildings down will hear all of us soon." Frame it: this was a promise of justice through the government's proper role (Romans 13). Preview for rough language from the crowd.

OLDER KIDS: Christians have long distinguished the state's duty to punish evil (Romans 13) from the individual's duty not to retaliate (Romans 12:17–21). Both come right next to each other in the same letter.

II PART 3 · ALWAYS READY

Love your enemies?!

"But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven."

MATTHEW 5:44–45 (ESV)

Jesus asks something really hard: to pray even for people who hate us.

We can pray that people trapped in hatred would come to know Jesus, and we can be kind to neighbors who are different from us.

"...we who hated and destroyed one another ... now, since the coming of Christ, ... pray for our enemies."

Justin Martyr, First Apology 14 (c. AD 155)

"Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

ROMANS 12:21 (ESV)

SLIDE 36

Love your enemies?!

PART 3 · HOW SHOULD WE THINK ABOUT IT

SAY: "This might be the hardest thing Jesus ever asked. He says to love our enemies and pray for them. That doesn't mean pretending evil is okay, and it doesn't mean the government shouldn't stop them. It means we don't let hate take over our hearts. We can pray that people who hate would meet Jesus and be changed. That's actually happened to people all through history — including some who used to hate Christians."

EARLY CHURCH: Justin Martyr, First Apology 14 (c. AD 155; ANF vol. 1, trans. Dods & Reith): "...we who hated and destroyed one another, and on account of their different manners would not live with men of a different tribe, now, since the coming of Christ, live familiarly with them, and pray for our enemies, and endeavour to persuade those who hate us unjustly to live conformably to the good precepts of Christ..."

Epistle to Diognetus 5 (2nd c.): "They love all men, and are persecuted by all... they are reviled, and bless; they are insulted, and repay the insult with honour."

BIBLE EXAMPLE: Saul (Paul) once approved of Stephen's killing (Acts 22:20) — and God changed him into the apostle Paul. No one is beyond God's reach.

ASK: "Is there someone who's been mean to you that you could pray for this week?"

II PART 3 • ALWAYS READY

What about feeling scared?

It's normal. Grown-ups felt scared that day too. Tell a parent when you feel afraid.	<i>"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear though the earth give way, though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea."</i> ISAIAH 41:10 (ESV)	<i>"fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God."</i> ISAIAH 41:10 (ESV)
People keep us safe. Every day, many people work to keep airplanes and cities safe.	PSALM 46:1-2 (ESV)	<i>"In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."</i> JOHN 16:33 (ESV)

SLIDE 37

What about feeling scared?

PART 3 • HOW SHOULD WE THINK ABOUT IT

SAY: "It's okay if hearing about 9/11 makes you feel a little scared. Grown-ups were scared that day too. Here's what's true: many people work every day to keep us safe. And more than that — God is our refuge. Even if the earth gave way, He would still be with us. Jesus said we'd have trouble in this world, but He has overcome the world."

IF ASKED "Could it happen again?" — "Bad things can happen in this world; the Bible is honest about that. But since 9/11, our country has worked very hard to stop attacks like that, and many attacks have been stopped. And no matter what happens, nothing can separate us from God's love (Romans 8:38–39)."

IF ASKED "Is it safe to fly?" — "Yes. Flying is very safe, and airports check everyone carefully now."

GREEK (optional): phobos (FOH-bos), "fear." 1 John 4:18 — "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear."

OLDER KIDS: Matthew 10:28 — "And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell." The deepest safety is being right with God.

PARENTS: Watch for lingering fears at bedtime over the next few days. Pray Psalm 4:8 or Psalm 46 with them.

II PART 3 · ALWAYS READY

Christians run toward people who are hurting

Around AD 260, a terrible sickness spread through the city of Alexandria. Many people ran away, even from their own families.

The Christians stayed and cared for the sick, even when it cost them their lives.

On 9/11 the helpers ran toward danger. Jesus calls His people to do the same kind of thing.

"The most of our brethren were unsparing in their exceeding love and brotherly kindness. They held fast to each other and visited the sick fearlessly, and ministered to them continually, serving them in Christ."

parakaleō pah-rah-kah-LEH-oh to comfort (2 Cor 1:4)

Dionysius of Alexandria (c. AD 260), quoted in Eusebius, Church History 7.22

SLIDE 38

Christians run toward people who are hurting

PART 3 · HOW SHOULD WE THINK ABOUT IT

SAY: "This isn't new for Christians. About 1,750 years ago, a plague hit the city of Alexandria in Egypt. People were so scared they left their own sick family members in the streets. But the Christians stayed. They took care of the sick, even though many of them caught the sickness and died. Their pastor, Dionysius, wrote about it. When we see firefighters running up the stairs, we're seeing the kind of love Jesus puts in His people."

SOURCE: Eusebius, Church History 7.22 (NPNF2 vol. 1, trans. A. C. McGiffert, public domain). The same passage continues: "But with the heathen everything was quite otherwise. They deserted those who began to be sick, and fled from their dearest friends."

(Note: the widely quoted wording "unbounded love and loyalty" is from a modern copyrighted translation; the slide uses the public-domain McGiffert text.)

SCRIPTURE: 2 Corinthians 1:3–4 (ESV) — "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God." Greek parakaleō (pah-rah-kah-LEH-oh): literally "to call alongside" — to come beside someone and comfort them.

ASK: "Who is hurting around us that we could run toward?"



SLIDE 39

When the churches filled up

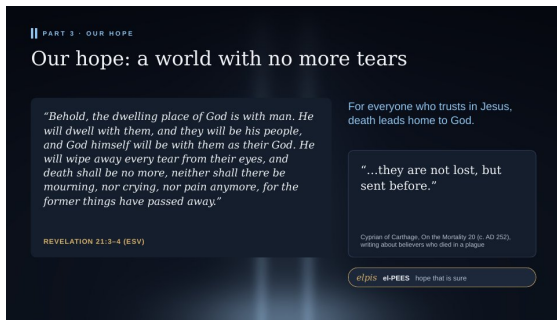
PART 3 · HOW SHOULD WE THINK ABOUT IT

SAY: "After 9/11, lots of people who hadn't been to church in a long time went back. People were scared and sad, and they wanted God. But a survey company called Gallup found that by November — just two months later — things were almost back to where they were before. People wanted God when life felt scary, but forgot Him when life felt normal again."

ASK: "Why do you think people forget about God when things feel normal?" "How can our family remember God on ordinary days, not just hard ones?"

FACTS: Gallup — 41% said they had attended church or synagogue in the past seven days (May 2001); 47% (Sept. 21–22, 2001); 42% (early November); 41% (mid-December). Barna similarly found attendance "back at normal levels" by about November 2001.

DISCERNMENT POINT (Always Ready): Crisis faith that doesn't last is like the seed on rocky ground in Jesus' parable (Mark 4) — it springs up quickly but has no root. We want roots.



SLIDE 40

Our hope: a world with no more tears

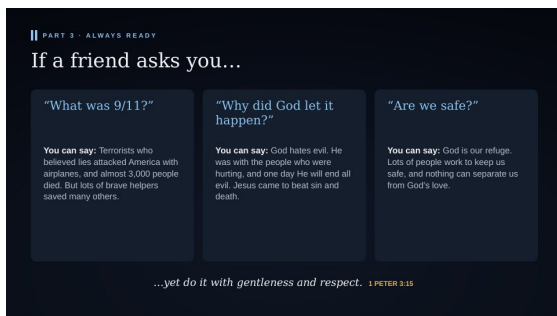
PART 3 • HOW SHOULD WE THINK ABOUT IT

SAY: "Here's our hope. The Bible says a day is coming when God will live with His people, and He will wipe away every tear. No more death. No more crying. No more planes crashing, no more towers falling, no more goodbyes. For everyone who trusts in Jesus, death leads home to God. A pastor named Cyprian, who lived through a terrible plague about 1,750 years ago, said believers who die are 'not lost, but sent before' — they've just gone ahead of us."

CAREFUL: Don't imply every victim is in heaven. We don't know people's hearts; we entrust them to God, who is just and merciful. The hope is offered to all who trust in Christ.

SOURCE: Cyprian, Treatise 7, On the Mortality §20 (ANF vol. 5, trans. R. E. Wallis): "...our brethren who are freed from the world by the summons of the Lord are not to be lamented, since we know that they are not lost, but sent before..."

ASK: "What's one thing you're looking forward to about the new heaven and new earth?"



SLIDE 41

If a friend asks you...

PART 3 • HOW SHOULD WE THINK ABOUT IT

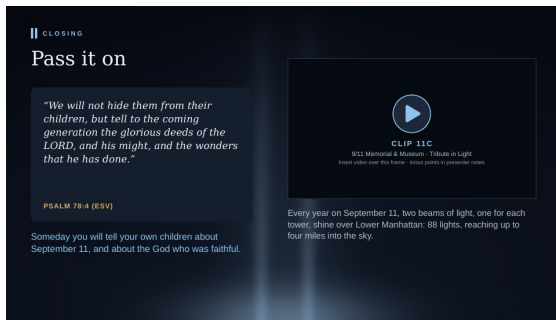
PRACTICE TIME: Have the kids pair up (or with a parent) and role-play: one asks, the other answers in their own words. Praise effort, not perfection.

SAY: "Now you're ready. If a friend at school asks you about 9/11, you don't have to know everything. Just tell the truth simply and kindly. And remember Peter's words: with gentleness and respect."

EXTRA ANSWERS FOR OLDER KIDS:

- "Were they Muslims?" — "They said they were, but most Muslims reject what they did. We believe Islam is wrong about Jesus, and we still love our Muslim neighbors."
- "Isn't religion the problem?" — "The problem is the human heart. Jesus taught His followers to love their enemies and never to kill for Him. The first Christians would rather die than kill."
- "Where was God?" — see the four answers on "Where was God on September 11?"

ROMANS 8:38–39 (ESV): "For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."



SLIDE 42

Pass it on

CLOSING

SAY: "God told families to pass the story of His faithfulness from one generation to the next. Paul told Timothy to teach faithful people who would teach others (2 Timothy 2:2). That's what we did tonight. Someday you'll be the grown-up telling your kids about 9/11 — and about the God who is near the brokenhearted."

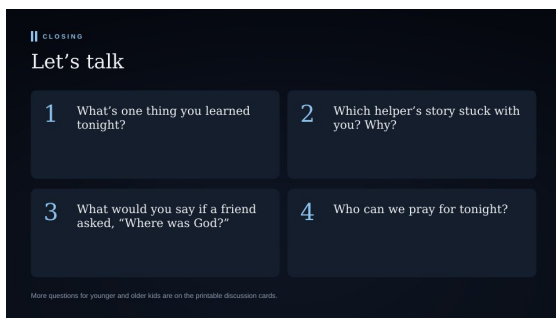
2 TIMOTHY 2:2 (ESV): "and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also." (Always Ready's second mandate: Multiplication.)

CLIP 11C — 9/11 Memorial & Museum, "Tribute in Light" video (embedded on the Museum's page)

URL: <https://www.911memorial.org/visit/memorial/tribute-light> — play a calm 30–60 seconds. Length not confirmed; preview.

Fallback (TV station, not the Museum): PIX11 News <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1yKDziv9cPs>

FACTS (9/11 Memorial): 88 xenon bulbs of 7,000 watts each in two 48-foot squares echoing the towers' shape and orientation; beams reach up to four miles and can be seen from about 60 miles away; first shown in March 2002; shines dusk to dawn each Sept. 11. The Memorial's two reflecting pools sit in the towers' footprints, with 2,983 names on bronze parapets.



SLIDE 43

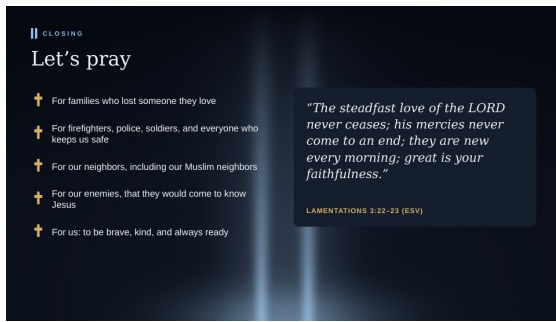
Let's talk

CLOSING

FACILITATION:

- Let kids answer first; parents go last.
- Accept feelings without correcting them ("That makes sense").
- If a child asks something you can't answer, say "That's a great question — let's look it up together" and follow up.
- Use the printable Discussion Cards (younger/older) for more.

WATCH FOR: a child who goes quiet or seems anxious. Check in one-on-one afterward, and again at bedtime.



SLIDE 44

Let's pray

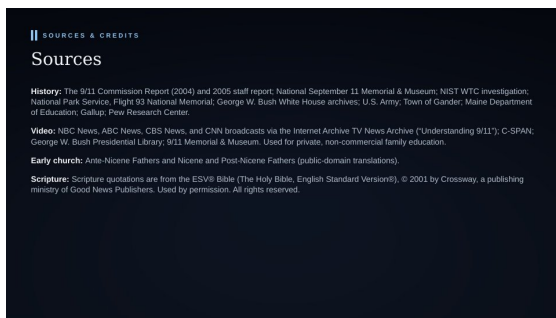
CLOSING

Invite each child to pray one short sentence for one of the prompts. A parent closes.

SAMPLE CLOSING PRAYER:

"Father, thank You that You are near to the brokenhearted. We pray for every family that still misses someone they lost on September 11. Thank You for the helpers who were brave. Please protect the people who keep us safe. Help us love our neighbors and even pray for our enemies. Thank You that Jesus gave His life so we could have life. Make us brave, kind, and always ready to tell others about our hope. Your mercies are new every morning. In Jesus' name, amen."

Lamentations was written after Jerusalem was destroyed — it is a book of grief that still ends up at God's faithfulness. That's where we end too.



SLIDE 45

Sources

CLOSING

Full source links for every fact and clip are in the Parent & Leader Guide and the Clip Sheet. Keep the finished Keynote (with embedded clips) for private family/church use — don't post or broadcast it, because the network footage is copyrighted.