

STUDENT MINISTRY: TEACHING CURRICULUM

WRITING & DESIGN SAMPLE

OFF-ROADING: When Mud and Faith Collide



Product Name:

Off-roading: When Mud and Faith Collide

Product Description: (Full)

This is a fun one-off message that also goes deep. It uses off-roading as a metaphor for our faith and compares the design and purpose of the Jeep to the design and purpose God has for us. Jeeps and Jesus, oh yeah!

This message compares and contrasts four main areas:

- The physical battle vs. the spiritual battle (Ephesians 6:11-13)
- Driving in the mud vs. serving in the mud (Galatians 5:13-14)
- Vehicle maintenance vs. soul maintenance (Psalm 62:5-6)
- Enjoying the ride vs. enjoying God (Psalm 95:1-3)

This message is great for encouraging and challenging students with the following: standing firm in the faith, fighting the enemy, putting on the Armor of God, serving and loving others, using their gifts and talents, promoting service projects, highlighting a missions trip, getting involved in a ministry team, connection with God, rest and renewal, relying on God, remaining in Christ, enjoying our faith, and enjoying the journey.

Short Description:

A fun one-off message and small group guide that combines Jeeps, off-roading, and faith. It tackles four main areas: the spiritual battle, serving others, feeding your soul, and enjoying God.

Includes:

- Teaching manuscript (Word file)
- Teaching outline (Word file)
- Small group guide with discussion questions (Word file)
- PowerPoint slide presentation (pptx) file
- Student handout (Word file)
- Graphics package: variety of social media images, slide images, title image (jpg)

Bible Passages:

Ephesians 6:11-13, Galatians 5:13-14, Psalm 62:5-6
John 15:5, James 1:5-6, Psalm 95:1-3

Pro Tip: Works great as a stand-alone message in a youth group setting, church setting, retreat setting, camp setting, workshop setting, or break the main points into four 6-8 minute messages on Zoom.

Product Type: Download

Product Price: \$5

OFF-ROADING: When Mud & Faith Collide

Lesson Outline

INTRO: Share a personal story, illustration, or video clip about off-roading.

KEY QUESTION: Why was the Jeep built?

ANSWER: It was built for WAR, for MUD, to LAST, and to ENJOY.

TRANSTION: As Christ followers, we are built for these things too.

1.BUILT FOR WAR: Fighting the Opposition

- A. Physical Battle: Jeeps are rough, rugged, and reliable
- B. Spiritual Battle: Armor of God (*Ephesians 6:11-13a*)

2.BUILT FOR MUD: Serving and Loving People

- A. Off-roading: driving in the mud, dirt, and sand helps fulfill its purpose
- B. Getting Muddy: Serve God and use your gifts (*Galatians 5:13-14, Matthew 25:40*)

3.BUILT TO LAST: Feeding Your Soul

- A. Vehicle Maintenance: Frame, Engine, Brakes
- B. Soul Maintenance
 - Rest: Be still (*Psalms 62:5-6, 46:10a*)
 - Remain: In the vine (*John 15:5*)
 - Rely: On God for wisdom & strength (*James 1:5-6a, Zechariah 4:6b*)

4.BUILT TO ENJOY: Enjoying the Journey (Visual Aid or Video Clip)

- A. Enjoy the Ride: Take the top down, grab some friends, and have some fun
- B. Enjoy God: Praise, honor, glory (*Psalms 95:1-3*)
- C. Enjoy the Journey: laugh, play, and keep things in perspective

APPLICATION: Pick an area to work on this week (*see Discussion Questions)

- WAR: Fighting the Spiritual Battle
- MUD: Serving and Loving People
- LAST: Feeding Your Soul
- ENJOY: Enjoying the Journey

TEACHING GOALS: What do you want the audience to know, feel, and do?

1. To know that they were made for War, for Mud, to Last, & to Enjoy
2. To feel empowered to fight the enemy, serve others, feed their soul, enjoy God
3. To do an action step to strengthen their faith in one of the above areas

Off-Roading: When Mud and Faith Collide

[Teacher Note: Share a personal story, illustration, or video clip about off-roading]

[Video Clip Idea: “Jeeps in the Mud Compilation” 0:00-1:03

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w_pElbRp5Pg

Pro Tip: Mute the audio and play upbeat fun music in the background.]

Intro:

Our topic today is “Off-Roading: When Mud and Faith Collide.” What would happen if we took the idea off-roading and added God to the mix? Let’s find out! To kick things off, we are going to use the Jeep as a framework to talk about faith. There is one main question that is going to guide our topic: “Why was the Jeep built?” The Jeep was built for four main reasons.

#1.BUILT FOR WAR: Fighting the Opposition

The original Jeep model was built for war. It was originally manufactured for the Armed Forces to aid in the fight of World War II. They were made to help fight the opposition in real physical battles. I like this first model of the Jeep because it was simple. It was rough, rugged, and reliable.

Jeeps were built to take a beating and keep going. When they broke down you could fix them easily. The parts were easy to get to, the bolts were simple, and the army could assemble them quickly. It was a very versatile vehicle.

Even the more modern Jeeps today have special trail armor that you can get to protect the under carriage, axels, bumpers, rocker panels, and headlights from damage.

Transition: In a similar way, we were built for war as well. Not a physical battle, but we live in an ongoing spiritual battle. There is a war going on for our souls, for our lives, and for our spiritual growth.

In light of that, we need to put on our spiritual battle armor. Check out what God’s Word says...

Read: Ephesians 6:11-13a

“Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground...” –Ephesians 6:11-13a (NIV)

There is real spiritual opposition in our lives, and Satan is a real spiritual enemy to our faith. There are forces of evil that do not want us to follow God, that do not want us to succeed, that do not want us to choose wisely, that want to trick us, trap us, tempt us, and keep us from the right path.

However, the armor of God can protect us from the enemy and guard our hearts and minds. In simple terms, here is how we put on the armor:

- By putting our faith in Jesus to forgive our sins we have salvation.
- With salvation as our spiritual helmet, we are clothed in the righteousness of Christ as a chest plate.
- We stand firm by claiming truth, living right, and resisting sin.
- We put on spiritual boots by living and sharing the gospel of peace.
- We defend ourselves with faith as our shield, and fight off the enemy with the Word of God as our sword and with prayer.

While this spiritual armor may feel like a mental exercise and seem invisible, it is highly effective.

Quote: To clarify what we are fighting for, I want to read a quote from Dr. David Jeremiah’s book “Overcomer”.

“From a spiritual perspective, we’re not fighting for victory, but from victory, and that changes everything. We’re called to be strong so we’ll stand in the victory that’s already been won.” (Jeremiah, p.24)

Jesus already won the ultimate victory over the forces of darkness through His death and resurrection. Understanding this can help us fight our daily struggles of temptation by claiming our victory in Christ and asking Him for the strength to overcome temptation. The struggle is real. The battle is real.

The question is: Are you going to fight the battle or are you going to let the enemy defeat you? We need to put on our armor, stand our ground, hold on to our faith, and stick with it for the long haul even when it is hard and even when things are tough.

Transition: As we continue to look at the purpose of the Jeep, it is clear that they were not built to stay on the road. They were designed to take troops through the woods & rough terrain. Which brings us to our next point.

#2. BUILT FOR MUD: Serving and Loving People

[Teacher Note: Share a personal story or illustration about getting muddy or use the story below stating that “I want to share a story with you from a Youth Leader friend of mine.”]

Story:

One afternoon, I was hanging out with three guys from our youth group. We went to Taco Bell, played some basketball, and then it was time to drive them home. We were riding in my Jeep with the top down, and they started taunting me: “Hey man, do a burnout. Go on the gravel. Drive on the rocks. Kick up some dirt. Drive in the mud. Come on man! You never take us off-roading!” And they just kept prodding me and taunting me.

The pressure is on, and I start thinking in my head: “I have to be the safe Youth Pastor. Their parents have entrusted me with their kids. I have to take them home in one piece.” Then, I laugh to myself “That’s a load of junk. I am going to get these guys!”

As we get closer to their home, these guys slowly quit bugging me about it. Suddenly, I see this dirt turn around where the semi-trucks can turn off and there is this huge mud puddle. I jerk the wheel hard! Pull in and hit the puddle, BOOM! The tire got swallowed up and muddy water goes flying up and over the top and gets all three of them wet. It was fantastic! They sat there in shock... and then all at once they cheered, oh yeah! Mud was splattered all over my Jeep and all over us just like it was meant to be.

The Point: Jeeps were built for mud. They were designed with a high ground clearance, four-wheel drive, and thick tire tread to get through the mud. Ultimately, driving in the mud, dirt, and sand helps fulfill its purpose. It was made for the mud. It was made to get troops through the mud, dirt, and rough terrain.

Transition: In a similar way, we were built for mud. As followers of God, He spurs us on to get muddy too!

One of the ways we can get muddy for Jesus is by serving others. It may be literally getting muddy digging a well on a mission trip or getting dirty cleaning up the local park. It may be figuratively getting dirty serving on a ministry team or helping those in need.

Read: Galatians 5:13-14

"For you have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters. But don't use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead, use your freedom to serve one another in love. For the whole law can be summed up in this one command: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" – Galatians 5:13-14 (NLT)

Getting muddy and dirty is all about serving each other and using our gifts and talents to help other people in the name of God. It is about building up one another, building up the church, building up the community, and reaching out to people with the message of Jesus.

[Teacher Note: (Optional Picture) Show a picture of your students serving in the community or on a mission trip as an example.]

Getting muddy and serving others can be contagious. Sometimes it starts with a small act of kindness. You stop and help push a stuck car out of an intersection. You mow your neighbor's lawn or babysit for free. You help the struggling kid with their homework. You share your lunch with someone at school. You serve at a shelter feeding the homeless. When you do those small things and get a little dirty, you are beginning to fulfill your purpose. A friend of mine shared this idea: "Getting dirty can feel unpleasant, but actually making someone's life better is worth the cost."

Check out what the Bible says about our acts of service:

Read: Matthew 25:40

"The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'" - Matthew 25:40 (NIV)

Actually, it's a lot like the unspoken rule of off-roading. When you are on the trail and someone's vehicle is broken down... you stop and help. And

that is what God wants us to do in life. Stop. Look around. Identify a need and then help.

Transition: However, you can't get muddy all the time. Eventually, you have to bring your ride home and hose it down so it will last.

#3.BUILT TO LAST: Feeding Your Soul

Jeeps were built to last. Did you know that the basic design of the Jeep Wrangler has not changed much? The style has endured. If you look at the WWII models and you look at a modern one today, the grill and the body-line pretty much look the same. They have made some changes and upgrades, but the basic design has remained consistent over time.

If you want an off-road vehicle to last, you have to do maintenance on it. There are a couple things that you need to do on a regular basis. First, you need to focus on the frame and the body. On a Jeep, the frame and the body are usually the first things to go because they are prone to rust. Second, you need to take care of the engine and make sure you do oil changes and check the fluids. Third, you need to take care of the brakes and make sure the brake pads and rotors get changed when needed.

Transition: The frame, the engine, and the brakes are all part of basic vehicle maintenance. In a similar way, we need to do regular soul maintenance if our faith is going to last.

Soul maintenance is a little but tougher to do. It is not as scheduled as vehicle maintenance, and often we do not take the time to do it. Healthy soul maintenance involves three main things: to rest, to remain, and to rely.

First, we need to take time to **rest** and be still. Not to sleep and relax, but to quiet our heart, quiet our mind, and refresh our soul. Our souls need to recharge on a regular basis. One of the ways we can do that is by being still and reflecting on who God is and what He has done for us.

Read: Psalm 62:5-6, Psalm 46:10

"Find rest, O my soul, in God alone; my hope comes from him. He alone is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will not be shaken." - Psalm 62:5-6 (NIV)

“Be still, and know that I am God! ...” Psalm 46:10a (NLT)

Often times, it can be hard to slow down and rest. We live in a busy world. We live in really busy times, and we have really busy lives. Unfortunately, our busyness often keeps us from God. We get so busy that our time with God gets cut out and our souls pay the price.

Take some time to stop, to pause, to look up, to be still, to remember the Lord, to calm down, to slow down, to re-center, and to pray.

Second, we need to **remain** in Christ and His Word. We need to spend time with God reading the Bible. We need to let His Word move into our hearts and put it into practice.

Read: John 15:5

“Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing.” – John 15:5 (NLT)

As branches, we need to stay connected to the vine, which is Jesus. He is the one that feeds our souls and provides much needed nourishment to our spirits. We remain by talking to Him through prayer, by listening to His guidance, by reading and applying His Word, by worshipping Him, by going to youth group and learning more about Him, by going to church, and by developing our relationship with Jesus.

Third, we need to **rely** on God and depend on Him for wisdom. He wants us to depend on Him in our decision-making and in the way that we live. For example, maybe you have a decision to make about a job, a project, an assignment, a family issue, or choosing a college and you ask God for wisdom. Maybe you are not sure if God would approve of the guy/girl you are going out with, the music you listen to, the movies you watch, or the video games you play. So, take some time and ask Him. Learn to rely on God.

Read: James 1:5-6a

“If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking. But when you ask him, be sure that your faith is in God alone...” -James 1:5-6a (NLT)

Also, we need to rely on the Spirit of God for help and strength, and not on our own power.

Read: Zechariah 4:6

“...This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: ‘Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,’ says the Lord Almighty.” –Zechariah 4:6b (NIV)

As you are going throughout your day, lift up small prayers. Ask God for help, help with friendships, help with family stuff, and help with school. God loves it when we rely on Him for wisdom and strength. Leaning on God in our daily lives refreshes our souls.

Transition: If we are going to last, we have to take care of our souls. And if a Jeep is going to last, you have to maintain it and upgrade it from time to time. However, the Jeep wasn’t just built for war, for mud, and to last. It was also built to enjoy and to have fun.

#4.BUILT TO ENJOY: Enjoying the Journey

[Teacher Note: (Option #1 Visual Aid) Unveil a Jeep on stage. It could be a toy jeep, a remote control Jeep, a Little Tykes Jeep, or a real Jeep. The idea is to have some fun with it, play with it, get in it, and create a fun visual that sticks. Talk about why you think they are fun. **Pro Tip:** Leave a Jeep on stage as a visual prop during the whole lesson.]

Optional Transition #1: I would like to draw your attention to the Jeep on stage.

[Teacher Note: (Option #2 Video Run Out: Needs Advanced Planning) Make an off-roading video with some of your students and get parent approval. Borrow a Jeep or SUV and make a 3-5 minute clip. Set up the clip by saying, “What if we went off-roading right now!” Run out of the room with the students you filmed the video with. Then play the clip. Return after the clip and finish the lesson or finish teaching in the video. **Pro Tip:** It is a great way to get students engaged and make them feel like heroes.]

Optional Transition #2: What if we went for a Jeep ride right now?

Jeeps are fun and built to be enjoyed! Sometimes, we just need to relax,

grab some friends, take the top down, have some fun, and enjoy the ride. Riding in a Jeep can be a good reminder to not take life too seriously.

Transition: In a similar way, our faith was meant to be enjoyed as well.

God made us to enjoy Him, to celebrate Him, to praise Him, to honor Him, and to give Him glory. Check out these words in the book of Psalms.

Read: Psalm 95:1-3

"Come, let us sing to the LORD! Let us shout joyfully to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come to him with thanksgiving. Let us sing psalms of praise to him. For the LORD is a great God, a great King above all gods." - Psalm 95:1-3 (NLT)

We were designed to enjoy God and express our enjoyment to Him as we live our lives. Sometimes our faith can become a stale bunch of rules to follow, but it wasn't meant to be that way. Following Jesus can be fun, and we can have some fun with our faith. It is not just about the destination, but learning to enjoy the journey. Laughing, singing, and playing can help us keep things in perspective.

In a way, being built for war, for mud, and to last helps us enjoy life more. As we put on God's armor we are protected from the enemy and empowered to live more freely. As we get muddy and serve, we experience the joy of helping others. As we invest in our own soul maintenance, our spirits are renewed and re-energized.

SUMMARY & APPLICATION:

As I close and review, I want you to pick an area to work on this week and then choose an action step you will take to apply it.

- WAR: Fighting the spiritual battle. Engage and put your armor on daily.
- MUD: Serving and loving people. Take a step to get dirty and serve.
- LAST: Feeding your soul. Make a plan to rest, remain, and rely.
- ENJOY: Enjoy the journey. Design a fun way to express your faith.

Close in Prayer:

[Go Deeper: Break into small groups and use the discussion questions.]

OFF-ROADING: When Mud & Faith Collide

Leader Guide

KEY QUESTION: Why was the Jeep built?

ANSWER: It was built for WAR, for MUD, to LAST, and to ENJOY.

TRANSTION: As Christ followers, we are built for these things too.

LESSON GOALS:

1. To know that they were made for War, for Mud, to Last, & to Enjoy
 2. To feel empowered to fight the enemy, serve others, feed their soul, enjoy God
 3. To do an action step to strengthen their faith in one of the above areas
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Discussion Guide

REVIEW THE MAIN POINTS:

- 1.BUILT FOR WAR: Fighting the Opposition (*Ephesians 6:11-13a*)
- 2.BUILT FOR MUD: Serving and Loving People (*Galatians 5:13-14, Matthew 25:40*)
- 3.BUILT TO LAST: Feeding Your Soul
 - Rest: *Psalms 62:5-6, 46:10a*
 - Remain: *John 15:5*
 - Rely: *James 1:5-6a, Zechariah 4:6b*
- 4.BUILT TO ENJOY: Enjoying the Journey (*Psalms 95:1-3*)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

For Starters:

- 1.Share a time when you got muddy. What happened?
- 2.Share a time when you went off-roading. (*Jeep, truck, SUV, ATV, dirt bike, etc*)

War: Fighting the Spiritual Battle

- 1.Describe the spiritual battle we are in. Why is it important to put on the armor of God?
- 2.How can you stand your ground and stand firm in your faith this week?

Mud: Serving and Loving People

- 1.Have you ever gotten muddy for Jesus by using your talents to help others? Explain.
- 2.What is a way that you could serve and love others this week?

Last: Feeding Your Soul

- 1.How well do you feed your soul? What kinds of things help refresh your spirit?
- 2.What is a way that you could rest, remain, and rely on God this week?

Enjoy: Enjoying the Journey

- 1.How has God helped you lately? What can you do to thank Him and give Him praise?
- 2.What is a way that you could enjoy God & enjoy life more this week?

OFF-ROADING: When Mud and Faith Collide



BUILT FOR WAR



- Physical Battle
- Spiritual Battle

BUILT FOR WAR



“Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground...” - *Ephesians 6:11-13a (NIV)*

BUILT FOR MUD



- Off-roading
- Getting Muddy

BUILT FOR MUD



“For you have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters. But don't use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead, use your freedom to serve one another in love. For the whole law can be summed up in this one command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.”

-*Galatians 5:13-14 (NLT)*

BUILT FOR MUD



“The King will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.’”

-*Matthew 25:40 (NIV)*

BUILT TO LAST



- Vehicle Maintenance
- Soul Maintenance
 - Rest, Remain, Rely

BUILT TO LAST



- “Find rest, O my soul, in God alone; my hope comes from Him. He alone is my rock and my salvation; He is my fortress, I will not be shaken.” -*Psalm 62:5-6 (NIV)*
- “Be still and know that I am God!...” -*Psalm 46:10a (NLT)*

BUILT TO LAST



- “Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing.” -*John 15:5 (NLT)*

BUILT TO LAST



- “If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and He will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking. But when you ask Him, be sure that your faith is in God alone...” -*James 1:5-6a (NLT)*
- “... 'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,' says the LORD Almighty. -*Zechariah 4:6b (NIV)*

BUILT TO ENJOY



- Enjoy the Ride
- Enjoy God
- Enjoy the Journey

BUILT TO ENJOY



“Come, let us sing to the LORD! Let us shout joyfully to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come to him with thanksgiving. Let us sing psalms of praise to him. For the LORD is a great God, a great King above all gods.”

- *Psalm 95:1-3 (NLT)*

SUMMARY



- **WAR:** Fighting the Spiritual Battle
- **MUD:** Serving & Loving People
- **LAST:** Feeding Your Soul
- **ENJOY:** Enjoying the Journey

OFF-ROADING: When Mud and Faith Collide



OFF-ROADING: When Mud and Faith Collide

- **WHY WAS THE JEEP BUILT?**
- **#1 BUILT FOR W_____**
The Point: Fighting the Opposition
 - Physical Battle:
 - Spiritual Battle: *Ephesians 6:11-13a*
- **#2 BUILT FOR M_____**
The Point: Serving and Loving People
 - Off-roading:
 - Getting Muddy: *Galatians 5:13-14, Matthew 25:40*
- **#3 BUILT TO L_____**
The Point: Feeding Your Soul
 - Vehicle Maintenance:
 - Soul Maintenance:
 - REST: *Psalms 62:5-6, 46:10a*
 - REMAIN: *John 15:5*
 - RELY: *James 1:5-6a, Zechariah 4:6b*
- **#4 BUILT TO E_____**
The Point: Enjoying the Journey
 - Enjoy the Ride:
 - Enjoy God: *Psalms 95:1-3*
 - Enjoy the Journey:

OFF-ROADING: When Mud and Faith Collide

- **WHY WAS THE JEEP BUILT?**
- **#1 BUILT FOR W_____**
The Point: Fighting the Opposition
 - Physical Battle:
 - Spiritual Battle: *Ephesians 6:11-13a*
- **#2 BUILT FOR M_____**
The Point: Serving and Loving People
 - Off-roading:
 - Getting Muddy: *Galatians 5:13-14, Matthew 25:40*
- **#3 BUILT TO L_____**
The Point: Feeding Your Soul
 - Vehicle Maintenance:
 - Soul Maintenance:
 - REST: *Psalms 62:5-6, 46:10a*
 - REMAIN: *John 15:5*
 - RELY: *James 1:5-6a, Zechariah 4:6b*
- **#4 BUILT TO E_____**
The Point: Enjoying the Journey
 - Enjoy the Ride:
 - Enjoy God: *Psalms 95:1-3*
 - Enjoy the Journey:

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

FOR FUN:

- 1.Share a time when you got muddy. What happened?
- 2.Share a time when you went off-roading. (*Jeep, SUV, ATV, etc*)

POINT #1

- 1.Describe the spiritual battle we are in. Why is it important to put on the armor of God daily?
- 2.How can you stand your ground and stand firm in your faith this week?

POINT #2

- 1.Have you ever gotten muddy for Jesus by using your talents to help others? Explain.
- 2.What is a way that you could serve and love others this week?

POINT #3

- 1.How well do you feed your soul? What kinds of things help refresh your spirit?
- 2.What is a way that you could rest, remain, and rely on God this week?

POINT #4

- 1.How has God helped you lately? What can you do to thank Him and give Him praise?
- 2.What is a way that you could enjoy God & enjoy life more this week?



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

FOR FUN:

- 1.Share a time when you got muddy. What happened?
- 2.Share a time when you went off-roading. (*Jeep, SUV, ATV, etc*)

POINT #1

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