

IT WAS AN ORDINARY DAY

1. Do you have a routine for your day – a sequence of events, some things you ordinarily do in a certain way or at a certain time every day? If so, describe it.

2. A Story

Todd and his wife, Lisa, had just returned from a trip to Italy. He won the trip from his company because he was one of their top salesmen. Business was taking him out of town the next day. This wasn't unusual. His job required that he travel three or four times each month. Todd could have flown out that same night they arrive home, but he wanted to spend some time with his family. He left at 6:15 the next morning for an early flight out. He planned to return late that evening. It was an ordinary day...

Or so it seemed. September 11, 2001 would be anything but an ordinary day for Todd Beamer. Terrorists would hijack that early morning flight he was on, along with three other planes. Two would crash into the World Trade Center. Another was crashed into the Pentagon. Thousands died. Because of the heroic actions of Beamer and others, the last plane was unable to reach its target. All the passengers died when the plane was flown into the crowd in a Pennsylvania field. Todd Beamer never made it home to see his kids.

3. Do you know of any similar stories – stories where someone began what seemed to be an ordinary day, but that ended in a dramatically different way?
4. What do we learn from stories like these? What important lessons should they teach us? Think about these passages.
 - Job 14:1-2
 - Ecclesiastes 9:10-12
 - James 4:13-17
5. If you knew that today was your last day, what would you want to change in your life?

TEACHER'S GUIDE

Instructions: Take each question, one by one, and have the students answer on their own. Then, discuss their answers with the group.

1. Have some fun with this first question, talking over the different daily routines we follow. You may want to emphasize that we get up every day (especially during the school year) assuming that every day will follow the schedule.
2. Share the Todd Beamer story with your group. First emphasize how this was for him an ordinary day. Then tell the rest of the story emphasizing that it was anything but an ordinary day. You might also ask your students to share their memories of 911, if they are old enough to have any.
3. Have students share tragic stories they know where an ordinary day ended in extraordinarily tragic ways. They may have lost a family member or close friend in a car accident. Ask the kids to share how they felt and how this incident impacted their lives. Note especially the way it provokes us to think about God and our relationship with him. Also point out that this happens to someone every day – an ordinary day turns out to be not so ordinary.
4. This question forms the core of our lesson. Have the students share what they believe are the most important lessons to take away from stories like Todd Beamer's and the stories your students shared. Work in the principles found in the Bible verses included. You will want to mention...
 - Man's time on earth is limited. For all of us there is a day coming when our lives will end.
 - We do not know when our time will come. Life is uncertain.
 - It is arrogant to live like we know what will happen tomorrow.
 - I need to be busy doing good and living the life that Jesus wants me to live all the time.
5. This is the take home for your students. You may ask them to write their answers on an index card and submit it anonymously. Ask them to list one specific thing they would change about their lives if they knew this was their last day.