



Heavyweight Champion of the World (Reverend and the Makers)

Song: Heavyweight Champion of the World
Artist: Reverend and the Makers
Album: The State of Things (*Beware – parental advisory*)
Duration: 3:30

Theme: Hopes, ambitions and regrets

You will need:

- 1 copy of this sheet for each leader of the music session
- 1 copy for each group member of the lyrics sheet
- 1 CD player, or MP3 player / laptop with speakers
- 1 copy of 'Heavyweight Champion of the World' – either an MP3 or on CD
- At least 1 copy of the Bible – as many as possible will speed up the process
- 1 candle or something to focus prayer
- 1 small sheet of paper for each group member and leader
- 1 pen for each group member and leader
- 1 basket or tray to pass around during prayer

Activity:

Break your group up into twos, and set up a thumb war competition (best of three wins)... if you have time, the winners could play each other, so that ultimately somebody is crowned 'The Thumb Warrior'!

Discussion Starter:

- Ask your group what range of emotions they felt during the thumb war competition.
- Who felt like they had achieved something when they had won?
- Who felt dejected when they had lost?
- Who has the ambition and the drive to be the top thumb warrior in the world?
- Who of your group has the ambition and the drive to be top class in something else?
- Are there any athletes or champions in the Olympics who you admire for their persistence?

Listen:

Hand out the lyrics sheets for the song, and play the song once through. You might like to ask if there are words that any group members don't understand or that puzzle them:



- *Leccy* = short slang for 'electricity'
- *Rat race* = day-to-day drudge and competition to get through life
- *chops* = martial arts moves
- *Manor top* = a housing estate in Sheffield (where the band are from)
- *First Dan* = a rank of karate skills
- *Camber Sands* = a seaside resort in Sussex

It might help to then replay the song if there have been a lot of questions about the content.

Questions to discuss:

- What is the message of the song?
- What does the song say about ambitions?
- What does the song say about regrets?
- What does the song say about standing out from the crowd?

Starting off:

- Do you think Olympic athletes have similar regrets?
- What qualities do athletes need to have to fulfill their ambitions?
- What kind of qualities do you think we each need to achieve our own ambitions?

Going deeper:

- Is ambition always a good thing?
- Would you be truly happy if you were the Heavyweight Champion of the World?
- Does God have hopes and ambitions for us?

The Bible Bit:

Once you've brought the questions to a close, tell your group that before finishing with a prayer, you'll briefly look together at some passages from the Bible that talk about hope, ambition and regrets.

You might like to ask each group member individually or in pairs to look up different references and read them aloud to the group – it's best if you don't photocopy or mark the sections, so that your group can begin to look books up in the contents, and discover how the Bible is laid out. The more copies of the Bible you have the better, so that different groups or individuals can be looking for their reference at the same time.

References (you don't have to use them all!):

- Genesis 12:1-7
God promises a future to Abram (Abraham), Sarai (Sarah) and their descendents. Abraham, indeed, was the father of the Jewish, Christian and Muslim religions!
- Proverbs 28:18-28
These collected sayings of Jewish wisdom give an interesting perspective on what things to put our hope in – do the same things apply these days?
- Jeremiah 29:11-13
The prophet Jeremiah's words can comfort us if we feel like the burdens of every day life are bringing us down – God has a plan for our lives!

- Matthew 20:26-28
After James and John's mum tries to get them promoted in Jesus's eyes, Jesus explains that in God's kingdom, ambition means seeking to serve one another.
- Luke 2:25-32
Simeon had been waiting his whole life to see the arrival of Jesus, and his prayer once he had seen him was one of 'no regrets' – now he could die a happy man!
- 2 Corinthians 7:10
Paul's strong words in his letter to the church in Corinth emphasize the difference between 'godly grief' (which causes us to say sorry) and 'worldly grief' (which breeds unhealthy regrets)

Closing Prayer:

Put some quiet music on, and see if you can dim the lights, ask each person to take a pen and a piece of paper, and give them a few minutes to write down one of their hopes for their lives.

After the group seem to be finished, begin with a spoken prayer, asking God to take each person's hopes into his hands, and pass a basket to the next person, having put your sheet of paper in. Invite each group member to place their hopes in the basket, praying either aloud or quietly as they do so.

Once the basket has returned to you, finish the prayer time with a closing prayer, thanking God for each person's hopes and dreams, and asking him to be with them in the coming weeks.

Song:

If your group are used to singing, you might like to finish with the song 'Jesus, All for Jesus' – lyrics available from www.robinmark.co.uk

