



ILLUMINATE

REVEALING THE GREATEST HOPE

SR HIGH
CURRICULUM
2017



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ILLUMINATE

REVEALING THE GREATEST HOPE

INTRODUCTION

When we want to see something, we shine a light. In today's world, without question, it can feel very dark at times. It is in these times that we are more cognizant of our need to find a hope we can trust in. The greatest hope is Jesus, and it is the role of church to be a people who will illuminate that great hope.

As we seek to become more like Christ, this year we need to delve into some key issues youth are facing today. By focus on these areas, we will shine the light of Jesus in these areas, with the emphasis that He is the way, the truth and the life (John 14:6).

It is important to note the lessons in this curriculum are not comprehensive overviews of those topics. Instead, in light of the complexity of these issues along with the diverse perspectives in God's family, we entrust each local church to identify their understanding of those issues in their unique context while being able to use what we have provide as a catalyst for conversation, dialogue and discovery of God's direction.

We recognize that starting the conversation can be hard. These lessons are meant to begin the dialogue with the hope that students and leaders will continue to wrestle and clarify any of the issues in the light of Jesus and in the context of a healthy engagement with scripture.

WHAT'S BEHIND THE CURRICULUM?

In this curriculum, we seek to lay the groundwork for meaning, Spirit-led dialogue through well-structured and thought-provoking lessons. We also took great efforts to write our lessons in such a way as to improve your teaching practice. Lesson flow, wording of instructions, transitions and other details are explicitly expressed. We also included teaching tips. These brief lessons on instructional practice and teaching strategies help to model the pedagogical practice behind the lessons so that you can improvise, adapt and create your own lessons using research-based practice. The lessons are laid out so that you know everything you need before you start.

The curriculum was produced using a constructivist/student-centred approach to learning. The premise is that people learn through different, multiple intelligences¹. Through this approach, we attempt to utilize these intelligences in different fashions.

We understand that you might not use the curriculum in the order the lessons were written. Just be aware that if you use lessons out of sequence you might need to make adjustments so the lessons will flow properly. Of course, if you need to change, amend or improve these lessons in any way, we encourage you to do so. We only ask that you do not redistribute either this original curriculum or any altered version as your own property.

STRUCTURE

In each lesson, you will find the following blocks to help you teach each lesson.

SPIRITUAL AIMS

These are the life transformations we hope will happen with the Holy Spirit's initiative. While it's hard to quantify or empirically measure transformations, these are qualities and actions we trust will be instilled in our students.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

These are the key end goals we aim for each student to attain by the end of a lesson.

MATERIALS NEEDED

This is a comprehensive list of all the items you'll need to facilitate the lesson. In some instances, you will see a notation such as "1 copy of Appendix A per 4 students" which means "In the lesson, students will be in groups of 4, so make sure each group has 1 copy." These are some terms for you to familiarize yourself with:

Video projection: To show a video, ensure you have a projector or TV screen, the appropriate cables (e.g., HDMI cable or VGA cable), a computer or applicable device (e.g., DVD player) and speakers. If possible, ensure this is set up at least 20 minutes before start time and play at least part of the clip to ensure all the video and sound are working properly.

Recording paper: For large-group brainstorming or idea compilation, or to display references for a large group, you can choose to use chart paper with permanent markers, a whiteboard with dry erase markers or an electronic word processor (like MS Word) displayed on an LCD projector.

In some instances, other media (outside of online sources) may be referenced. These standalone media will be available at cboqyouth.ca/illuminate under "Sr High Media Pack."

PRE-LESSON PREPARATION

It is assumed you will collect all the materials needed ahead of time. There may be some specific set-ups required before the lesson begins. These details are outlined for your preparation.

MINDS ON

A brief section to create the mental set for the lesson and provide an effective "hook" for the ideas that will be presented. These are not just icebreaker activities (unless otherwise stated); these are interactive introductions to prepare your students for the "meat" of the lesson.

ACTION

This is the main part of the lesson. Students will engage with big ideas from Scripture or from theological thinking around the Christian faith. A lot of times, these are moments where students will be teaching each other and learning together (hopefully including your leaders as well).

CONSOLIDATE/DEBRIEF



This gives an opportunity to bring all the ideas of the lesson together and to apply them to our own lives. While the "Action" section usually deals with the head, this section deals with the heart. Its intention is to hopefully internalize the discoveries made in "Action" into life transformation.

HOW TO USE THE CURRICULUM

Read the lesson thoroughly and well in advance. There are some preparations that will take time to set up depending on the lesson. This includes any technical requirements, such as equipment to view a video. Also, adapt and revise the lesson as needed because you know your students the best.

Review the teaching tips so you can become familiar with some best practices when facilitating a lesson. While not every tip has a

specific allocation in the lessons themselves, take some time to review them to help expand your teaching toolkit. (You can always share your own online via Facebook ([facebook.com/cboqyouth](https://www.facebook.com/cboqyouth)) or Twitter (@cboqyouth) #teachingtips.)

 **Leader's notes** vs.  **teaching tips:** **Leader's notes** are details specific to that part of the lesson. **Teaching tips** are general, helpful practices or reminders. Each teaching tip corresponds to an index at the back of the curriculum.

Your role is to facilitate the lesson. Within a constructivist approach, your objective is to create the space for students to find the truths God is aiming to show them. Keep the group moving at a good pace through the lesson. Observe the feedback they are giving you through their energy levels and body language. Also, ask good questions (not just giving good answers).

SOME COMMON TERMS USED INCLUDE:

These are words you can speak verbatim or in your own words.

Ask: You can ask this question verbatim or in your own words.

Optional: These are alternatives or supplemental instructions.

The numbered instructions are meant to give clear directions to students (you can give them verbatim except where it indicates "Leader's note"). Providing clear details for what students will be doing is vital in smooth transitions and accepted expectations. The title gives you the aim of the set-up. There are some commonly used set-up; you will see a Teaching Tip next to it. Refer to that Teaching Tip for instructions on the set-up. Specific details of the content are in the lesson.

If there are instructions that are repeated often through the module, only the title will be shown with the topic/question.

MEDIA USE

Please note that presenting a video from a distributor (e.g. from a DVD or a digital download) in public (e.g., a church) may require a licence (similar to a CCLI licence for music). You can obtain a licence that will cover most distributors, such as Universal, Disney and 20th Century Fox, Audio Ciné Film (www.acf-film.com) or Criterion Pictures (www.criterionpic.com).

We will give you the URLs of the videos so you can screen them. You may choose to download those clips, because other content like YouTube sidebars cannot be controlled or to remove the dependency for an online connection at the time of the lesson. However, due to copyright laws, we cannot include the clips with the curriculum itself. We suggest that you preview the movie clips suggested in each specific case. This will help you determine whether the clips are suitable for your group. Note that at the time of print, the URLs were live. However, they can be removed at the website host's discretion at any time. We have given a brief description of what content was in the video so that you may find a suitable alternative. If you need further assistance, email cboqyouth@baptist.ca or call 416-620-2946.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Last, we pray that the Holy Spirit will guide you and your students since many of these topics will strike at the core of many youth. For some, these issues will be soul-wrenching. And yet, Jesus continues to shine his light, revealing that he is the greatest hope. We pray that you will illuminate the One Truth Hope.

SPECIAL THANKS

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WHO'S IN YOUR QUIVER?

The Power of Mentorship

SPIRITUAL AIMS

Hopefully students will be able to...

- Embrace God's view of mentorship relationships
- Evaluate their own mentoring relationship
- Begin a mentorship relationship with someone

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- Study a biblical example of a mentorship relationship
- Discover the benefits of investing in mentoring relationships
- List the people or places they can go to for advice
- Identify the voices they currently listen to
- Evaluate the impact these voices have in helping them mature in their faith
- Consider who they could ask to mentor them

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Video projection
- Video clip: Parents Just Don't Understand (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jW3PFC86UNI>) (only from 0:00-2:18)
- 1 copy of Appendix A (optional: You can choose to display the pictures on screen.)
- Recording paper
- 1 copy of Appendix B (posted around the room)
- 1 pen per student
- 1 blank paper per student
- 1 copy of Appendix D per student

MINDS ON: (Approx 7 Mins.)

Play video and be prepared to stop it at 2:18.

Even though this video is a few years old, I think teenagers have been singing this message for centuries, “Parents just don’t understand.” Have you ever felt this way? That your parents just don’t understand?

Think/Pair/Share: What do you think your parents just don’t understand about you or youth in general these days?

💡 TT #1

👤 **Leader’s Notes:** Empathize with the students the fact that sometimes they feel like their parents don’t understand them, but don’t beat up the parents either :)

Some of you may not have a great relationship with your parents. Even if you do, there will be times when the relationship will be strained or tough. That’s why it’s really important to have other adults in their lives they can turn to for advice or guidance.

Display the pictures from Appendix A.

Ask: What do these characters have in common? (Answers: They are archers, heroes, defenders)

Ask: What was their defence weapon? (Answer: Bow and arrows)

Ask: What other piece of equipment do they have? (A quiver)

Explain that a quiver holds the extra arrows and that as good as these heroes were, they needed more than one sharp arrow.

Ask: How many arrows did they have in their quivers?

(Answers: Legolas = 24, Green Arrow = 24, Merida = 6-8, Hawkeye = 10-20,

Katniss Everdeen = 8-10)


Did you know that each of you have a quiver too? God has designed your quiver to carry people, not arrows. We’re going to look at what God says about the importance of having a few adults in your quiver. Like arrows, these are special people who will help you reach your target, and maybe help you defeat a few foes along the way. The question is, who’s in your quiver?

ACTION: (Approx. 25 mins)

Jigsaw 💡 TT #2

1. Divide the students into 3 expert groups (between 3-6 people per group). (if you have less than 3 people per group i.e. less than 9 students, they can review each passage together. If you have more than 6 per group, have multiple groups work on the same passage).
2. Each expert group will review a passage and answer the question “What is the strategy that is being used to pass on truth about God?” Expert groups have 5 minutes to formulate their answer.
 - a. Group 1: Psalm 71:18

- b. Group 2: Psalm 145:4
 - c. Group 3: 1 Thessalonians 2:8
3. In each group, have each student assigned a number from 1-3. (If there are more than 3 people, then have duplicate numbers.)
 4. Gather each number to form the home groups.
 5. In each home group, have each person share the answer from their expert group passage. Each home group will formulate a definition of mentorship. A speaker from each group will share their home group's definition to the large group. Home groups have 5 minutes to formulate their definition.
 6. When home groups share their definition, record it on Recording paper.

 **Leader's Notes:** Mentorship can be defined as: "Mentor is an experienced and trusted advisor." "Mentorship is a time-based, intentional, 1-on-1 relationship with the mentor to discern God's directives for the mentee." Mentors also help us develop godly character through sharing life with us. Valuable life lessons can be passed on, just by spending time together and enjoying one another's company.

God wants one generation to teach the next generation all about Him and the things He has done. This isn't just a job for parents; it is the job of a whole generation. So, we are meant to have more than our parents in our quiver; we need mentors.

Ask: In the Bible, God gives us examples of people who had older adults helping them learn about life and God. Who are some examples?"

(Answers: Moses and Joshua, Naomi and Ruth, Elijah and Elisha, Paul and Timothy, Barnabbas and Paul, Jesus and the 12 disciples.)

Record this on Recording paper.

Art Gallery

TT #3

1. Give each student a pen and piece of blank paper.
2. Using the pictures from Appendix B, instruct the students to visit each picture and read the corresponding Bible passage.
3. As they are reviewing each post, have the students identify and list the characteristics that Jesus included in his mentoring relationship with his disciples on their own paper.
4. After they have reviewed each passage, gather the large group.
5. Have students offer their answers. Recording them on Recording paper. (Suggested answers are in Appendix C.)

Ask: Did anything stand out to you about the ways in which Jesus mentored the 12 disciples?


Ask: Did anything surprise you about how Jesus spent time with the disciples?

Have a student volunteer to read Mark 3:14.

TT #4

Ask: What is the first thing this verse says is the reason that Jesus appointed the twelve disciples?

(Answer - “They might be with him”)


 **Leader’s Notes:** Highlight the fact that Jesus taught the disciples, but they weren’t always in a formal setting like a church or school; they shared their life together and learned along the way. The disciples were able to see Jesus in all kinds of environments and they learned a lot about what it meant to have a relationship with God just through “being with” Jesus.

You can connect with adults in your lives in these same sort of ways. These are the people we want in our quivers; the people who help us grow in our relationship with God. Before we think about who could be in our quiver. Let’s look and see who already is.

DEBRIEF & CONSOLIDATE: (APPROX. 15 MINS)

Ask: When you want to figure something out in your life, whether it’s big or small things, where do you turn to for help?

Give each student a copy of Appendix D. Instruct students to write down all the voices that they listen to, or the places they go to for advice about anything in life. They can either complete this individually or in groups no bigger than 3. Give about 3 minutes to complete this list.


 **Leader’s Notes:** Encourage them to be specific. (Possible suggestions: internet sites, movie stars, friends, teachers, family members)

1. Based on Jesus’ model of mentoring and the definition you created, have students evaluate on a scale of 1 to 3 how well each influence reflects a mentoring relationship.
 - a. (3 points for 6-8 characteristics, 2 points for 3-5 characteristics, 1 point for 1-2 characteristics)
2. Instruct students to circle the names that scored a 2 or 3.
3. Have students write those names onto the other quiver on the worksheet.

Ask: How could your relationship with this person develop more into a mentoring relationship?

Ask: What areas could you begin to focus on with one or two of these relationships? Based on the way that Jesus mentored his disciples.

(Possible suggestions: Could I pray more with this person? Could I hang out more with this person? Could this person teach me more about _____ in my life?)

 **Leader’s Notes:** Help students understand that while they need other adults to help them grow, it’s still important for them to develop healthy relationships with their parents. At times, they will need more than their parents’ influence in their lives. Suggest that they talk to their parents about mentorship and get their parents’ advice on who they think would be a great mentor for them.

Optional: You or another youth worker can share a personal story about how someone in your life mentored you.

As you go about your week, why not talk to some of these people about how you can be more intentional to set up times and occasions to be with them. Have honest conversations with them about where you’re at in life and how they can help you in some of the areas you thought about. God has given you a quiver to fill with people that can help you to grow in your faith and in your character, so start filling it with some sharp arrows!

Close your time in prayer.

APPENDIX A



APPENDIX B

#1 Mark 2:15



#2 John 15:15



#3 John 17:1 & 9



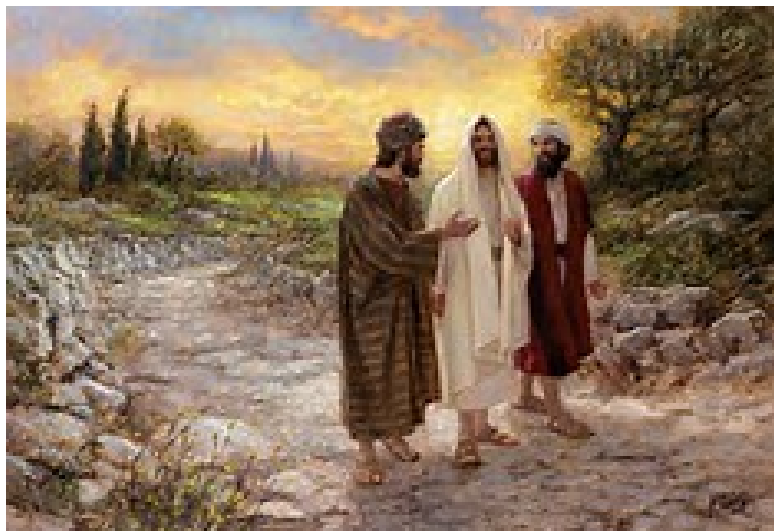
#4 Mark 9:30-31



#5 Mark 3:13-14



#6 Luke 8:1



#7 John 13:1, 4&5



#8 John 2:1-2



APPENDIX C

Characteristics of Mentorship

1. John 2:1-2 = Celebrate together
2. John 13: 1, 4 & 5 = Demonstrated love by serving
3. Mark 3:13-14 = Gave them special assignments
4. John 17:1 & 9 = Prayed with his disciples
5. John 15:15 = Became friends
6. Luke 8:1 = Travelled together
7. Mark 9:30-31 = Taught the disciples
8. Mark 2:15 = Ate meals together

APPENDIX D





ILLUMINATE
REVEALING THE GREATEST HOPE

ANXIETY

SPIRITUAL AIMS

Hopefully students will be able to...

- Release control of their anxieties to Jesus
- Experience freedom from worry

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to...

- Understand why anxiety can be debilitating
- Differentiate between stress and anxiety
- Identify the steps to calming someone having an anxiety attack

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Several pieces of Lego
- 1 inflated balloon
- 1 blindfold
- Video projection
- Video clip: Anxiety video
- 1 copy of Appendix A (printed double-sided) per 4 students
- Scripture passage (Philippians 4:6-7) written out on chart paper (or displayed digitally)
- 1 copy of article (<http://www.heysigmund.com/dealing-with-anxiety-anxious-mind-calm/>)
- Recording paper

PRE-LESSON PREPARATION (IF APPLICABLE)

- Have 3 stations set up with Lego pieces at each. Set the balloon at Station 1 and the blindfold at Station 2 (Station 3 does not require a prop).
- Cut up Appendix A into cards and collated into separate sets.

MINDS ON (approx. 20 min.)

This activity is meant to illustrate different ways anxiety can become debilitating.



This exercise may also be triggering to someone who suffers from anxiety so pick your volunteers carefully. If you aren't comfortable having a student do this, then swap the student/leader roles.

“What is Anxiety Like?”

1. Have 3 students volunteer with each of them at one of the 3 Lego stations.
2. Instruct them that they will need to build an object of your (leader's) choice. Note that each station has an impediment.
3. Have 3 leaders (or responsible students) volunteer and go to one of the 3 stations.
4. At Station 1, the leader gently hits the student in the face with the balloon repeatedly while they work.
5. At Station 2, the leader will blindfold the student while they work.
6. At Station 3, the leader will gently restrain one of the student's arms while they are trying to work.
7. Students will have approx. 5 minutes to complete their build.

Ask the participating students: What is was like to try and build under these conditions?

Anxiety shows itself differently in different people, but these three stations were meant to illustrate how it can make you feel. In the first station [student #1's name] was being hit in the face with a balloon; this was to show how even little things can seem irritating and disorienting when you are suffering from anxiety. [Student #2] was blindfolded, this represented how out of your control things look when you suffer from anxiety. [Student #3] was physically restrained while doing their work. This showed how anxiety can show itself with actual physical symptoms that keep you from being able to work to your fullest. In the same way that these students were irritated and disoriented there are aspects of our lives that can cause us to be disoriented and irritated. Anxiety is something that manifests itself differently in everyone and yet what remains the same is that it distracts us from the task at hand

ACTION (approx. 10 min.)

We are going to watch a video where someone with an anxiety disorder describes what it feels like and how it affects him. Afterwards we'll play a bit of a game to illustrate these points further, and to think about how we can overcome these obstacles.

Show the video clip.

Play the game in Appendix A

1. Divide students into groups of 4 (no more than 5). 💡 TT #5
2. Have students lay out the cards with the daily activities/tasks facing up.

3. One at a time, a student will pick an activity they think they could do and then flip the card to reveal the anxiety behind the task. After revealing each anxiety ask the following questions as a group:

- Have you ever felt like this?
- If you did feel like this how would you respond?
- What could you do to deal with this anxiety and move past it?
- What could you say to someone to help them move past it? (Note: “get over it” isn’t helpful)

Give students approx. 5 minutes to complete. Afterwards, gather everyone into the large group.

Ask: What are some similar approaches you discussed in helping someone move past that anxiety?

Record their answers on Recording paper.

CONSOLIDATE/DEBRIEF *(approx. 5 min.)*

Show Philippians 4:6-7 on chart paper (or digitally.)

Invite students to find a quiet place in the room. Have them sit up straight and quietly read the verse over in their heads a few times while practicing the “breathe like a box” exercise as was explained in the video. They have 3 minutes to read over the passage.



Breathe like a box is a cognitive behavioural therapy technique that shifts focus away from the things you can’t control towards something that you can, breathing.

Anxiety exists only in our mind, and it is our mind which produces the physical symptoms. We can use our mind to re-focus our anxiety and calm us down. Here are 8 steps to doing that. Listen calmly to the 8 steps and try imagining walking through them, or walking a friend through them in the event of a panic attack.

Read over the [HeySigmund.com](https://www.heySigmund.com) article (just the 8 steps, don’t worry about the introduction or conclusion).

Close in Prayer

Optional: Give a copy of the article to each student or send the link to them afterwards.

APPENDIX A

Getting out of bed	Eating Breakfast	Going to School	Seeing Friends
Eating Lunch	Sitting in Class	After School Activities	Having Dinner
Doing Homework	Watching TV	Falling Asleep	Dreaming

<p>You think: “Do these people even like me?” There is not much you like about yourself so you have trouble believing others could like you either.</p>	<p>The knot in your stomach gets heavier with every step. You don’t know how the day is going to go, but there is so much that can go wrong in your mind.</p>	<p>You are thinking of skipping breakfast because you aren’t really hungry because you are too anxious about how the day is going to go. But you also know it will be worse if you haven’t eaten well so you eat it anyways. You do not enjoy it.</p>	<p>Feeling nervous or guilty for no reason. Dreading having to leave your bed not because you don’t want to go to school, but because life seems too stressful to face</p>
<p>You still aren’t hungry. You stare blankly at your food and think about whether you can bring yourself to eat. You have trouble reading the other people at the table and aren’t sure if they are mad at you or if they even notice you.</p>	<p>You want to get lost in this, but you can’t stop thinking about the rest of your day. You go over everything you forgot to do or say. It effects the way you participate.</p>	<p>You can’t concentrate. You know it’s important but you can’t stop thinking about how you are hurting yourself by not listening to the teacher.</p>	<p>You are nervous about lunch time, but you are more nervous about going back to class. You get stuck in a loop of dread where you aren’t sure which option you want less. All you know is you don’t want either.</p>
<p>You don’t even have any rest in your sleep because you have stress dreams all night. You will wake up feeling exhausted and have to do the whole thing over.</p>	<p>You toss and turn and go over every stupid thing you said that day. You question everyone’s intentions about how they acted around you and wonder what stresses tomorrow will bring.</p>	<p>You can’t enjoy your show because your head is still swimming from the stress of not finishing your homework well. You know that this is just a momentary distraction before life resumes again.</p>	<p>You still can’t concentrate. None of this makes any sense because you weren’t able to pay attention in class. All you want to do is go to bed but you know that will just bring tomorrow sooner and you’ll have to do it all again.</p>



ILLUMINATE
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DEPRESSION

SPIRITUAL AIMS

Hopefully students will be able to...

- Pray for, comfort, and encourage those who struggle with depression
- Meditate on the word of God as an exercise to help cope with depression

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to...

- Understand that depression is a reality and it can be treated
- Identify ways to comfort and support a friend going through depression

MATERIALS NEEDED

- 1 backpack
- Book to fill the backpack
- 1 envelope per student
- 5 paper scraps per student
- 1 pen per student
- Video projection
- Video clip: What is Depression (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z-IR48Mb3W0&feature=youtu.be>)
- Recording paper

MINDS ON (approx. 10 min.)

Pick a student who will be able to do more extensive physical activity. Have them perform 5 repetitions of a physical activity (e.g. push ups, jumping jacks, burpees, etc.) and ask them how that was. Next, put a backpack with books on the student. Have them repeat the exercise. Call another student up and have them do 10 repetitions of an activity in competition with each other. You can continue until the first student is totally winded (careful not to exhaust them too much). Thank the students and have them sit down.

Ask: [student name] can't seem to maintain the pace s/he had at the beginning. Why?

Allow for students to offer answers.

Ask: Would it be true if I suggested the following reasons (vote whether you think it is true or false):

💡 TT #6

- S/He's being lazy.
- He/she should have just powered through and gotten over it.
- S/he should just change his/her attitude.
- He/she needs to be more optimistic.

People often think that depression is just feeling sad, but it actually has physical symptoms that you can't get over by just thinking happy thoughts or trying to be optimistic. It can often feel as though you are carrying a lot of weight, or that someone is standing on your chest.

ACTION (approx. 20 min.)

Show the video.

Break your group up into 3 smaller groups 💡 TT #5 (if you have more than 10 people per group then create additional groups and assign them one of the three verses being used already) and assign each of them a verse to answer the following questions for about 5 minutes.

- Matthew 11:29
- Deuteronomy 31:8
- Psalm 34:7

Group questions 💡 TT #7

Given what we learned about depression from the video, how might these verses help encourage those who are suffering?

- Does this verse mean that God takes away depression? Why or why not?
- Given the theme of the video, what should we not say about this verse to a friend or loved one with depression?
- (possible Is it helpful or unhelpful to tell someone suffering from depression to "cheer up"? What is something we could say instead?)
- How can we use this verse as an encouragement without making them feel guiltier?

Bring the groups back together and have them share what their verse was and what they talked about in their group.

[Alternate idea]

Read these verses out loud to the group one at a time. Directly before each verse is read, have the students and leaders stand up and find a new seat/spot in the room. Changing physical location and position can open our imaginations to ideas we wouldn't have thought of before (also great for tactile and spatial learners). After each verse, tell students and leaders to call up words or images that came to mind when listening to them. Write the answers down on Recording paper. After this exercise refer to the questions above, as a large group instead of three small ones.]

Depression is a reality but it is treatable. There are lots of things people find helpful for treating and processing depression. Some options include:

- Talk Therapy
- Spiritual Counselling
- Prayer and Meditation
- Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (this is a form of therapy based around reframing and re-examining depressing or anxious thoughts)

What are some things you think might be helpful for yourself or others to treat, process, or deal with depression?

Record their answers on the Recording paper.

CONSOLIDATE/DEBRIEF *(approx. 5 min.)*

The most important thing to remember when you struggle with depression is that you are not alone. Remember over 10% of the population is suffering from depression. The most important thing to remember when seeing a loved one struggle with depression is to believe them and be patient with them.

Pass out envelopes, pens and paper scraps.

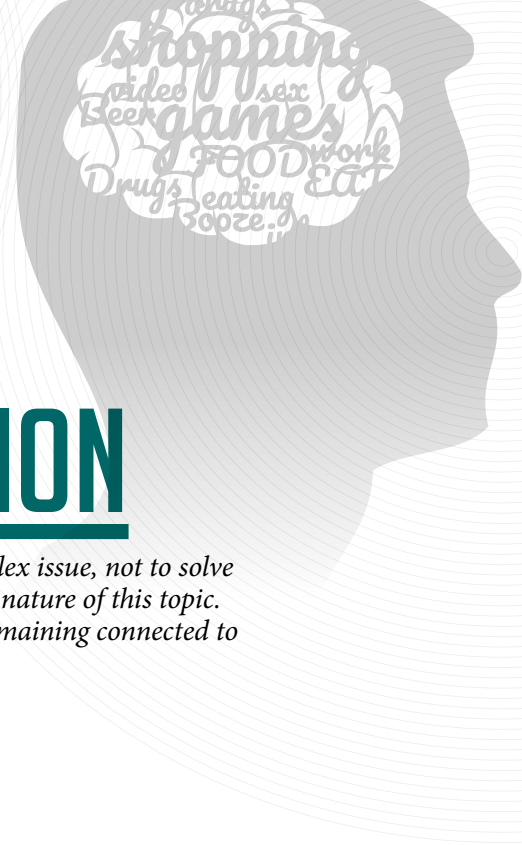
These envelopes are your secret prayer envelopes. It's meant to hold names of people you love and words you find powerful.

1. On the first piece of paper write down the name(s) of someone (or some people) in your life who struggle from depression (or another illness or affliction).
2. On the second piece of paper write some words you find powerful and encouraging (i.e.: Strength, faith, love, grace, etc.).
3. Put this envelope somewhere you will see it periodically (like your dresser top). When you remember, take out the papers and read the name and pray the words over them ("Lord, give [name] [word of power] today... etc.)

If you yourself struggle with depression write the names of people you feel blessed to have in your life, like the people who you know support you. If you can't think of anyone I encourage you to put my name, or the names of one of the leaders, because we do love you and we are here for you, no matter what.

Have the student's spend some time making up their secret prayer envelopes.

Close in prayer.



DEFINING ADDICTION

Leader Note: *The aim of this lesson is to begin a conversation about a complex issue, not to solve a complex issue. Some students may be uncomfortable with the inconclusive nature of this topic. Continue to be open to their questions, and to reinforce the importance of remaining connected to family, friends, church, youth group and (most importantly) to God.*

SPIRITUAL AIMS

Hopefully students will be able to...

- Understand addiction as an outward manifestation of the sin every human heart struggles with
- View addiction not as a personal failing in an individual, but as a symptom of our broken world
- Realize that the relationship and connection God calls us to is one of the greatest factors in addressing addiction successfully

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to...

- Define addiction (as different than obsession, dependence, habit, or tolerance)
- Recognize signs and symptoms of addiction
- Develop vocabulary around addiction
- Become aware that addiction is not always related to drugs and/or alcohol and/or sex

MATERIALS NEEDED

- 1 pen/marker per 3 students
- 2 Bibles (optional: project the passages)
- Recording paper
- 1 whiteboard or chart paper (for 4 Cs)
- 1 chart paper per 3 students
- Video projection
- Video clip:
 - Everything you think ... (<https://youtu.be/Qr7u7y5VKXM>)
 - Rich Young Ruler (<https://youtu.be/Qr7u7y5VKXM>) (optional)
- 1 copy of Appendix A per small group (see “Pre-lesson preparation”)

PRE-LESSON PREPARATION

- Review video clip to ensure it's appropriate for your group.
- Visit Center for Addiction and Mental Health website for information about addiction and treatment: https://www.camh.ca/en/hospital/health_information/a_z_mental_health_and_addiction_information/drug-use-addiction/Pages/addiction.aspx
- Write 4 “C’s” on whiteboard or on another sheet of chart paper

- For Appendix A, cut up pages 1-2 into separate pieces and collate together. Leave the answers and small groups questions together for the group leader.
- Assign individuals into small groups ahead of time for “Small Group” in Action section. These may be preassigned groups that meet regularly each week or you may create groups for the lesson. If assigning small groups just for this lesson, be sure to consider relationship dynamics within your participants. This is a sensitive topic that requires a positive environment for people to feel comfortable sharing things that may be a struggle. Have 1 leader per group with no more than 7 students.

MINDS ON (APPROX.10 MIN.)



Here we are starting a conversation about a sensitive subject that may be intensely personal to some members of your group. The goal of this activity is to edge students towards thinking about addiction, and especially to have them write out their assumptions about the topic so they can be confronted. As we will discover, this is a complex issue that can and should be dealt with compassion, and connection.

1. Divide students into groups of 3-4 and hand out markers and chart paper. 💡 TT #5
2. Ask the following questions one at a time. Allow students to brainstorm answers for 1-2 minutes before moving on to the next question. 💡 TT #7
3. What are you addicted to? (if you feel this question is leading, use a phrase that works with your group i.e. “what are you obsessed with?”, “what are you in to?”, “what do you dig?”, “what are your favourite things?”)
4. What could someone be addicted to?
5. What does an addict look like/what does an addict do?
6. Have students post up sheets on three different walls, have them walk around to see what other groups have written for each question. 💡 TT #3 Alternatively, you could have groups verbally share what they thought of.



Many students will think of obvious answers: drugs, alcohol, pornography, etc. Having them post up their answers may help to create a safe environment as you begin to talk about this sensitive subject. However, if your group is especially open, mature and/or vocal, it's ok to have them respectfully approach these issues verbally.

Ask: Based on what we've written here, how does society view addicts?

(Possible answers: lazy, uncontrolled, stupid, foolish, poor, unfortunate, sad, worthless etc.)

Romans 3:23 tells us that “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” [emphasis added]. This is an important passage for us to remember as we talk about addiction. As we saw in our activity, we can have a very specific idea of what it means to be an addict (read out answers from question 3). However, there is more to this issue than we may realize.

Prompt (as a prayer): Lord, may you open our hearts and minds to new information, and that our assumptions about addicts as an abstract concept be set aside in order to experience a deeper truth about the world we live in and the people who live with us. Amen.

Ask: Where can you look for reliable research based information about addiction?

Allow students to raise their hands to answer or brainstorm out loud, and have the following answer prepared.

Suggested Answer: There are multiple sources that can be viewed, however the Centre for Mental Health and Addiction is widely considered to be a leading research and treatment organization in Canada.

The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) defines addiction this way: (Use prepared 4 “C’s” on whiteboard or on another sheet of big paper)

The word “addiction” is often used to refer to any behaviour that is out of control in some way. People often describe themselves as being addicted to, for example, a TV show or shopping. The word is also used to explain the experience of withdrawal when a substance or behaviour is stopped (e.g., “I must be addicted to coffee: I get a headache when I don’t have my cup in the morning”).

However, experiencing enjoyment or going through withdrawal do not in themselves mean a person has an addiction.

Because the term “addiction” is commonly used in such a vague way, there have been many attempts to define it more clearly. One simple way of describing addiction is the presence of the 4 Cs:

- Craving
- loss of Control of amount or frequency of use
- Compulsion to use
- use despite Consequences.

While the Bible doesn’t directly talk about addiction as we understand it today, there are passages that direct us towards God’s perspective on things that pull us away from Him.

ACTION (approx. 40 minutes)

Have a student read *Mark 10: 17-22* OR show the video of the Rich Young Ruler.

Divide students back into 4 groups. Assign each group one of the “four C’s” (Craving, loss of Control, Compulsion to use, use despite Consequences) ask them if they can see how their assigned “C” relates in this story. (If you have more than 5 students per group, further divide the group and have multiple groups assigned one of the Cs.) Each group will have 1 speaker share their group’s answers.

After 10 minutes have students gather in a large group. Have each speaker share their group’s answers. Encourage conversation and idea exchange during this time.

(optional: Show the Rich Young Ruler video again. This time, when they think their C is being displayed, have them raise their hand and pause the video.)

We are only given a finite amount of information about the Rich Man, so encourage your students to think broadly about their “C” in this scenario. Often when someone is dealing with addiction, we don’t know all of the details about their struggle, however, we are still able to clearly see the

destructive nature of addiction. In this story, the true failing of the Rich Man is not that he was rich, but rather that his wealth interfered with his connection to Jesus. The Rich Man kept his wealth between his heart and Jesus, and as a result he grieved and was left unsatisfied. When something other than God takes over our hearts we lose our ability to follow Him and connect with others.

Ask:

- What was the Young Man addicted to? [his wealth]
- What sin can we attach that to? [greed, pride etc...]
- What, then, is the need for wealth representing?
- Why do people who are wealthy feel the need to keep their wealth?
- Why does it consume them?
- What does this action and need represent in people?
- Read the first sentence of Mark 10:21 “Jesus looked at him and loved him”. How does that sentence teach us how to treat people struggling with addiction? [answer- with love]

These questions can be discussed as a large group or back in their small groups. If they are in their small groups, regather students after 10 minutes of discussion. 💡 TT #7

Have 2 students volunteer to read 1 Corinthians 6:12 and Galatians 5:1,13. 💡 TT #4

Ask:

- According to the passage in 1 Corinthians what does God offer us? [answer: everything, freedom, choice etc.]
- What does that freedom entail?
- What are the downfalls of having choice? How can we avoid those problems? [answer: in Galatians 5:1,13: Do not indulge in sinful nature, but serve one another in love.]

Small Group Time (20 minutes)

Have students separate into the assigned small groups. Give a copy of Appendix A to each group leader. Each group will first match the sign (in bold) with a symptom (in italics). Once that's complete, each group will answer the small group questions.

After 20 minutes, gather everyone into the large group. Ask groups to share any questions they didn't feel they adequately answered or any new insights they want to share.

CONSOLIDATE/DEBRIEF (approx. 10min.)

We began talking about addiction. We came up with a simple definition (optional: ask someone to review what the definition is. If they can't then remind them of the definition), but we need to remember that this isn't a simple problem. Addiction isn't just a physical and/or mental issue; it's a heart/soul issue. It's a sickness and a sin problem and needs to be thought of and treated with the same love and compassion that we approach other sins with. Addiction is not only found in the deep dark places in our world, in drugs, alcohol, and sex, but can also be found in things that we might think are not problems like health and fitness, having nice things, earning money, gathering information, using technology, and yes- even coffee! As Christians we know that “Everything is permissible for me -- but not everything is beneficial. Everything is permissible for me -- but I will not be mastered by anything” (1 Corinthians 6:12).

Addicts are enslaved by their addictions but we need to remember what Paul wrote in Galatians

5:1, 13 “It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature, rather, serve one another in love.” Remember that addicts are people, loved by God just like you are loved by God! Their addiction is a symptom of the broken world we live in, a world that has been redeemed through the work of the Cross!

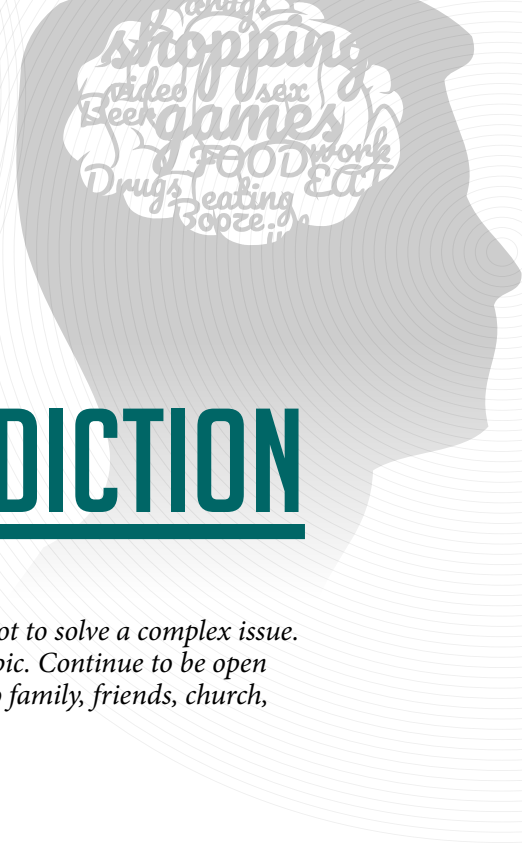
💡 students may have questions about this subject that you will not know the answer to- that’s ok! If this happens, be sure to note down their question and let them know that you will look into it and will get back to them. This is a great opportunity to show students that you don’t need to have all the answers and that you are someone they can rely on for good, solid responses. This is also an opportunity to show you care by following up on something specific for the student.

Have students close their eyes and listen to the following reflection questions. They can respond to the questions silently.


How have your views about people with addiction changed over this lesson?

Is there a person you know who is struggling with addiction? If so, how can you pray for or be more loving to that person?

End in Prayer



LET'S TALK ABOUT ADDICTION

 *The aim of this lesson is to begin a conversation about a complex issue, not to solve a complex issue. Some students may be uncomfortable with the inconclusive nature of this topic. Continue to be open to their questions, and to reinforce the importance of remaining connected to family, friends, church, youth group and (most importantly) to God.*

SPIRITUAL AIMS

Hopefully students will be able to...

- Understand addiction as an outward manifestation of the sin every human heart struggles with
- View addiction as a symptom of our broken world not as a personal failing in an individual
- Embrace the relationship and connection God calls us to as one of the greatest factors in addressing addiction successfully

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Bibles
- 1 copy of Appendix B per 12 students (separated by passage)
- 1 copy of Appendix A per 28 students
- Recording paper OR 1 small paper per student
- Markers (ideally 9 colours- one for each fruit of the spirit)
- Video projection
- Video clip: Addiction: In a Nutshell (<https://youtu.be/ao8L-0nSYzg>)

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to...

- Utilize vocabulary developed in Lesson 1 to develop questions about addiction
- Develop a deeper understanding between community/connection and the positive resolution of addiction
- Integrate biblical principles into conversations about addiction
- Create questions about addiction to encourage open conversations (both as someone who is addicted, and as someone concerned for an addicted individual)

PRE-LESSON PREPARATION *(if applicable)*

- Review the video clip to ensure it's appropriate for your group. Please note that there mentions of several sensitive issues including heroin and pornography in this video. If appropriate, contact parents to let them know what you will be discussing with your group and maybe send parents a link to the video so that they can be prepared for any questions that may arise after group.

MINDS ON (approx. 10 min.)

Activity and purpose:

Ask, ask, and ask again

This activity is intended to celebrate the asking of questions. Of course, in a real conversation we would want students to ask questions and listen intently to ask intentionally selected questions that relate to the conversation at hand, but this improv game will get them in the right mindset for the rest of this lesson.

1. Have students split into teams of 2. Each form 1 line behind 1 person. The first people of each line are facing each other.
2. Give a topic (e.g. summer activities) that the two students will dialogue on.
3. One person will ask a question. The second person will respond with another question. The conversation will continue until someone makes a statement or repeats a question. Once that happens, the person who lost sits down and the other goes to the back of the line.
4. Encourage those not involved in the dialogue to cheer on their team.
5. Continue until one line has been eliminated.
6. If you have more than 20 students, you may choose a “tournament” format with smaller-sized teams and play multiple rounds.

Ask:

- Was it easy or difficult to think of questions?
- How did it feel to cheer for others? To be cheered for?
- What does this game make you think about asking (lots) of questions?

Last time we worked on defining addiction. Does anyone remember what we defined it as? (allow students to answer). We are going to begin a conversation about addiction that goes beyond definition and deals with the heart of the problem and how we view both addiction and addicts themselves.

ACTION (approx. 40 minutes)



This section is about asking questions. Depending on the size and maturity of your group as well as the number of leaders you have, you may want to consider breaking the group into smaller sections to ask questions, have conversation, and seek answers in the Bible. Ensure you have multiple sets of markers and paper available.

Show video: “Addiction: in a Nutshell” (6 minutes)

Use Recording Paper to write down some of the answers to the following questions.

Ask:

- Based on the video we just saw, what is the real cause of addiction?
- Does this line up with what you know about addiction? Why? Why not?
- Why do you think it's difficult for people to give up something they are addicted to (even if it is negatively impacting their life)?
- What environmental factors lead people towards addiction? Away from addiction?
- Who could you talk to if you felt like you were going too far with something in your life? Do you feel like you have connections that would allow you to recover?

Have a student read Galatians 5:22-23.

💡 TT #4

Ask: Where can we see the Fruits of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control) represented in this suggested road to recovery?

Using the answers to the questions above, ask students to indicate which Fruits of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22-23 are represented in those answers. Use coloured markers or different symbols to mark those answers with that specific Fruit. (e.g. If red represents kindness, have students use a red marker to underline answers that require kindness.) You can also have students write down new ideas/suggestions about dealing with addiction that occur to them upon reading the Galatians passage.



The goal of this activity is to showcase the different ways that God has intended His followers to engage with other people, especially those struggling with sin.

If you have split into small groups gather your students back together.

Ask: What insight does this passage bring to the video we watched? Where can we see God's truth shining through the research suggestions in the video? How does this passage allow for the suggested solutions to work?

Remember that addiction is a state that causes harm (mentally, physically, and spiritually) to all those involved - both the addict and those who care for that person.

Divide students into groups of 4-5. They will answer the following questions. If you have a group that is not comfortable with serious conversation consider giving them pens and paper to write their answers.

💡 TT #6

1. How would you want someone to approach you if you were struggling with an addiction?
2. How could you approach someone you believe is struggling with an addiction?
3. What difficulties could occur in approaching/being approached about an addiction?

Once a group has completed their questions, give them 1 of the scenarios from Appendix A. Have them create a role play from the scenario using some of the insights discussed so far in the lesson. Each group will present to the large group afterwards. 💡 TT #8

CONSOLIDATE/DEBRIEF *(approx. 10 min.)*

Addiction is a complex issue that has a complex solution. We need to remember that addiction is a manifestation of both the broken world we live in and of the sin that every human heart struggles with. Our greatest hope lies in Jesus Christ who has already done something about the problem of sin. He came to liberate us from sin and enable us to gain self-control, a fruit of the Holy Spirit. By coming to earth, and dying on the cross Jesus gave us an unbreakable connection to our Holy Father and left us a blueprint for what a God-centred society could look like. Research about addiction is starting to come into alignment with the view God has given us of the world reconciled to Him. A world where connection is the key to wholeness, where love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness, faithfulness, goodness and self-control are the lenses through which we approach people and difficult situations. Addiction is a difficult subject to talk about and to work through, in His Holy Word we are able to find solace and hope. As we walk away, let us remember the path that God has placed us on and all that He calls us to do, and to be.

Hand out verses from Appendix B, and close in quiet reflection and prayer.

APPENDIX A

Signs and Symptoms of Addiction

Cut outs for small groups:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The person cannot stop | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Addiction continues despite health problem awareness |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Withdrawal symptoms | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social and/or recreational sacrifices |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintaining a good supply | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Taking risks (1) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Taking risks (2) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dealing with problems |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Obsession | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Secrecy and Solitude |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Denial | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Excess Consumption |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dropping hobbies and activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Having Stashes |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Taking an initial large dose | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Having problems with the law |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Financial Difficulties | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Relationship problems |

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> in many cases, such as nicotine, alcohol or drug dependence, at least one serious attempt was made to give up, but unsuccessfully. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> when somebody has physical and mood-related symptoms. There are cravings, bouts of moodiness, bad temper, poor focus, a feeling of being depressed and empty, frustration, anger, bitterness and resentment. Suddenly increased appetite, insomnia, in some cases the individual may have constipation or diarrhea, trembling, seizures, hallucinations, and sweats.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the individual continues participating with their addiction regularly, even though they have developed illnesses linked to it. For example, a smoker may continue smoking even after a lung or heart condition develops. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> some activities are given up because of an addiction to something. For example, an alcoholic may turn down an invitation to go camping or spend a day out on a boat if no alcohol is available, a smoker may decide not to meet up with friends in a smoke-free pub or restaurant.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> people who are addicted will always make sure they have good access to what they are addicted to, even if they do not have much money. Sacrifices may be made to make sure the addict is as plentiful as possible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> in some cases the addicted individual make take risks to make sure he/she can obtain his/her addiction, such as stealing or trading sex for money.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> while under the influence of some substances the addict may engage in risky activities, such as driving fast. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> an addicted person commonly feels they need their addiction to deal with their problems.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> an addicted person may spend more and more time and energy focusing on ways of getting hold of what they are addicted to, and in some cases how to use it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> in many cases the addict may do/use their addiction alone, and even in secret.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a significant number of people who are addicted are in denial. They are not aware (or refuse to acknowledge) that they have a problem. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> in some addictions, such as alcohol, some drugs and even nicotine, the individual consumes it to excess. The consequence can be blackouts (cannot remember chunks of time) or physical symptoms, such as a sore throat and bad persistent cough (heavy smokers).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> as the addiction progresses the individual may stop doing things he/she used to enjoy a lot. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the addicted individual may have small stocks of their addiction hidden away in different parts of the house or car; often in unlikely places.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The individual may take or do a great deal of their addiction in order to feel good quickly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • this is more a characteristic of some drug and alcohol addictions (not nicotine, food, or social media for examples). This may be either because the substance impairs judgment and the individual takes risks they would not take if they were sober, or in order to get hold of the substance they break the law.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the addicted individual may sacrifice a lot to make sure their addiction is secured. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relationships become less important as the addict replaces people with their addiction.

Answer Key

1. The person cannot stop - in many cases, such as nicotine, alcohol or drug dependence, at least one serious attempt was made to give up, but unsuccessfully.
2. Withdrawal symptoms - when somebody has physical and mood-related symptoms. There are cravings, bouts of moodiness, bad temper, poor focus, a feeling of being depressed and empty, frustration, anger, bitterness and resentment. Suddenly increased appetite, insomnia, in some cases the individual may have constipation or diarrhea, trembling, seizures, hallucinations, and sweats.
3. Addiction continues despite health problem awareness - the individual continues participating with their addiction regularly, even though they have developed illnesses linked to it. For example, a smoker may continue smoking even after a lung or heart condition develops.
4. Social and/or recreational sacrifices - some activities are given up because of an addiction to something. For example, an alcoholic may turn down an invitation to go camping or spend a day out on a boat if no alcohol is available, a smoker may decide not to meet up with friends in a smoke-free pub or restaurant.
5. Maintaining a good supply - people who are addicted will always make sure they have good access to what they are addicted to, even if they do not have much money. Sacrifices may be made to make sure the addict is as plentiful as possible.
6. Taking risks (1) - in some cases the addicted individual make take risks to make sure he/she can obtain his/her addiction, such as stealing or trading sex for money.
7. Taking risks (2) - while under the influence of some substances the addict may engage in risky activities, such as driving fast.
8. Dealing with problems - an addicted person commonly feels they need their addiction to deal with their problems.
9. Obsession - an addicted person may spend more and more time and energy focusing on ways of getting hold of what they are addicted to, and in some cases how to use it.
10. Secrecy and solitude - in many cases the addict may do/use their addiction alone, and even in secret.
11. Denial - a significant number of people who are addicted are in denial. They are not aware (or refuse to acknowledge) that they have a problem.
12. Excess consumption - in some addictions, such as alcohol, some drugs and even nicotine, the individual consumes it to excess. The consequence can be blackouts (cannot remember chunks of time) or physical symptoms, such as a sore throat and bad persistent cough (heavy smokers).

13. Dropping hobbies and activities - as the addiction progresses the individual may stop doing things he/she used to enjoy a lot.
14. Having stashes - the addicted individual may have small stocks of their addiction hidden away in different parts of the house or car; often in unlikely places.
15. Taking an initial large dose - The individual may take or do a great deal of their addiction in order to feel good quickly.
16. Having problems with the law - this is more a characteristic of some drug and alcohol addictions (not nicotine, food, or social media for examples). This may be either because the substance impairs judgment and the individual takes risks they would not take if they were sober, or in order to get hold of the substance they break the law.
17. Financial difficulties - the addicted individual may sacrifice a lot to make sure their addiction is secured.
18. Relationship problems - relationships become less important as the addict replaces people with their addiction.

Adapted from: <http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/info/addiction/signs-of-addiction.php>

Small Group Questions:

1. Which of the signs and symptoms we just matched up did you expect to see?
2. Were there any signs/symptoms that you hadn't thought about before?
3. Which sign/symptom is the most serious or severe? Why?
4. Are there any signs/symptoms you can think of that aren't listed here? What are they?
5. How many of these signs/symptoms would someone need to show before you would be certain they are addicted?
6. Have you ever seen any of these signs/symptoms in someone? (if yes) How did you feel about seeing those behaviours?

APPENDIX B

Revealing the Greatest Hope- God's words about recovery

Psalm 50:15

Trust me in your times of trouble; I will rescue you, and you will honor me.

1 Corinthians 6:12

"I have the right to do anything," you say—but not everything is beneficial. "I have the right to do anything"—but I will not be mastered by anything.

1 Corinthians 10: 13-14

No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it. Therefore, my dear friends, flee from idolatry.

James 4:7

Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

1 Peter 5:10

And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.

Romans 5:3-5

Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

Titus 2:11-12

For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age.

Hebrews 4:15-16

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Philippians 4:13

I can do all this through him who gives me strength.

Galatians 5:1, 13

It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature, rather, serve one another in love.

Matthews 26:41

Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.

2 Corinthians 12:9-10

But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

APPENDIX C:

Scenarios

You have a friend who's worried that one of your habits (playing video games, watching Netflix, working out, smoking, watching pornography etc.) is starting to have negative effects on your life. Who can they approach for help and what would they say? How would the other person respond?

You hear your friends talking about binge drinking on the weekend, how do you react?

You notice a friend has become withdrawn, he/she is spending a lot of time alone. You suspect that a recent break-up has really affected them. What part can you play in making them feel more connected? [Note: this may require more than one attempt]

A friend began smoking marijuana on weekends at parties, and is now smoking-up during the week, at school, on lunch break etc. When you try to approach them they tell you they "need it to help with their stress". How do you engage them in a conversation about this habit?

A friend of your always seems to be tired and when you ask them about it they tell you they've been playing video games late into the night. When you think about it, you recall that they are always online when you get on, and you remember that they have declined several invites to hangout because they were in the middle of a game and didn't want to lose their standing. How do you connect with this person?

Your group of friends always seems to be on their phones while you're hanging out. At first it didn't bother you, but now you are starting to feel like you are having less fun when you are together, and you're not really sure what's really going on in everyone's lives even though you are together often. What can you do to make sure you stay connected face-to-face?

Your friend is a competitive athlete who keeps talking about "taking things to the next level" and you've noticed that they have put on a lot of muscle really quickly. Do you approach them to talk about what they're doing to gain this "edge"? [Note: this addiction could be about a substance abuse- like steroids- or it could be about the amount of time this person is spending in the gym, it could be about their need to succeed in a competitive situation, about their body image etc.)

PINK SHIRT DAY



SPIRITUAL AIMS

Hopefully students will be able to...

- Develop a view of others through God's eyes
- stand as a Christ-representative in these situations

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to...

- Recognize some of the ways we can bully others
- Develop a basic understanding of how they can help overcome bullying in their lives

PRE-LESSON PREPARATION (IF APPLICABLE)

- Consider wearing a pink shirt for the lesson. The Pink Shirt has become a symbol of standing up to bullying in Ontario schools (see pinkshirtday.ca).

MATERIALS NEEDED

- 8 equal tubes of Toothpaste & paper towel
- 1 timer (e.g. phone, watch)
- Min. 5 post it notes per students
- 1 pen per student
- Video clip: Amanda Todd's video (Amanda Todd's story became a national new story. Approach the subject that suits your group's current state with one of the following videos.)
 - Original post (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vOHXGNx-E7E>)
 - Condensed version (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DBmLB9ctz-w>)
 - Original post with teen reaction (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VF6cmddWOgU>) "https://vimeo.com/59956490"
- Video projection
- 1 copy of Appendix A per student OR 1 Bible per student
- 4 copies of Appendix B (see Leader's Note under "Concept Sketches" if any adaptation needs to be made)
- Optional: 4 chart papers
- Optional: 4 markers
- 1 copy of Appendix C OR project the questions from Appendix C
- Optional: soft instrumental music for Consolidate/Debrief

MINDS ON (approx. 10 min.)

To start this lesson separate students into 2 teams. To make the teams have students line up by height. Once they are lined up simply number them 1 and 2 to form the teams. Then, have them select 4 participants from each team. For smaller groups consider having each student participate.

The object of this game is to have students race to see who can empty the toothpaste the fastest. When ready, signify “go” and time the teams to see who empties all of their tubes the fastest. This can be done all at once or having a series of trials giving prizes to each winner and a cumulative prize for the team with the lowest combined time.

Once they are done, have the teams then pick a player for the final round. The final round’s challenge is to have the players put all the toothpaste back into the tube as quickly as possible.


 This is obviously impossible. So, let them try for a bit and enjoy the laughs. After a minute stop them.


It’s obviously a lot easier to squeeze the toothpaste out of the tube than to put it back in. This game is often used as an illustration to show how it is easier to do something than to undo it. For example, it is easier to say things than it is to take them back. For this lesson, we are going to talk about bullying. One way that people are bullied is through the words we speak.


ACTION (approx. 40 min.)

To begin, let’s define bullying. The dictionary says that a bully is “a blustering, quarrelsome, overbearing person who habitually badgers and intimidates smaller or weaker people.”

Ask: What sticks out in this definition?

 allow students time to talk about the definition. Help guide the conversation by repeating the definition and keeping them on track. Allow 2 minutes for conversation.

Art Gallery  TT #3

1. Provide students with a pen/marker and several post-it notes.
2. Ask students to write down their answer to “How have you seen people bully others or how have people bullied you?” They can write 1 concise incident/method per post-it. Give students 5 minutes to write these.
3. After 5 minutes, have them post it to the designated wall.
4. Have students read the different post-it messages. If there is one that they have either witnessed or experienced personally, place a checkmark on that note. Give students 5 minutes to review.  TT #8

It is clear that all of us have either seen bullying or we have been bullied. But, how should we respond to bullying? What should we do about it? There are really three types of people here: those who are being bullied, those who see people being bullied, and the bullies (sometimes a person can be all three). Bullying can have serious, even deadly, consequences. We have seen numerous examples of this in the last few years. One of the more compelling stories was Amanda Todd committing suicide after being bullied at school.

Show video clip.

It is hard to watch knowing that she killed herself not long after she made this video. We sit here watching and we have to ask ourselves, what can we do to stop bullying? Should we even stop it?

Ask: What do you think was Amanda's opinion of herself? What do you think other people's opinion, especially the bullies, of Amanda?

(Allow for some responses.)

While the Bible does not specifically mention the word bullying, there is one passage that talks about how we should treat each other.

Have a student volunteer to read 1 John 4:7-21. (You can either provide Bibles for each student to follow with or a copy of Appendix A.) 💡 TT #4

Concept Sketch 💡 TT #9

Divide students into 4 groups. Give each group a copy of Appendix B and assign each group one passage from Appendix B.

(💡 While the passage has been divided into 4 sections you can adjust that to meet the needs of the size of your group. Smaller groups can consider working on Appendix B as a whole and answer the questions for all sections. Larger groups may have to assign one section to multiple groups.)

Each group will create a concept sketch based on the assigned passage. They can use the questions in Appendix B to help define the components and relationships. They can create their sketches on a chart paper with marker if they wish. Groups have 10 minutes to complete Appendix B. 💡 TT #8

Once complete, have them post their sketches on a designated wall. Give students 5 minutes to review the other groups' sketches. Then gather the students back into the large group. 💡 TT #3

Ask: Now that we've heard from each group, what do you think this passage has to say about bullying?

(Allow 5 minutes for students to respond.)

To summarize this passage, we must acknowledge that, for people who claim to be Christians, for those of us who want to follow God, there is no room for bullying of any kind. This passage makes it clear that there is no fear in love. And, anyone that would claim to be a Christian must love others. Therefore, you cannot claim to love God and also bully others. They just don't go together.

Ask: Go back to Amanda Todd for a moment. What was God's opinion of Amanda? What should a Christian's opinion of Amanda be based on the passages we looked at?

(suggested answer: God sees Amanda as someone worth loving. A Christian would love Amanda so she wouldn't fear not being loved.)

CONSOLIDATE/DEBRIEF *(approx. 10 min.)*

The roots of bullying are complex. In some rare cases, bullying occurs because the bully wants to intentionally cause chaos and violence. In most cases, bullying occurs because of fear of rejection, of pain and many other factors. God challenges those who follow him to bring love, to extend that sense of God's best for that person so fear no longer has a place.

Have students reflect on the following questions in silence from Appendix C. Give them 5 minutes to reflect. You may choose to play some soft instrumental music in the background.

Whether you have seen someone bullied, are being bullied or are the bully, you don't have to endure any of this alone. Some of your friends and the youth leaders are here to work this out with you. Amanda Todd's video was a cry for help. We'd strongly encourage you, whether after this lesson or very soon, to reach out to someone if you haven't already, and let's work this through together.

Close in prayer.

APPENDIX A

1 John 4:7-21

7 Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. 8 Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. 9 This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. 10 This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. 11 Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. 12 No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

13 This is how we know that we live in him and he in us: He has given us of his Spirit. 14 And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. 15 If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in them and they in God. 16 And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them.

17 This is how love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment: In this world we are like Jesus. 18 There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

19 We love because he first loved us. 20 Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen. 21 And he has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister.

APPENDIX B:

Finding the Key Idea

Group Sections: 1 John 4:7-11; 1 John 4:8-12; 1 John 4:13-16; 1 John 4:17-21

Group Work: Answer the Following Questions:

1. What is the main idea of this section?
2. What are the key words in this passage?
3. Using those key words, create a concept sketch below of the section in your own words.

APPENDIX C:

Reflection Questions

1. Is there someone you've noticed who's been bullied lately? How can you step in to support the victim? What ways could you support the bully?
2. Are you being bullied? Is there someone you can approach to discuss this. (Note: one of the youth leaders would be a great resource.)
3. Are you bullying someone? What's the root cause of that bullying? What are you afraid of? Do you want to stop? If so, who can you approach to work through this? (Note: one of the youth leaders would be a great resource.)



GENDER IDENTITY

SPIRITUAL AIMS

Hopefully students will be able to...

- Begin to see those who wrestle with gender identity through God's eyes

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to...

- Define a eunuch as a person who has their genitals removed.
- Develop an initial biblical response to those experiencing gender dysphoria.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- 1 copy of Appendix A (or symbols are projected)
- Optional: 1 small prize per symbol
- Recording paper
- 1 marker/pen per student
- 1 chart paper per 4 students
- 1 copy of Appendix B per 4 students
- Min. 1 Bible per 4 students

PRE-LESSON PREPARATION (IF APPLICABLE)

- Understand what your church's position is regarding gender dysphoria and gender identity.
- Given the sensitivity and nature of this topic, you may want to give parents a synopsis of this lesson so they are aware of what their child will be discussing.

MINDS ON (approx. 10 min.)

Using Appendix A, have students identify as many symbols as possible. Consider having prizes for each right answer (small candy of some sort). (You may choose to have additional symbols. Be sure to end with the symbols for male and female.)

Most of these symbols are easy to identify. Some we see every day. Some have been around for as long as we can remember. The last two symbols represented male and female. We are going to talk about these two symbols. More specifically, we want to ask the question “how do we respond to people who may not identify with these symbols?” To clarify, we’re defining gender identity at “a person’s internal sense of being male, female, some combination of male and female, or neither male nor female”



This isn’t to debate whether this definition is morally right or wrong, but as an agreed definition to base the remaining discussion.

Before we continue, because this is a topic that some people will feel very vulnerable in discussing, we are going to establish some ground rules:

- The intention of this lesson is not to establish the “rightness or wrongness” of gender identity. The primary reason for this is to create a safe space for all of us to discuss a subject we should dialogue on.
- Let’s be respectful of our comments and questions.
- Let’s not make assumptions about the comments and questions, or the person who is saying them.

Ask: What has been your experience with people who are wrestling with gender identity?



Allow students to share their experiences. Pay close attention to their thoughts and foster a safe environment by ensuring that others do not mock or tease people.

ACTION (approx. 40 min.)

It is pretty clear that we have all encountered this in some way. For the remainder of this lesson we want to take some time to talk about how Christians should respond. We will look at some passages in the Bible that will help us understand God’s perspective on gender identity.

Divide students into groups of 4. (If you do not have multiples of 4, some groups may have 5.)

Placemat Discussion 💡 TT #11

Question: How should Christians respond to gender identity?

Record a final list of all the top 5 suggestions on Recording paper.

It is always good to compare how we believe we should respond with what Jesus has to say about

it. So, we are going to spend a bit of time looking at a passage from the Bible where Jesus offered his thoughts on how we should respond.

Appendix B Activity

Have students return to their placemat group. Give 1 copy of Appendix B to each group and at least 1 Bible. Then, assign each group one of the following passages: (🕯️ You can assign a passage to multiple groups or combine passages for certain groups.)

- Isaiah 56:3-5
- Acts 8:25-40
- Jeremiah 38:1-13
- Mark 12:30-31

Have 1 speaker for each group ready to share their group's summary with the large group. Give groups about 7 minutes to complete Appendix B.

🕯️ You may be asked what a eunuch is. A eunuch is a person that has had their genitals removed. In Matthew 19:12 Jesus mentions eunuchs and says that there are three reasons why a person may be a eunuch. The first is that they chose that life. Secondly, it was forced on them by someone else. Third, they were born that way. It is important to note Jesus' words as you read through the verses.

After 7 minutes, gather everyone into the large group and have the speakers share their summaries.

Figuring out their gender identity, which is known as gender dysphoria which is an anxiety or dissatisfaction with one's gender, is not a new phenomenon. As you can see, there were eunuchs all through the Bible. These people were genderless in a sense that they did not have the anatomy of either a male or a female. Some were eunuchs by choice, some were forced and, as Jesus said in Mark, some were born that way. Again, for this lesson, we are not looking to cast judgement on whether or not it is wrong to wrestle with your gender identity. We are looking for a Biblical answer to how Christians should respond to those who are going through this journey.

Ask: Based on the passages we read, how should we respond to those who have gender dysphoria?

Allow students to offer responses.

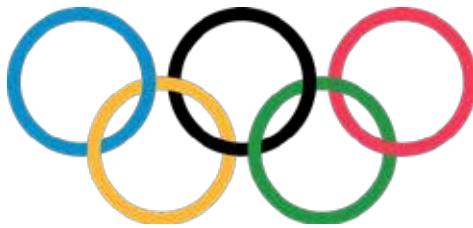
Essentially, God wants his best for us. His best isn't defined by what we think is best. That's why we have the Bible and the Holy Spirit to understand what God's best is. But these passages remind us that our role is to continuously care for others no matter who they are or what they are dealing with, and help direct them to God because God does want everyone as part of his family. Like many complex issues, we work together to understand what God's best is.

CONSOLIDATE/DEBRIEF *(approx. 10 min.)*

Have students return to their placemat groups. Instruct students to compare what they wrote on their placemats and what they discovered in those verses. Have them note: what items are similar and what items are different? Give them 5 minutes to discuss and then gather to the large group.

The evidence from the Bible is that the appropriate Christian response to anyone, not just those wrestling with gender identity, is to love them, to desire God's best for them. The Bible does not place restrictions on who to love. We need to love people and point them back to God.

APPENDIX A



APPENDIX B

Group Work

For your assigned verse answer the following questions:

1. Read the verse twice.
2. What is the main idea of this passage?
3. What key words best describe the point of the passage?
4. Summarize the key point of the passage in your own words.



TO BE KNOWN, SEEN, AND LOVED

Leader Note: This lesson is meant to be a launch pad for going deeper into the many topics around sex, sexuality, love, marriage, relationship, consent etc. Use it as a base and consider keeping another time open for follow-up discussions.

SPIRITUAL AIMS

Hopefully students will be able to...

- Endorse key components of a healthy relationship
- Progress slowly in intimacy
- Trust that they are loved and accepted by God, and that they don't need to grasp at acceptance through risky relationships in which they haven't built a foundation of trust and commitment

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to...

- Understand different types and levels of intimacy
- Define and discuss the components of a healthy relationship
- Hear that they can grow intimacy slowly in a relationship
- Hear that God loves and accepts them unconditionally, and that this knowledge is an important foundation for any healthy relationship

MATERIALS NEEDED

- 1 Large bed sheet, blanket or piece of fabric
- Optional: small prizes (maximum: enough for each student)
- 1 roll of Scotch tape (or similar)
- 1 copy of Appendix A
 - 1 projection (or chart paper copy) of part A of Appendix A
 - Part B cut into individual cards
- 2 copies of Appendix B
 - 1 as leader's answer key
 - 1 that is cut into 51 individual cards
- 1 copy of Appendix C
- 1 Paper per student
- 1 pen per student
- Optional: video projection
- Optional video clip: Brene Brown idea of 'Marble Jar' (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6442YcvEUH8>)
- Optional: 1 jar
- Optional: Enough marbles to fill the jar
- Recording paper

PRE-LESSON PREPARATION (IF APPLICABLE)

- Review the video clips to determine if you will use them.
- Have "Levels of Intimacy" chart posted backwards on the wall until the time comes to use it in the lesson. Then it can be turned around to see its content.
- Have a leader ready to respond to the Consolidate question if needed.

MINDS ON

Game 1 (approx. 10 min.)



If you don't have enough time, skip this activity and go to the next activity.

Drop Sheet

1. Divide students into 2 teams.
2. Have 2 volunteers hold a large bed sheet perpendicular to the floor with teams crouching on either side (and not visible by the other side).
3. Each team will silently choose 1 person to move to the front of the sheet.
4. When both teams are ready, the sheet is quickly dropped and the two chosen students try to name the other person before they are named.
5. 1 point goes to the team who correctly named first
6. The game continues to a pre-set number of points that you choose.

Once the game is done, have students sit in a circle on the floor for a short debrief.

Ask:

- Did you find naming the other person easy? Hard?
- Who did you find easiest to name? Why?
- What traits or qualities of the person did you notice first? (e.g. answers will probably be physical: the color of their shirt, their face...)

We're going to explore in this lesson about "being known". A name isn't just something we call ourselves, it's also something deeper – our identity. In the Bible, to know someone by name also meant to know them on a deeper, soul-level. Knowing someone's name and recognizing their face is the start to being truly known.

Game 2 (approx 10 mins):

Gaze Game/Gazing

Move to a location where students can sit and have them split into pairs.

1. The goal of this game is to look their partner in the eyes without breaking eye-contact for 2 minutes. They can blink or talk as much as they'd like about whatever (sports, the weather, their favourite movies, etc.), but they must keep eye contact.
2. Even if they break eye contact, to continue for the full 2 minutes; although only the pairs who keep unbroken eye contact "win". Consider having a prize ready for the winning pairs.
3. Optional: Play 2 rounds. In the first round, 1 pair will watch the other pair while they stare. In

the 2nd round, switch roles.

Ask:

- Compare this game to the sheet game, what traits or qualities of the person did you notice? (e.g. they may have noticed emotions, small and subtle features in their face, their eye colour...)
- How did you feel? Was this uncomfortable? Comfortable? Why?
- Sometimes the idea of being 'seen' is a metaphor for being 'known'. Have you ever felt known? What did that feel like? Being known can feel freeing, or it can feel uncomfortable. What's the difference?

Allow students to offer responses to each question, one at a time.

Option 1: Show video clip of Brene Brown to bring up the concept of trust.

Option 2: Trust takes time to earn with people. It's like a jar. We have one for each person we know. When someone does something to earn your trust, it's like adding a marble to this jar. Over time, if they demonstrate more ways to earn your trust, you add to it. But it takes times to build a high level of trust.

It takes a long time to really know and trust a person--and especially in relationships. This is why it's important to build a solid foundation with those you are spending time with.

The Gaze Game may have also been uncomfortable because it was intimate. There are different kinds of intimacy, and many levels of intimacy – and staring into someone else's eyes may have been a few levels deeper than you were comfortable going with them.

Ask: What types of intimacy are there?

(possible answers: physical, intellectual, verbal, emotional, spiritual, sexual)

Write down their answers on the recording paper.

ACTION (approx. 50 mins)

Appendix A activity

Display "Levels of Intimacy" chart. Take the cards in Appendix A and place them face down on a table.

On this chart, we have listed various levels of intimacy and corresponding numbers to explain how low or high our intimacy can get: very low/low/medium/high/very high, or '1-10'. On this table, we have examples of intimacy on cards, facing down.

1. One student will choose a card and read the statement.
2. Every person will vote what level of intimacy it should be placed at by indicating their vote with the number of fingers on 1 hand.
3. Estimate an average or median of the votes and invite the student to place that card under that heading.
4. Repeat steps 1-3 until all the cards are placed.

It takes a long time to develop healthy trust and intimacy – beautiful relationships and even friendships start low & grow slow (low levels of intimacy, slow growth of all the types of intimacy). To really understand these levels of intimacy and how to be in healthy, respectful relationships, it's important to know and understand some key components of a healthy relationship. God gives us clear truths for the best, most fulfilling relationships - and our society often tells us something different. Let's explore those differences to better understand these key truths from God.

Appendix B activity



If you have less than 34 students, post the 17 words on a designated wall.

1. Give the remaining cards randomly to each student. (If you have more than 102 students, have them work in pairs.)
2. Let students know that some definitions they have are dictionary definitions, others are “kingdom definitions” i.e. as defined by the Bible.
3. Their task is match their definition to the appropriate word (if there are more than 34 students, then to find the person with that appropriate word). Note: Each word has only 1 dictionary definition and 1 kingdom definition.
4. Once they have both definitions, that group can sit down.
5. Once all the definitions have been matched, each group will identify what are the similarities and differences between the dictionary and kingdom definitions. Give them 5 minutes to discuss their answer. Each group will have 1 speaker to share their group's answer with the large group.
6. After 5 minutes, gather everyone into the large group and have each speaker share.

Debrief

Ask:

- How would some of your friends react to these definitions?
- What does this look like in your life?
- What makes it hard to practice this in your context?
- What is the healthiest approach to applying these concepts in relationships? (suggested answer: start LOW, grow SLOW)



If you're vulnerable to share personal thoughts and things from your life, your students will be more comfortable doing so. Know where to draw the line about what's too personal – but don't expect kids to open up until they know they can trust you too!

Appendix C – Art Gallery



TT #3

Post the 4 passages from Appendix C around the room. Have students walk to each passage in any order and read it silently. Each student is trying to identify the common theme from all 4 passages. After 5 minutes, gather students in a large group. Have some students share what their answers are.

(suggested answer: God knows us and loves us all.)

So many of our actions – from what we wear, who we hang out with, to who we're intimate with – come from a desire to be accepted. A great conversation about a common, nerdy interest – that's a feeling of acceptance. A kiss – that can feel like the other person accepts you.

Ask: What are some examples of times that you have felt accepted?

(Take just 1-2 answers--or have a leader ready to respond if no one comes forward with anything.)

Great examples! And notice how those often involved someone truly seeing you, and when someone truly knew you. That's a vulnerable feeling, and an intimate feeling - and really involves a lot of time and trust.

Ask: In many examples in media today, our society tells us that the best way to connect with someone and to feel accepted is to jump right into sexual intimacy. Why do you think that is?

(possible answers: People want to feel accepted. It's the most tangible way to experience and demonstrate intimacy.)

Physical intimacy, as we looked at earlier, is one of the highest levels of intimacy and requires a lot of trust to properly engage in it. How can someone truly accept you if they don't truly know you--even if they think they know you? And how can you show them who you really are if you're still developing your identity...if you don't truly know yourself? The healthiest and most beautiful relationships take a long time to develop. And God intended for your intimate partners to fully know you.

CONSOLIDATE/DEBRIEF *(approx. 15-20 min.)*

Pass out a pen and paper to each student.

We identified earlier that one reason for intimacy is our desire to be accepted and to be known. If God made each of us, then God knows each of us best.

Ask: How well do you think God knows you? How much do you think he accepts you?

(Students can either answer silently or write their responses down for their own purposes. Give students 1 minute to reflect.)

If we want to engage in intimacy well with other people, we need to start with our own relationship with God.

Ask: What's one step you can take to deepen that relationship?

(Students can either answer silently or write their responses down for their own purposes. Give students 1 minute to reflect.)

Ask: Let's look at our relationships with other people.

- If there's someone you want to be intimate with: How much do you trust that person? How deeply do you know them? How deeply do they know you?
- What consequences could result from jumping too fast into a high level of intimacy in each area?

(Students can either answer silently or write their responses down for their own purposes. Give students 1 minute to reflect.)

At some level or another, we've all messed up relationships, whether with God or with others. God promises that relationships can be restored well, beginning with him. If you're not sure how to do that, talk with an adult you trust, including one of the youth leaders.

As you leave, one of the leaders wants to say something specific to you. Like the Gaze game, it may feel a bit awkward. But receive that statement as a truth from God.

Closure/Prayer: As students leave the room, have one leader say to each student (slowly and genuinely):

"[Name], if nothing else today, know you are loved and accepted by God."



Be prepared to follow up with students who may want to restore relationships properly.

APPENDIX A:

A: Levels of Intimacy Chart

(Blow up and print OR write the same chart on a large piece of paper or whiteboard)

				• very high (5)
			• high (4)	
		• medium (3)		
	• low (2)			
• very low (1)				

B: Examples of Intimacy

Cut out each card and place face down on a table--each student will choose one for the activity--these will then be used to place on the chart above to visually categorize the levels of intimacy.

• Sharing something you wouldn't tell other people	• Giving a compliment	• Giving a kiss	• Sharing eye contact
• Having Sex	• Giving a book	• Praying with someone	• Holding hands
• Having conversation about a shared interest	• Giving a hug	• Shaking hands	• High Fiving

APPENDIX B:

Dictionary and Kingdom Definitions

Cut out and keep the both dictionary and kingdom attached, but don't keep the headings i.e. cut along the solid lines.

WORD	Dictionary Definition	Kingdom Definition
Sexuality:	Possession of the structural and functional traits of sex, and a person's preparedness for engaging in sexual activity.	A mysterious, God-given drive towards relationship and connection, and away from isolation and self-centeredness.
Consent:	To give permission, approval, or agreement to a certain thing.	Honouring the image of God in others by doing to others as they desire and request you to do.
Love:	A profoundly tender, passionate affection for another person.	The act of putting others before yourself, as exemplified by Jesus.
Intimacy:	An amorously familiar act.	Our deepest selves being seen and known by another person.
Fidelity, Faithfulness:	Strict observance of promises or duties.	The act of keeping the commitments and covenant relationships we've made.
Commitment:	A pledge or promise; an obligation.	An agreement to do something for someone else.
Covenant:	An agreement, usually formal, between two or more persons to do or not do something specified.	A unique agreement to be in relationship with someone else in a way that you are not in relationship with any other-- often exemplified in marriage.

Equality:	The state or quality of being alike in quantity, degree, value, etc.	Each person receiving the same things or treatments
Covenant:	An agreement, usually formal, between two or more persons to do or not do something specified.	A unique agreement to be in relationship with someone else in a way that you are not in relationship with any other-- often exemplified in marriage.
Equality:	The state or quality of being alike in quantity, degree, value, etc.	Each person receiving the same things or treatments
Equity:	The quality of being fair or just.	Each person receiving the unique things or treatments that bring them to a state of equality with others
Healthy Relationship:	Vitality of connection between two people wherein both parties are happy and fulfilled.	Relationships founded on God's love, and built up through mutual self-sacrifice.
Good Communication:	High quality interchange of thoughts, opinions or information.	Speaking the truth in love whenever and however possible.
Dating:	A social appointment or engagement when a romantic relationship exists or may develop.	The intentional seeking of intimacy with another, with healthy levels of intimacy proportional to mutual commitment and a slow growth in trust.
Identity:	The condition or character that distinguish who a person is.	The convergence of all our experiences, heritage, desires, and personality as understood through the value God gives to each of us as God's beloved children.
Trust:	A person on whom or thing on which one relies.	The time-tested assurance that another person's intentions are in our best interests
Shame:	The painful feeling arising from the consciousness of something dishonorable or improper, done by oneself or another.	A feeling resulting from the belief that our sin is at the core of our identity and worth.
Guilt:	The fact or state of having committed an offense, crime, violation or wrong.	A feeling resulting from the committing acts which dehumanize and cause harm to other people or ourselves
Safety:	The quality of averting or not causing injury, danger, or loss.	A state in which no harm or suffering will come upon us.

APPENDIX C

Psalms 139:1-4

*1 You have searched me, Lord,
and you know me.*

*2 You know when I sit and when I rise;
you perceive my thoughts from afar.*

*3 You discern my going out and my lying down;
you are familiar with all my ways.*

*4 Before a word is on my tongue
you, Lord, know it completely.*

John 15:9

9 “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love.

1 John 3:1

See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

Jeremiah 31:3

The Lord appeared to us in the past, saying:

*“I have loved you with an everlasting love;
I have drawn you with unfailing kindness.*



BODY IMAGE (PART 1)

SPIRITUAL AIMS

Hopefully students will be able to...

- Embrace the reality that God loves us for what is inside our hearts

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to...


- Define 'body image' in a general sense
- Verbalize how body image can affect people
- Identify ways that media creates unrealistic expectations of our bodies and looks
- Examine how God views us and contrast how that is different from what society teaches us

MATERIALS NEEDED


- 1 marker per student
- 1 pad of sticky notes per 5 students
- Approximately 20 pieces of chart paper
- 1 colour copy of Appendix A
- 1 copy of Appendix B separated into individual passages.
- 1 Bible per 3 students
- Recording paper
- 1 handwritten card per student (see Consolidate)

PRE-LESSON PREPARATION (IF APPLICABLE)

- Print off pictures from Appendix A and tape/glue them to large pieces of chart paper (printed in colour is best) and post the chart papers around your youth room

 **Leader's Note:** you may find yourself looking at some of the images provided and feel uncomfortable. Feel free to choose which pictures to show, however, know that the pictures chosen were to make students think about what perceptions (both negative and positive, female and male) surround the concept of body image. As humans, we all struggle with body image in one way or another, and these pictures are just a sampling of those struggles.

- Prepare two pieces of chart paper that have one of the following titles on each:
 - What messages do women get about their body image?
 - What messages do men get about their body image?

 **Leader's note:** If you have more than 20 students, you may want to create duplicates so multiple groups can work on this at a time.

- Prepare another chart paper with the following table on it:

What the WORLD says	What GOD says

MINDS ON (APPROX. 20 MIN.)


This minds on activity is meant to have students reflect on the stereotypes of body image and healthiness as we prepare to define those items. Do not introduce this topic prior to the gallery walk.

Option: This gallery walk is inspired by a movement called “Unlearn” (<http://unlearn.com>). Their posters are much more thought provoking but are quite expensive, so we attempted it in a different way. If you are interested in using their posters (specifically any to do with body image/health) you may consider purchasing their poster pack.

Gallery Walk

As students come into the room, hand them a marker. When everyone is in the room, explain what they are going to do.

Prompt: There are pictures posted around this room. You are to silently walk around for the next 5-10 minutes and write down what comes to mind when you see each picture.

1. Stop and reflect for about 30 seconds about what you really think of when you are looking at that picture. It could be a message, a feeling or emotion, or anything that comes to mind.
( **Leader's Note:** DO NOT say “keep it appropriate for youth group” as we do not want to disregard any youth's feelings. However, if you are worried about someone not being respectful, take them aside quickly before letting them move around the room or monitor them so that you can discuss with them quickly and discreetly if needed)
2. Write a word or short statement either right on the chart paper OR on a sticky note which you can then stick onto the chart paper.

3. If you agree with someone else's word/statement, you are welcome to put a checkmark beside it or write another word/statement.
4. This will all be done silently without speaking to each other.

Give them 10 minutes (or so) to go through as many of the photos as possible. 💡 TT #8

👤 **Leader's Note:** Give them a 1 minute warning so they know to start winding down their reflection process and write on their final picture or two.

Prompt: Let's take a seat and discuss some of what we just saw. With a partner, take 2 minutes to discuss what similarities you saw in some of the pictures, what differences and any thoughts/emotions they had while going through the pictures.

👤 **Leader's Note:** You may just want to write up three point-form words on a board or chart paper, to help them with their discussion time. 💡 TT #7

- Similarities
- Differences
- Overall thoughts/emotions

After 2 minutes of discussion, have 2 pair join with another pair to make a group of 4 and share their discussion again. (If there is an odd group, a group of 6 is okay.) Give them 2 minutes to do this.

Bring the group back together and ask for a general discussion on what was the most prominent topic in their groups.

ACTION (APPROX. 30 MIN.)

Ask: Why do you think I had you do this activity? (allow for responses)

Prompt: Over the next two lessons, we will be discussing body image. Before we dig any deeper, we need to come up with a workable definition of what "body image" means. In your original pair, come up with a definition of 'body image'.

Write "body image" on the board/chart paper and get rid of the points written up from the Minds On portion.

👤 **Leader's Note:** if you feel students work better with something to write on, you can hand out a couple sticky notes to each group to use to write their definition on.

After 1 minute of this, have them combine with a DIFFERENT pair and look at what similar words were used in both definitions. Give them another minute to find the similarities.

Bring the group back and have the groups of 4 say out loud the similar words that were used. Write these in point form or randomly on the recording paper (you may ask a youth leader or youth member to help with this). Once you have all the similar words together, work together as a group to come up with a final definition.

👤 **Leader's Note:** Try to bring the conversation/definition to include that body image isn't just about how we look or what our bodies can do; it also includes our feelings and how we interpret our body's value. It includes how you feel about what your body looks like and how you feel about what your body can do.

Split the group up into two groups based on gender. (💡 Leader's note: If you have anyone struggling with gender identity, consider breaking the whole group up simply by numbering them into group 1 and group 2). (💡 Leader's note: If a group has more than 10 students, you can further divide that group and give them the same paper.) Pass out the chart paper that says "What messages do women get about how their body image?" to the males and pass out the chart paper that says, "What message do men get about their body image?" to the females (or one to each group, if you aren't separating them by gender). They have 2 minutes for everyone in that group to write a response to that question.

After about two minutes, have the groups switch chart papers. They are to read over what the other group said and then answer the following question on the other side of the chart paper (write this up for them to see): "How do these messages affect people?"

After another 3 or 4 minutes, bring the groups back together and have them present their answers. Ask the group to present the current chart paper that they are holding, presenting both the first question (which was answered by the other group) and the second question (answered by their group).

Ask: What does this mean for us, as young people growing up in society? (💡 Leader's note: decide if you feel it is appropriate to discuss as a whole group or to put them back into their smaller groups for discussion).

Discussion could go a number of ways here, but when you feel discussion has been exhausted, move with the following prompt into the consolidation portion of the lesson.

Prompt: Much of what has been discussed has been perpetuated by the media and society around us. But who made media and celebrities so powerful to make those decisions about what looks best and what we should feel like? I don't have an answer to that, but I do know that God says something different. God loves you for who you are, no matter what you look like and feel like, and you are worthy in His eyes.

Have a student read 1 Samuel 16:7.

T/P/S Prompt: "the Lord looks at the heart". I want you to think about that for a moment in silence. (give them one minute to think about it). Turn to someone or a couple people close to you and discuss what it means for the Lord to look at the heart. (Give them two minutes to discuss this).

💡 TT #1

(suggested answer: What God values most is who you are, not your appearance.)

CONSOLIDATE/DEBRIEF (APPROX. 10 MIN.)

After everyone who wants to participate has, put up the chart paper for the students to fill in on a board or chart paper with the table.

Prompt: Using some of the discussion we've had already or things you are thinking on your own, we are going to fill this chart with adjectives that the world uses to describe people and adjectives that God uses.

💡 **Leader's note:** If you have people who do not have great bible background, you can give one or both of the verses from Appendix B.

Have students come up all at once if they want, or one at a time, to write down something in either category using a marker.

Optional: If you feel people might be shy, hand out 2-5 sticky notes per person and have them write down words or phrases that could go under either category. When they are ready they can stick them up (note: you will probably get duplicates, if this is the case you can suggest that the sticky notes that are similar can go together instead of them being spread out). Students should still use a marker in this case, so that when the sticky notes are up, they are still readable from far away.

When students are done, take a sharpie marker (or dark black marker) and cross off every single item written under “What the WORLD says”. As you do this say...

Prompt: What the world says doesn’t matter. When you have a relationship with Christ, you are worthy because he made you in his image. Genesis 1:27 tells us that, “God created mankind in his image, in the image of God he created them.” God is an all-knowing and powerful God, who does not look to the outside, but to your heart of who you are.

Pray for the students, that they may open up their hearts to knowing that God loves them for what is inside, not for what they look like. God created them in His image and therefore they are worthy of the love that He gives.

As students leave, give them hand written cards (business card sized) that say “you ARE loved”, “you ARE worthy”, “you ARE wonderful”, “you ARE beautiful” for them to keep.

(If you went with Option 2 in this debrief, you can take off the sticky notes from the chart paper and write before the word/phrase “you ARE” to go with the adjective that was written on that one.)

APPENDIX A



APPENDIX B

Philippians 4:8

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

Galatians 5:22-23

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law

Philippians 4:8

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

Galatians 5:22-23

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Philippians 4:8

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

Galatians 5:22-23

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law





BODY IMAGE (PART 2)

SPIRITUAL AIMS

Hopefully students will be able to...

- Grasp God's love for us as His creation
- Reject that "lies" can hold them back from living a life filled with God's love

LESSON OBJECTIVES


Students will be able to...

- Articulate different "lies" that they feel about their bodies and "truths" of how God views them
- Discuss how easy it is to listen to the "lies" society tells us rather than the Truth from God
- Choose one word to be their "truth" moving forward

MATERIALS NEEDED

- 1 small canvas (5x7 sized) per student
- Various arts supplies:
- Paint and paintbrushes
- Markers
- Crayons
- Stickers
- Glitter
- glue
- 1 permanent marker per 3 students
- 1 Large cross
- 1 paper (5x7 minimum size) per student
- 1 pen/pencil per student
- Audio system with a playlist of slow, quiet, instrumental songs
- 1 roll of scotch tape (or similar)
- 1 copy of Appendix A for every 5-10 students (see breakdown in preparation)
- 1 copy of Appendix B for every 5-10 students(see breakdown in preparation)
- 1 Bible per 3 students
- 2 tables

PRE-LESSON PREPARATION *(if applicable)*

 **Leader's note:** Please read the whole lesson before moving forward. If you feel your youth are not ready or mature enough as a group to hear this lesson, feel free to look at Body Image-Part 2 (Jr high version) for a simplified version of a similar lesson objective. This lesson requires a certain level of comfort with the group and ability to speak from a vulnerable position. Prayerfully consider if your group will respond accordingly.

- Prepare and gather all the art supplies into one side of the room. There should be a table or two for students to work at with all supplies on top. This should be away from the lesson area. If possible, make an example “truth” art (with a word that you choose) to help “art shy” students get an idea of what to do).
- On one side of your lesson area, cut up and post the words from Appendix A onto the wall. Use the following suggestions (if you have more than 30 students, continue to increase the copies accordingly):
 - Up to 10 students - 2 copies
 - Up to 15 students - 3 copies
 - Up to 20 students - 4 copies
 - Up to 30 students - 5 copies
- In the middle of your lesson area, have a fairly large cross placed there (based on what you have available to you)
- On the opposite side from the Appendix A words, cut up and post the words from Appendix B using the same copying suggestions from before.
- Clear the middle of your gathering area so that a circle is able to be formed. (This will be up to you and how you want to personalize the “Action” portion of this lesson).


MINDS ON *(approx. 10-15 min.)*

This Minds On activity is to allow youth to get to know each other a bit better in a non-serious way. It will break the ice to the concept of “lies” as we move into the Action portion of the lesson.

Two Truths and a Lie Game

1. On the piece of paper, write down three things about yourself. Two of them MUST be true and one of them MUST be a lie. It does not matter what order you put them in.
2. The object of the game is to stump people and for them not to be able to guess your lie.
3. When you are done, place your paper upside down in front of you, or on your lap, so that we can see you are done.


When everyone is done, go around the circle and have each person share their three sentences. Allow for 3-4 guesses as to which one is the lie. After those guesses, the student confesses which one was the lie.

 **Leader's note:** For groups that are larger than 8, you could place them into small groups (up to 5) to share their two truths and a lie, in order to minimize the time taken to complete this activity.

Prompt: Often when we play this game, it can sometimes be easy to pick out the “lie” that someone is giving, especially if you know the person very well. If you don’t know them very well, then it can be more difficult to pick out the lie.

ACTION *(approx. 10-15 min.)*


Prompt: The devil** is constantly throwing “lies” out about who you are in Jesus Christ. It is very easy for us to believe these lies when we do not know Jesus very well. The devil does a good job of hiding these lies and making them seem true to our lives and how we define ourselves.

**  **Leader’s note:** The “devil” may be too mythical or entwined with cultures definition of devil (pitchfork and horns) so you may consider referring to an evil influence in this world if you are more comfortable with that.


Ask: Have you ever felt a conflicting emotion around something you were a part of or about yourself in general? (For example, maybe you play on the basketball team and you know you are good but you messed up a few times and for a moment or more you felt like a failure.)

Allow 2-3 students to respond.


Prompt: Those are examples of the “lies” that the enemy (or evil influence) wants you to hold on to. I am going to ask you in a moment to take some time of silence. When you feel ready, you will silently get up and walk over the “LIES” wall and pick off the word that you feel is popping out the most to you. It might be easy and you’ll see it quickly, or you might reflect on the wall for a while before picking your word. It doesn’t matter. Take your time and when you have your word sit down and think about that word: think about when you have felt it in the past little while and why you have felt that.

 **Leader’s note:** As you head into this silent time, you may want to set the mood with music. Slow, quiet, instrumental music will do. You will want to keep this music on until the end of the lesson. You may also want to dim the lights. Lastly, depending on your group, you may want to separate the males and females for when we open up, it may be easier for males to open up to other males and females to open up to other females. You will have to decide based on your group dynamics and size if it is doable.

When everyone has a word, have them turn to a partner, share what their word is and why they chose it. Give them 2 minutes to do this. When everyone is done sharing, ask if anyone would be brave enough to share their word and why they chose it. Allow for some silence as youth come up with the courage to share, typically once one person is brave enough, more will follow along. You may want to be an example and share your word or have another leader or junior leader share.

 **Leader’s note:** Make sure you thank everyone for sharing, showing value in their thoughts and struggles.

Have a student volunteer to read Psalm 139:13-14.

Think/pair/share: What is your thinking about the word you chose in light of what this passage says?  TT #1

CONSOLIDATE/DEBRIEF *(approx. 20-25 min.)*

Prompt: God does not want you to believe those lies that the world around us is making and wanting us to believe. God made you and you are beautifully and wonderfully made, never forget that. Take this time to remember that God loves you and does not want you to focus on those lies, but to focus on the truths that He has for you. Jesus died on the cross so that you didn’t have to listen to those lies anymore and could take delight in His truths. Take this time to pray to God to help you let go of those lies. When you are ready, you may go up to the cross and drop those lies and then go to the truth wall and pick the truth that first strikes you the most. Then you can go over to the creation table and pick up a canvas and draw your new truth word onto it and decorate it in

whatever way you would like.

When students have chosen their “truth” word, allow them to get a canvas and to draw on their truth word in whatever way they feel led. Have all the art supplies available so the youth can use their own creativity to really focus in on their new truth word.

Give them 15-20 minutes for this. 💡 TT #8


Prompt: When you are done, take a marker and sign your name on the bottom. Just like an artist does, you are taking ownership of that truth in your life that Jesus has given you because of His sacrifice on the cross. Take this home and remember it always. It won’t always be easy to remember Jesus’ truths, but this will be a reminder to you that those lies are nothing compared to having Jesus Christ in your life. He makes us worthy.

Pray to end the lesson, asking God to help us let go of the lies that we hold onto in our lives and to grab a hold of the truth of living with Jesus Christ as our Saviour and Lord.

Request that students leave when they are done so that other youth can take their time in completing their canvas pieces.

APPENDIX A

Lies you can post

 **Leader's note:** We have left 4 blank sections - these are for you to post and for students to write in their own words, should they feel there is another word that they have been feeling lately.

Ugly	Failure (Mess-Up)
Mean	Unworthy
Dumb	Forgotten
Worthless	Useless
Not Good Enough	Not Wanted
Going Nowhere	Alone
Weak	Unloved

APPENDIX B

Truths you can post

Leader's note: We have left 4 blank sections - these are for you to post and for students to write in their own words, should they feel there is another word that they feel God wanting them to feel

Beautiful	Wonderful
Loved	Kind
Worthy	Empowered
Successful	Smart
Accepted	Wanted
Cared for	Strong
Good	Admired
Helpful	Supported

SOCIAL MEDIA:

What does it look like to follow Jesus in the technological world?

SPIRITUAL AIMS

Hopefully students will be able to...

- Embrace that their identity is found in Jesus Christ
- Live out the characteristics of Christ they are called to represent as Christ followers in all aspects of their lives
- See themselves and others the way God sees them and allow that knowledge to transform how they interact with those around them
- Be a light and an example to their friends
- Make changes to live more like Jesus
- Practically determine what it looks like to follow Jesus
- Consciously integrate biblical principles into Social Media use

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to...

- Identify and assess the pros and cons of Social Media use in the 21st Century
- Develop the ability to analyze personal use of Social Media Platforms
- Develop a deeper understanding of the long and short term implications of Social Media
- Construct an outline of appropriate behaviour for Social Media

MATERIALS NEEDED

- 3 Small White Boards
- 3 White Board Markers
- 3 White Board Erasers
- Chart Paper (or pieces of regular white paper if chart paper is not available)
- You will need enough paper that if you divide your students into groups of 5 with 2 sheets per group)
- 1 Marker per student
- 2 pieces of paper/cardstock per student
- 1 Pen per student
- 1 small Prize for the winner of the game
- 1 larger prize that can be shared amongst the winning team (i.e. candy)
- Scrap paper (a regular 8 ½ X 11 piece of paper divided into quarters is an appropriate size)
- Printed copies of the Consolidate/Debrief Questions for Leaders (1 copy per leader)
- 1 copy of Appendix A
- 1 copy of Appendix B
- 1 roll of scotch tape (or similar)
- 1 display of Appendix D (either on a large sheet of paper or projected)
- Recording paper
- 1 Bible per 5 students

MINDS ON *(approx. 5 min.)*

Ask: In your day to day lives, what social media sites are you frequently using? (Allow students to share their responses i.e. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, etc.)

Prompt: Let's test your Social Media skills and see just how much you know about some of your favourite sites. So I'm going to need three people to volunteer to compete in a little trivia challenge.

Choose three students to volunteer. Hand each student a whiteboard, whiteboard marker and whiteboard eraser. Divide the group into three teams. Each volunteer represents one of these three teams. During the game the team can help their representative with their trivia answers. (👤**Leader's note:** Before this game starts, remind students they are not allowed to use their smartphones to help them find any answers.)

Prompt: Okay, I am going to see just how well you all know the Instagram world. In my hand I am holding a list of the top 5 most followed Instagram accounts as of May 2017. I am going to ask you who has the fifth most Instagram followers, then who has the fourth most followers and so on and so forth. I will ask you and then give you a few seconds to consult the rest of your team to see if they can help you out. When you think you have the correct answer you will hold your white board facing yourself until I ask you to reveal your answer. Are you ready? Let's get started!

Use *Appendix A* to walk your students through this game.

Prompt: I think it's safe to say that in the world of social media and, especially Instagram, it becomes increasingly important how many followers you have, how many people you're following and how many likes your photos are receiving. I want us to acknowledge that while that world of likes and followers exists we want to make sure that we are first and foremost following Jesus and that he likes what he sees and hears from us.

ACTION *(approx. 20 min.)*

Think/pair/share for 2 minutes: 💡 TT#5 💡 TT #1

- Where does your identity come from?
- How can you show more of God's heart to the world around you?

Possible answers:

- Where does your identity come from?
 - The sports team I am a part of
 - The school I go to
 - The city I am from
 - My family
 - My group of friends
 - My hobbies (dance, sports, reading, art etc.)

- How can you show more of God's heart to the world around you?
 - Be kind to others
 - Include people who are by themselves
 - Introduce yourself to the new kid at school
 - Volunteer

Allow 5 minutes to hear student's responses.

Ask: On a Scale of 1-5, 1 being not hard at all and 5 being very hard, showing your answer with the number of fingers on 1 hand, how difficult was it for you to answer those questions?

Prompt: Well I want us to spend some time thinking about some potential answers to those questions.

Have a student read Matthew 4:18.

💡 TT #4

Ask: What does it mean to follow someone?

(Allow time for students to provide answers)

Prompt: The word "follow" means "to go or come after (a person or thing proceeding ahead); to move or travel behind." 'Follow' essentially means then that you have put something or someone else before you. If that thing is a person and we put them before us it means we are looking at them, that our eyes are fixed there and that we will see everything they do. It means we consider them worth watching and worth pursuing. I'm going to divide you all into smaller groups and I have a question I want to ask you and I'm very curious to hear your answers.

Ask: I want you to think of one person you follow on social media, or if you don't have social media choose someone you would follow if you did. Maybe it's a musician or band, maybe it's a sports team or a professional athlete, and perhaps it's a celebrity or political figure. As a group list out the names of these people and write down the reasons you follow them. What about them makes them worth following?

(Example: I follow Taylor Swift on Instagram because she has great music, writes her own songs, is a positive role model for girls, and empowers women)

Art Gallery 💡 TT #3



For Smaller Groups: Give each student one or two pieces of cardstock and markers. Have them write a name of someone they follow. Collect them and stick them on the wall.

For Larger Groups: Let students shout out names of people they follow. Have a volunteer/volunteers write each name (1 per cardstock). Decide the max number of names you want to use. Stick the names on the wall.

Post the questions in Appendix D. Have students walk around the room, observe the names and consider the answers to these two questions. Give students 5 minutes to review the names and then have everyone take their seats. Ask the group the same two questions allowing them to share their answers aloud.

Prompt: I love that we all follow different people for different reasons. I want to remind us that if we have decided to become Christ followers then we have committed to following Jesus for the rest of our lives. If you haven't yet decided to follow Jesus and you are still figuring out who Jesus is and why he might be worth following, I want you to know I'm so glad you've joined us. As we head into our next activity I want all of us to ask ourselves the same questions: So why Jesus? What makes him worth following?

Use *Appendix B* to lead students in the next activity.

1. Divide students into groups of 5 (up to 6 if there aren't multiples of 5).  TT #5
2. Give each group a piece of chart paper and a marker
3. Have them assign one person to be the writer for their group.
4. Have them pick a different student to be the speaker who will share their answers at the end of their time together.
5. Assign each group a passage of scripture from Appendix B (they can look up the passage on their own) that will highlight an aspect of God's character. Have them read the passage together.
6. Using chart paper have students write words, draw pictures or use the paper to create a model or sculpture that depicts the characteristics of God in the passage that make him someone worth following.
7. Allow students 8 minutes to review their verses of scripture and then regain the group's attention. Have one student from each group read aloud their groups assigned passage of scripture. Then let each group share which quality or characteristic of God their passage exemplified.  TT #8

Once their time is up have one student from each group read aloud their groups assigned passage of scripture. Then let each group share which quality or characteristic of God their passage exemplified.

As students share, write down their answers on Recording paper.

Ask: Can you think of any other qualities or characteristics God possesses that make him worth following? (As students share their answers, add them to the Recording paper.)

Have 1 student read 1 John 2:6 and another student read Romans 12:2.

Prompt: We've concluded then that there are a lot of really great reasons to follow Jesus – He is someone worth following. 1 John 2:6 reminds us that if Jesus is worthy of being followed, we need to figure out what it looks like to live the kind of lives he wants us to.


Ask: From Romans 12:2, what do you think it means to be transformed by the renewing of your mind? (Allow students to respond)

(suggested answer: To allow God's thinking influence and change our thinking.)

Prompt: I want us to think specifically about what kind of lives Jesus would want us to be leading in the world of Social Media. I don't want us to create a list of rules for how we should or should not be using social media but I do want us to create a list of questions we should be asking ourselves when we are using it.

Use *Appendix C* to list a few questions to begin the discussion and then

In their groups of 5, have students brainstorm together 5 questions a person should ask before engaging in Social media. Once they have had 10min to brainstorm allow time for students to share out loud the questions they came up with. Add the students' answers to the Recording paper so that you have a long list of questions students can use and reference later.


( **Leader's note:** If a group isn't sure what kind of question to ask, use 1-2 from Appendix C as examples.)

CONSOLIDATE/DEBRIEF (approx. 10 min.)

If you currently have a Small Group structure in your youth group consider using option #1 for your debrief time. If you currently do not have a Small Group structure in your youth group or you have a group of 10 students or less consider using debrief option #2.

Debrief Option#1:

Have students divide into small groups (these may be preassigned groups that meet regularly each week or you may create groups that evening). For these conversations it may be helpful to group females together and males together in order to allow for a more comfortable context for discussion. Ensure that there is one leader per group who can facilitate the conversation.

( **Leader's Note:** Have a hard copy of the questions below printed for your leaders so they can facilitate the conversation effectively.)

Prompt: Earlier I asked you to consider two questions and I want us to return to these two questions again as we wrap up. I'm going to divide you into small groups and would love for you to take time wrestling through these two questions:



1. Where does your identity come from?
2. How can you show more of God's heart to the world around you?


Have the leader pray for the group and then dismiss students from their small groups.

Debrief Option #2:

Think/Pair/Share: Have students get into a pair with a partner of their choosing. Ensure everyone has a partner. If there is an odd number of students allow for a group of three.

Prompt: Earlier I asked you to consider two questions and I want us to return to these two questions again as we wrap up. I'm going to ask you to find a partner in the room and ask that you pair up with that person.

Think/Pair/Share: Where does your identity come from? How can you show more of God's heart to the world around you?  TT #1  TT #5

( **Leader's note:** As they listen, suggest to students to notice if their partner mentioned something you never thought of or if they have similar answers?)

Allow students 10min to share their answers to the two questions in a Think/Pair/Share format. Once the 10 minutes is up ask students, if they are comfortable, to share with the larger group what their partner shared with them. Take 5 minutes to have students share answers.

Pray for the group and then dismiss.

APPENDIX A:

How Many Instagram Followers

Ask: Who has the fifth most followed account on Instagram?

Allow students time to consult their teams. Have each student reveal their answer. Reveal the correct answer (see Leader's note below) and award points accordingly.

Continue for 4th most, 3rd most, 2nd most and most followed account.

Leader's Note: At the end of each round be sure to announce the correct answer

Correct answers are as follows:

- #1 Instagram: 223 million followers
- #2 Selena Gomez: 121 million followers
- #3 Ariana Grande: 107 million followers
- #4 Taylor Swift: 102 million followers
- #5 Beyoncé: 102 million followers

Keep track of who has the most correct answers. The winning volunteer and their team will be awarded a prize at the conclusion of the game.

Option 2: If your group is having a hard time identifying the top 5 provide them with a list of the top 10 most followed accounts on Instagram and allow them the opportunity to try to select the top 5 from that list of ten.

The top 10 most followed accounts on Instagram are:

- #1 Instagram: 223 million followers
 - #2 Selena Gomez: 121 million followers
 - #3 Ariana Grande: 107million followers
 - #4 Taylor Swift: 102 million followers
 - #5 Beyonce: 102 million followers
 - #6 Cristiano Ronaldo: 102 million followers
 - #7 Kim Kardashian West: 100 million followers
 - #8 Kylie Jenner: 94.4 million followers
 - #9 Dwayne "the Rock" Johnson: 87.5 million followers
 - #10 Nicki Minaj: 80.6 million followers
- (This top ten list was updated in May 2017.)

APPENDIX B

1 John 4:8- Love

“Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love”

John 3:17 – Saviour, Redeemer

“For God did not send his sons into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him”

Genesis 1:1 – Creator

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”

Hebrews 13:8 – Constant

“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever”

Psalms 18:30 – Perfect Protector

“As for God, his way is perfect: The Lord’s word is flawless; he shields all who take refuge in him.”

John 14:6 – Life, Truth

“Jesus answered, ‘I am the way the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.’”

Isaiah 41:10 – Strength, Righteousness, Helpful

“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand”

Philippians 4:7 – Peace

“And the peace of God which transcends all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

Isaiah 40:28 – Everlasting

“Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom”

APPENDIX C

Below is a list of helpful questions we should be asking ourselves before we post or comment on Social Media.

- Am I angry?
- Am I battling jealousy or discontent?
- Do you hide through Social Media?
- Do you use Social Media as a platform to vent/complain?
- Am I using Social Media as a platform to promote myself?
- Do you use Social Media to boost or inflate your ego?
- Do you use it for connection with others instead of attention from others?
- Is Social Media being used as a weapon or a tool?
- Do we use it for Justice or for revenge?
- Do we use it for public shaming?
- Is what we are posting kind?
- Is what I am about to post a moment to protect?
- Is Social Media the first thing you turn to when you wake up?
- Is Social Media the last thing you look at before bed?
- Do you experience anxiety when you are not on Social Media?
- Does Social Media make you a healthier and happier person?
- Am I spending more time on Social Media than with people?
- Do you value your online interactions more than your face to face interactions?
- Is the kind of person people see on Social Media the same person people see when they see you in real life?
- Is this the best use of my time?
- Does this help me serve another person?
- Are you accurately representing yourself as a person through Social Media?
- Is what you are posting appropriate? Would you want your parents to see it? Would you want Jesus to see it?
- Is Social Media your Master?

- Is Social Media an avenue through which you are glorifying God?
- Is it causing you to sin?
- Consider who you have chosen to follow and interact with online. What is coming onto your feed and into your mind and heart every day?
- Social Media isn't just a part of our lives anymore, it has become a platform through which we live our lives and as Christian we've committed to living lives that reflect Jesus. So are you reflecting Jesus in the things you post and say online?

APPENDIX D

What makes them worth following?”

Why would you follow them?

WHAT'S THE POINT?

The Message of Christmas

SPIRITUAL AIMS

Hopefully students will be able to...

- Appreciate the Christmas message
- Personalize and internalize the message of Christmas
- Accept Jesus and/or commit to walking with God

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- Retell the Christmas story in their own words
- Explore scriptures that reveal the message of Christmas
- Identify the message of Christmas
- Discuss the importance of the message
- Reflect on how the message of Christmas relates to them
- Choose how to respond to the message

MATERIALS NEEDED

- 1 slip of paper per student
- 2 markers per 4 students
- Optional: 1 Bible per 4 students
- 1 small container, box or Santa hat
- 3 trivial gifts (e.g. a single puzzle piece, a button, a penny, monopoly money)
- 3 small gift boxes
- 1 roll of wrapping paper
- 1 roll of scotch tape (or similar)
- 3-5 packages of Sticky Notes
- 1 blank sheet of paper per 3 students
- Optional: Video projection
- Optional: Video clip: Christmas Lego video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xyhPDMS5VB0>)
- 1 copy of Appendix A per 3 students
- 1 copy of Appendix B per 3 students
- 1 copy of Appendix C per 3 students
- 1 copy of Appendix D

PRE-LESSON PREPARATION

- Package and wrap the 3 gifts.
- Write on each gift tag, or somewhere on each gift, "God Loved, so God Gave!" (Don't make it too obvious, you don't want the students to see it right away.)
- Place the wrapped gifts at the front of your meeting space where students will see them.

MINDS ON: (Approx. 10 mins)

Prompt: I bet you are all pretty excited to see those presents. So yes, in the spirit of Christmas, I thought I would, spread the Christmas cheer and hand out a few presents. But, who should I give these presents to? Since there are only three presents, and I want to be fair, we are going to draw names to see who gets a gift.

Optional: To save time, have the students write their names on a slip of paper as they enter the room. Don't tell them what it's for, just tell them to hold on to it. When you announce the gift game, they can just add the slip of paper to the hat.

- Instruct the students to write their names on the slip of paper and place it in the hat or container that you've provided.



Leader's Notes: Keep the hat and the remaining names handy, as you will need to use them again.

- Draw three names and have those students stand near the gifts.
- Whoever's name was drawn first, gets to pick a gift first and then the second, then the third.
- Students may pick any gift they'd like, but they CANNOT open the gift yet.

Prompt: As you all know, a big part of the Christmas season, and possibly the favourite part for some of you, is the tradition of receiving gifts. But, Christmas is more than just receiving gifts, it's also a time of giving gifts.

- The students who have a gift must now draw a new name from the hat and give their present to that person.
- The new people MUST NOT open the gift yet either.

Ask the first set of students: What did it feel like when you thought you were getting a gift? What did it feel like when you had to give it up?

Let the second set of students open their gifts.

Ask: Do you like your gifts? What was your initial reaction to the gift? (Hopefully, they see it as insignificant and pointless...that's the point!)

Think/Pair/Share: When did you give or receive what you considered a pointless gift? 💡 TT #1



Leader's Notes: If you have time, ask some students to share their story with the whole group.

Prompt: I don't think anyone likes to receive a pointless gift, or one that has little to no personal meaning. Sometimes this is a result of "last minute shopping." You know, when time is running out and you just gotta get something. You sometimes wind up getting, or giving pointless gifts.

In this lesson, we're going to see that God was not a last minute shopper so to speak, and he certainly did not give a pointless gift.

ACTION: (Approx. 40 mins)

Storyboard

- Divide the students into groups of 4 or 5.
- Give each group a package of Sticky Notes and 2 markers.
- Instruct the students to recall as many events (or scenes) around the Christmas story as they can and draw each event/scene on the sticky notes. (Stick figures are encouraged)
- Have the students organize the notes chronologically and stick them on the wall.

Give groups about 5 minutes to create their storyboard.

Let the groups check their work against the Bible to see if they got all the events correct and in the right order. You can use one of the following methods:

Option #1: Provide a Bible for each group to compare. You can suggest the following verses.

- Luke 1:26-33
- Matthew 1:18-20-24
- Luke 2:4-16
- Matthew 2:1-2 & 9-12

Option #2: Show the Lego video.

Prompt: The Christmas story is so important for us to know because these events didn't just happen on their own, or spur of the moment. God prepared in advance a perfect plan that had a specific point.

Jigsaw 💡 TT #2

- Divide the students into groups of 3.
- This group of 3 is the home group. Give a copy of Appendices A, B and C to each group. Each member will take 1 copy.
- Have each student gather based on which appendix they have (i.e. all As, all Bs, all Cs). These are the expert groups. (**Leader's note:** If you have more than 5 people per group, you can further divide into smaller groups.)
- The expert groups have 10 minutes to complete the worksheet.
- After, they will gather back in their home groups. Each group will formulate 1 summary sentence that combines the findings from all 3 note what are the similarities and what are the differences between the 3 worksheets. They have 10 minutes to discuss this. One speaker from each group will share their group's findings.
- Gather everyone into the large group and have the speakers share their group's findings.


💡 **Leader's Notes:** Encourage the groups to elaborate on their answers, referring back to what the verses specifically say.

Suggested answer: God used the prophets to announce the Gospel in advance; that Jesus came to save people from their sins (defined as living life their own way vs God's intended way), and that God did this all because of love.

💡 **Leader's note:** You may need to help students understand what sin is and how it affects our relationship with God. (Refer to: Romans 3:23, Romans 6:23)

CONSOLIDATE AND DEBRIEF *(Approx. 10 mins)*


Prompt: Every year we are reminded of the gift of Jesus when we celebrate Christmas. Yet, often this message gets forgotten or drowned out by all the other messages we hear around us.

Think/Pair/Share:  TT #1 What does society (through TV, media and other sources) say that the meaning of Christmas is or should be?

(Possible answers: gather with family and friends, support the less fortunate, give money to local charities, vacation times, or exchanging gifts)


Prompt: These things are all a part of what makes Christmas, “The most wonderful time of the year,” and we can enjoy them, but we can’t replace those things with the true meaning of Christmas. Attached to the gift of Jesus is a simple message that God gives to you and me. What often happens is with all the craziness of the season, the message gets overlooked.

- Ask the students who opened the presents at the beginning of the lesson if they noticed the message that was attached to the gift.
- Have the students go back and look at the wrapping paper/tag and tell the others what it says. (Answer: God Loved, so He Gave!)
- **Ask:** What makes this message universal? How might this message also be personal?

 **Leader’s Notes:** Perhaps you could share your own personal story of what this message means to you.

- **Ask:** What does this message mean to you?
- Allow time for quiet reflection on that message of “God loves so He gave!” or open it up for others to share their thoughts with the group.

Prompt: Sometimes we give or get “pointless” gifts, but when God gave us Jesus, he made his point very clear. Have you accepted that gift of love?

 **Leader’s Notes:** Encourage the students to not let another Christmas go by without fully receiving this gift. Let the students know that you and other leaders are available to answer any questions they may have or just to talk further about today’s topic.

Close with a time of prayer, thanking God for sending us the perfect gift, his son Jesus.

APPENDIX A

Christmas Preparation - Group A

Look up the following passages and ask, “What did the prophet announce or declare?”

1) Micah 5:2

2) Isaiah 7:14

3) 2 Samuel 7:11b-13

4) Isaiah 9:6-7

5) Jeremiah 23:5-6

6) Isaiah 11:1-2

APPENDIX B

Christmas Plan - Group B

Look up the following passages and ask, “Why was sending Jesus part of God’s plan? What was Jesus going to do?”

1) Galatians 4:4-5

2) Luke 19:10

3) Matthew 20:28

4) 1 John 4:14

5) 1 Timothy 1:15

6) John 10:10

APPENDIX C

Christmas Point - Group C

Look up the following passages and ask, “What point was God making by sending Jesus as a gift for us?”

Ephesians 2:4-5

John 3:16

1 John 4:9-10

Romans 5:8

1 John 3:16

APPENDIX D

ANSWER SHEET

“Christmas Preparation” Answers (Appendix A)

1. Micah 5:2 (Bethlehem)
2. Isaiah 7:14 (Virgin birth. Named Immanuel)
3. 2 Samuel 7:11b-13 (Lineage of David)
4. Isaiah 9:6-7 (Lineage of David)
5. Jeremiah 23:5-6 (Lineage of David)
6. Isaiah 11:1-2 (Descendent of Jesse - David’s father)

“Christmas Plan” Answers (Appendix B)

1. Galatians 4:4-5 (redeem)
2. Luke 19:10 (seek and save)
3. Matthew 20:28 (give his life as a ransom)
4. 1 John 4:14 (to be the Savior of the world)
5. 1 Timothy 1:15 (save sinners)
6. John 10:10 (Jesus would give us life)

“Christmas Purpose” Answers (Appendix C)

1. Ephesians 2:4-5 (great love)
2. John 3:16 (love)
3. 1 John 4:9-10 (love)
4. Romans 5:8 (love)
5. 1 John 3:16 (love)

WALKING THROUGH EASTER:

Experience Thursday to Sunday

SPIRITUAL AIMS

Hopefully students will be able to...


Embrace God's love for them in a new or deeper way

Practice the act of communion to honour God's love for us in community with one another, as we recognize our brokenness and need for Jesus

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to...

- Explore the significance and meaning of Christ's crucifixion and resurrection
- Experience the Easter journey through the emotions of 'Thursday', 'Friday', 'Saturday', and 'Sunday', culminating in a communion experience

 **Leader's note:** This lesson is intended to take place over 3 youth meeting s or, over 3 days of a weekend retreat. Prior to each youth meeting, set up the space(s) representing Thursday, Friday/Saturday, and Sunday prior to your students arriving.

Below is a chart that explains how to separate the content into days/spaces depending on which model you choose:

Do the lesson in...	Thursday Section	Friday Section	Saturday Section	Sunday Section
3 Separate Meetings	Meeting 1	Meeting 2		Meeting 3
1 Weekend Retreat	Day 1/ Evening 1	Day 2 AM	Day 2 PM	Day 3

MATERIALS NEEDED

- 1 copy of Appendix A
- 1 copy of Appendix B
- 1 copy of Appendix C
- 1 copy of Appendix D
- 1 copy of Appendix E per 22 students
- 1 Water basin (alternative: 1 spray bottle)
- 1 cloth/towels per student
- 1 roll of Masking Tape (or painter's tape)
- 1 pillow/chair per student
- Optional: background music (for "Friday" and "Sunday" set-ups)
- Min. 5 Post-it notes per student
- 1 timer
- 1 Pen per student
- Min. 5 papers and 1 per student OR 1 journal per student
- *Optional:* 1 flashlight
- *Optional:* 1 paper or small journal per student
- Decorations (battery tea lights, balloons, streamers—all optional—whatever you already have)
- Snacks or a meal ready to go with place settings, cutlery and drinking cups
- Min. 1 Bible
- 1 bowl of juice
- 1 piece of bread per student

PRE-LESSON PREPARATION *(if applicable) approximately 20-40 minutes of setup for each meeting:*

- To prime your own heart and reflect on the journey towards Easter, consider reading:

Brian McLaren: Easter 'Make the Road': <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/brianmclaren/2015/04/the-uprising-begins-an-easter-sunday-reflection/>

Day 1/Meeting 1: THURSDAY (See Appendix A)

1. Set-up a circle of chairs (1 chair per student)
2. Prep a basin with water and a cloth, with towels nearby for drying feet (optional: a 'misting' spray bottle for students who are not comfortable having their feet washed).

Day 2/Meeting 2: 1st space--FRIDAY (suggested: Sanctuary--if at church) (Appendix B)

1. Have the focus be on a cross, at the front of your sanctuary or space. If there is no cross, consider taping the shape of a cross onto the wall with masking tape (or painter's tape).
2. Place a number of pillows around to make floor-sitting comfortable, or chairs set up in a circle and have enough for each student to sit down.
3. Consider playing soft music in the background.
4. Have post-it notes and pens available for each student at the base of the cross.
5. Place the "Friday words" at the base of the cross and post the scripture and reflection at eye-level with the cross on the wall.

Day 2/Meeting 2: 2nd space--SATURDAY (Appendix C)

1. Dim the lights if possible and empty the room – consider moving everything out of a room the students know, as a contrast.
2. Have students stand or sit in chairs, which would need to be set up in a circle*.
3. Silence (no music) is best.
4. Scatter the "Saturday words" in the centre of the circle on the ground, or, paste them to walls and have students' chairs face away from the centre*, still in a circle (or stand in a circle facing away from centre) to observe the words.
5. Set Saturday scripture, reflection and questions nearby in the space and handy for the leader to read. (Set the flashlight nearby if the lighting is too dark for reading).

Day 3/Meeting 3: SUNDAY (Celebration/Party room) (Appendix D)

1. Cut out and tape the words and scripture on the walls.
2. Set up tables in a large square with a space in the centre, or one long table for a meal.
3. Set out snacks or have meal ready to go before the journey starts.
4. Decorate with celebration in mind (electric tea lights, streamers, balloons, or other ‘party’ decorations)
5. Have fun music to help create a celebratory atmosphere.
6. See Appendix E for words that can be taped under each person’s chair in the party room. You’ll want to create partners out of people who find the same word, so do the math and make sure there are enough pairs of words for everyone to have a partner during the meal and discussion time.



Leader Note: These lessons are meant to be communicated equally (if not more than) through space and actions, as well as with words. Be intentional about the way you set up each of the 3 spaces representing the ‘Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday’ of Easter. If possible, keep students from seeing the spaces until the designated time in the meeting, or include only a few in helping you to set them up—it might be a good mentoring opportunity.

Options:

Give students small booklets to write responses/prayers/thoughts throughout the journey. Have empty seats at the table in the ‘party’ room—who will you invite to the banquet? (Who in your life is suffering like Friday? Who is lonely like Saturday? How can you show them that Jesus is alive – is with them in those places?)

Prompt: Over the next three weeks OR Over the next three days, we’ll be doing an interactive journey to help us to understand Easter and what each of the days of Easter represent. We’ll walk through Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday and unpack what was happening and the emotions being felt during those significant days in history.

MINDS ON *(approx. 10-15 min.)*

‘Stand up if you...’

This is a fun game to start the series and to get them comfortable in the first space.

1. Everyone sits in a chair in the circle.
2. Remove 1 chair. That person is now in the middle.
3. The person in the middle completes this statement: “Stand up if you...[have a brother]”.
4. Every student who has that attribute (e.g. has a brother) must find another chair (not the one next to their last seat or their last seat).
5. The last person who can’t find a chair is now “it” and in the middle.
6. Repeat steps 3-5 until you want to end the game.

ACTION: *(take as long as you'd like this to take within your time frame)*

Washing of Student's Feet

Prompt: Now that we're warmed up and comfortable in this space, let's talk about Thursday, the night when Jesus washed his disciples' feet.

Have every student a pen and a journal/paper.

Have a student volunteer to read John 13:2-17.

💡 TT #4

💡 TT #7

Ask: What did it mean for Jesus to wash his disciple's feet?

Allow students to respond.

(Suggested answer: Washing feet was seen as a lowly servant's job.)

Ask: How did the disciples react? How would you have reacted?

Have students write their responses on the paper/journal.

Prompt: In a moment, I would like to wash your feet if you're willing. What I'll do is bring a basin of water to you, ask you to put your feet in it and I will dry your feet with a towel. If you'd prefer, I can just spray your feet with a mist of water and dry your feet. You can also choose to pass if you'd like.

Wash (or 'mist') the feet of each student, drying their feet with a towel and saying "Just as Jesus humbled himself to help others, so you too are invited to humble yourself to help others".

Have a student volunteer to read Philippians 2:3-11.

💡 TT #4

💡 TT #7

Ask:

💡 TT #7

- After having it done now, how does having your feet washed make you feel?
- Is it hard to accept this act of service? Why or why not?
- How would you feel if someone who deeply loved and admired you, washed your feet?

Have students write their thoughts down in a journal/paper in between each question.

End this meeting with prayer and thanksgiving for a God who humbles himself to wash our feet and make us clean.

Day 2 AM/Meeting 2: 1st space--Friday (approx 50 mins): (See Appendix B)


Walk to Friday:

Meet students in a space that is not "Friday's" Space. Take them on a "journey/walk" to the "Friday" space and have them remember what Thursday felt like from the disciple's viewpoint. Have them recall with a partner, while they walk, what happened on Thursday and how they think the disciples would have felt.

Arrive outside the Friday room.

Prompt: As you enter the Friday space, look at the words around you. Once you have taken in the words, choose one/take one to keep that resonates with you. Maybe it's a feeling you have experienced before. After you've chosen your word, have a seat (on a pillow or chair) and recall this emotion. I will gather us by reading some scripture and reflection questions.

Once all students are seated in the space:

- Read the provided statements and questions in Appendix B.  TT #7
- Invite them to either 1. discuss in pairs (or small groups if you already have them established) or 2. answer on their own in writing in their journal/paper or 3. in silence.

After this time of reflection, invite students to take a post-it note, write one word that spoke to them most from this station and stick it to the cross before they leave. It could be the same one that they chose to keep, or a different word that stands out to them by the end of the lesson.

Pray over the group and acknowledge that God sees all of the emotions pinned on the cross and is with us in those feelings, just as he was with his son, Jesus. Invite students to pray aloud as well.

Conclude and let the students know to exit without making any sound. (**Leader's note:** if this is a continuation of Meeting 2, proceed directly to the "Saturday" room.)

Day 2 PM/Meeting 2: 2nd space--Saturday (approx 50 mins): (See Appendix C)

Silence Contest

Before entering, give each student a pen and their journal/new piece of paper.

To get students feeling the weight of Saturday's emotions, challenge them to a "silence contest" before they enter the Saturday space. Put a timer on for 2 minutes and request that there be total silence and emptiness. Let them know that once the alarm goes off after two minutes, that they can enter the room without sound and find a seat, or stand in a circle facing the wall (depending on how you've set up the room).

Prompt: Alone, and quietly, write the words that stand out to you in your journals/papers that you're seeing on the walls.

Have 1-2 students volunteer to read the 2 passages from Appendix C.  TT #4  TT #7

Have students remain silent again for 2 minutes to reflect on a word or phrase they just heard read.

Read the reflection and ask the questions in Appendix C. Leave some space for them to record the answers in their journal after each question.  TT #7

If facing outwards, have students face into the circle. Ask them to write one prayer or feeling on a paper and crumple it up. Lead a prayer that invites students to cast the weight of their feelings to Jesus and have them throw their piece of paper into the centre of the circle, symbolizing that God hears any words/emotions that we offer him.

Have students exit the room in silence.


Day 3/Meeting 3: Sunday Party! (See Appendix D)

This space is the destination at the end of the ‘journey’. It represents a celebration of Christ’s resurrection, and an invitation to go be like Christ in the world (through the ritual of communion).

Minds On: Snacking

Have music playing and food/drink available for students to munch on before students arrive; they can snack while waiting for everyone to arrive. OR, if eating a meal, have them find a spot at the table and have the first course of munchies out. The rest of the meal can be served after communion is done. Students can just chat or a casual game can be played at the table.

Action:

Once all the students have arrived, officially welcome them to this PARTY! And then have a student read the following scripture (with excitement!): Luke 24:1-8  TT #7

Invite students to a few call-and-response: “He is risen! He is risen indeed!”

Have students look under their chair and sit beside the person who has the same word as them. This is a fun activity, and will mix the group into new pairs. After the following readings there are some questions. Have the new pairs briefly discuss their answers with each other. Invite a few students to share with the whole group, if you, the leader, wants to ‘unpack’ or explain any of the questions more--your call!

Prompt: As we gather and then as we go later, we’re invited to continue the Easter Journey. A journey that all started on Thursday, when Jesus gave the disciples a meal with a whole new meaning...”

Read: 1 Cor. 11:17-26, 33.

Ask: When writing about the Last Supper John writes about Jesus washing his disciples feet, and the other Gospels tell of Jesus giving his disciples bread and wine. Both of these are symbolic actions. How are their meanings different? How are they similar?

Have 3-4 students share their suggestions.

Prompt: Jesus was trying to teach the disciples something through his acting like a servant. And to teach them something through the metaphor of life-giving food and comparing it to his coming actions of self-giving love on the cross. It wasn’t just about cleaning the disciples’ dirty feet because they were dirty, it was also about leading by example and showing them that to follow is to serve. It wasn’t just about meeting the disciple’s hunger and thirst, it was also a ritual that would remind them, every time they ate a meal, that to follow Jesus is to deny themselves and serve.

Read or tell these stories in your own words OR consider having someone who can read well or dramatically come to your session to read or tell these stories to the group:

- Matthew 9:9-12 (Jesus eats with sinners)
- Luke 14:1-14 (Jesus at a Pharisee’s House)
- John 2:1-11 (Jesus turns water into wine)

Ask: Who did Jesus feast with? (answer: everyone) What did he do at feasts? (answer: healed, offended, turned water into wine)

Communion:

Prompt: We're going to do an ancient ritual together called Communion. Communion was originally a meal, and Jesus asks us to remember him any time we eat and drink. What do we remember about Jesus? He showed us what God's love is like: Thinking of others first, Forgiving, Including people that most people ignore or don't like. Communion is also about accepting God's love and acceptance for you. Lastly, communion is an invitation to imitate Jesus' love, by 'inviting others to the banquet'; showing inclusive self-giving love & acceptance. If you accept God's love for you as Jesus showed us, and want to imitate that love, I invite you to take a little bread, dip it in the cup, and eat it. If you're not ready to take part in this, that's alright. I'd invite you to observe and ask God to further clarify some of what you've heard in this lesson.



Leader's note: If your church's tradition does not allow communion to be served in this context, then remove the juice/cup and serve only the bread (called an agape meal). In this ritual, taking the bread symbolized the public recognition that Jesus is the primary source and provider in our lives.

Serve communion to each student, saying "Just as Jesus loved and forgave others, so you too are invited to show God's love and acceptance to others".

If eating a meal, serve the meal after communion, or invite students to serve the meal to one another, just as Jesus serves us. Enjoy eating, talking and consider playing a fun and familiar game to fill up the rest of the "party" time.

Pray to finish the lesson and remind students in the prayer that this Easter journey is meant to be lived out in the world.

APPENDIX A:

THURSDAY

Scripture:

John 13:2-17 (Jesus washes his disciples feet)

The evening meal was in progress, and the devil had already prompted Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand."

"No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet."

Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me."

"Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!"

Jesus answered, "Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you." For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not everyone was clean.

When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them."

APPENDIX B:

FRIDAY

Words displayed:

Cut apart and post—consider printing 2-3 copies so the words are repeated in the space

BETRAYAL
LOSS
SUFFERING
SIN
BROKENNESS

Scriptures:

Psalms 32:3-7

When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy on me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer. Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord." And you forgave the guilt of my sin. Therefore let all the faithful pray to you while you may be found; surely the rising of the mighty waters will not reach them. You are my hiding place; you will protect me from trouble and surround me with songs of deliverance.

Luke 23:33-34:

When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left. Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.

Mark 15:33-38:

At noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And at three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" (which means "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"). When some of those standing near heard this, they said, "Listen, he's calling Elijah." Someone ran, filled a sponge with wine vinegar, put it on a staff, and offered it to Jesus to drink. "Now leave him alone. Let's see if Elijah comes to take him down," he said. With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last. The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, saw how he died, he said, "Surely this man was the Son of God!"

Reflection and questions: Print and post together. Place post-it notes below the cross with pens.

Reflection:

One way to define Sin is to ‘miss the mark’ – like in archery: aiming for the bullseye but failing to hit it.

Another way to define Sin is ‘dehumanization’ – treating someone as less-than-human, and failing to show them the dignity each and every human deserves (yourself included).

We all have experienced messed-up things in the world. We have all been treated as “less than human” at some point, and we have all failed to show another person the dignity they deserve as a creation of God.

Questions:

1. How does it feel to know that Jesus also suffered betrayal, pain and loss?
2. What does the crucifixion of Jesus say and mean to you today?
3. Jesus asked God to forgive the people who hurt him – is there anyone you’ve hurt who you can offer forgiveness to?
4. God offering that same forgiveness to you – is there any way you’ve ‘missed the mark’ that you’d like to confess to God?

APPENDIX C:

SATURDAY

Words displayed:

Cut apart and post—consider printing 2-3 copies so the words are repeated in the space

GRIEF

FEAR

LONELINESS

DISAPPOINTMENT

DOUBT

Scriptures:

Choose one or all scriptures. Print and post in the best spot or suggested spots in setup instructions.

Ecc. 1:1-2:

*The words of the Teacher, son of David, king in Jerusalem:
“Meaningless! Meaningless!” says the Teacher.*

“Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless.”

Psalms 88:3-14:

I am overwhelmed with troubles and my life draws near to death. I am counted among those who go down to the pit; I am like one without strength. I am set apart with the dead, like the slain who lie in the grave, whom you remember no more, who are cut off from your care. You have put me in the lowest pit, in the darkest depths. Your wrath lies heavily on me; you have overwhelmed me with all your waves. You have taken from me my closest friends and have made me repulsive to them. I am confined and cannot escape; my eyes are dim with grief. I call to you, Lord, every day; I spread out my hands to you. Do you show your wonders to the dead? Do their spirits rise up and praise you? Is your love declared in the grave, your faithfulness in destruction? Are your wonders known in the place of darkness, or your righteous deeds in the land of oblivion? But I cry to you for help, Lord; in the morning my prayer comes before you. Why, Lord, do you reject me and hide your face from me?

Reflection:

Feelings like Fear, Loneliness, Disappointment, Grief, and Doubt are part of everyone's life – and we find them in the Bible too.

Have you ever asked “Where are you, God?”

The day after Jesus died, the disciples had no idea what to do. Their world had come crashing down, and it seemed like all their hopes and dreams were dead.

Can you identify with them today? This would be like your favourite teacher or role model dying, and you just don't know what to do.

Doubting God's love or even God's existence isn't wrong; it's part of the journey.

Take a moment to allow yourself to feel emptiness, doubt, disappointment, and fear, and don't try to explain them away. But keep open to the possibility that God is bigger than your biggest fear, disillusionment, or sorrow.

APPENDIX D:

SUNDAY

(Hallway or stairs leading to party room)

Words displayed:

Cut apart and post—consider printing 2-3 copies so the words are repeated in the space on the walls of the hallway. These words can also be written on post-it notes and students can collect the words that stand out or speak to them personally. (maybe add some balloons in this hallway for effect)

SURPRISE
WONDER
AWE
CELEBRATION
EXCITEMENT

Scripture:

Luke 24:1-8:

On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, “Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: ‘The Son of Man must be delivered over to the hands of sinners, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.’” Then they remembered his words.



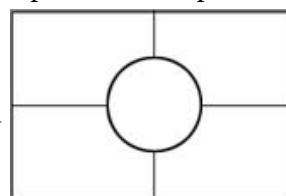
TEACHING TIPS

1. **Think/pair/share:** there are usually two common occurrences: a. Nobody talks first. You can pre-determine who will go first by adding the instructions “the person with the longest hair goes first”, or “the person with the most red on goes first.” b. One person dominates the allotted time and the second person does not get a chance to speak. You can solve this problem by calling out at half time – “now change, and the other person speaks”. This method uses the following steps:
 - a. Students should be in pairs (you can decide how students will be paired up).
 - b. Each student reflects on their answer to the given question.
 - c. Students share their answer with their partner.
 - d. Each student should be ready to share their partner’s answer with the large group.
2. **Jigsaw:** This method is to have each student in the home group be an “expert” with content to contribute to the home group. In the lesson, you’ll see instructions for the expert group and instructions for the home group. Here is how the Jigsaw works:
 - a. Divide your students into the number of groups requested with equal number of students in each (e.g. 4 home groups).
 - b. Within each home group, every student is assigned one number. (e.g. If you have 5 people in that home group, you would number them 1-5.)
 - c. Separate them into their expert groups (i.e. all the people with the same number would gather into a new group e.g. all the 1s, all the 2s, etc.). Assign their task. Each person in the expert group should be prepared to share that answer to their home group.
 - d. After the applicable time, regather students based on their home groups. They will complete the task for the home group.
3. The “art gallery” method allows students to display their answers and also gives others time to review everyone else’s responses. Like visiting an art gallery, encourage students to stay at each location for a moment to review and appreciate what was displayed.
4. Some students are very willing and able to read publicly. Others (whether because of their reading level or fear of public speaking) may need some lead-time to prepare. If you’re asking a student who’s not as comfortable, give him or her the passage to read ahead of time. Consider using a translation or paraphrase that will be easily understood by your group (e.g., the Message). If the passage is long (i.e., more than 2 verses), consider breaking it up and having multiple readers.

5. There are many creative ways to separate people into groups. One random-generating program is found at <http://www.superteachertools.us/instantclassroom/group-maker.php#.V0etvvkrLiw> (which you can also use on some mobile devices).
6. Voting on a poll can be simple e.g. raising your hand or could include moving to one side of the room (for yes) or the other side (for no).
7. If you are assigning different passages to different students or a series of questions, posting/projecting them during that activity provides a point of reference.
8. You can adjust the times allotted for group work. With about 1 minute left, ask each group if 1 minute will be enough. If not, ask them how much time they need, and decide if you want to extend the time allotted. Conversely, if all the groups finish faster, you can reduce the time.
9. Concept sketches allow students to depict a series of concepts and their relationships together in a drawing. The key isn't to make the drawing a masterpiece of art. The sketch summarizes the concept with graphics of the various components, and uses icons and words to identify key components and relationships. (For a more detailed explanation of concept sketches and to see examples, download this Word document at https://d32ogoqmya1dw8.cloudfront.net/files/NAGTWorkshops/course设计/tutorial/concept_sketch_1.doc).

10. Placemat: This method uses the following steps:

- Divide the large group into equal #s (between 3-5) in each small group. E.g. if you have 21, divide them into 7 groups of 3. If you have 15, divide into 3 groups of 5. (With prime #s i.e. 7, 11, 13, 17, etc., you will need to have 1 group with 1 less or 1 more person.)
- On a large chart paper, have them draw a circle in the middle and divide the rest of the paper so that each person has 1 section of the paper in front of them.
- In the first round, give students 3 minutes to write their answers to the given question. There is no talking at this point. (You can adjust the time accordingly).
- In the subsequent rounds (e.g. if there are 4 people, there are 3 remaining rounds), turn the sheet so that the adjacent person's answers are in front of you. Students have 1 minute to comment on those answers with a check-mark in agreement, an X in disagreement, or other comments or ideas based on those answers. (Students do not need to reiterate what they wrote originally in that section.)
- Repeat step 4 until each person has reviewed everyone else's answers.
- Give students 5 minutes to consolidate all their answers into 1 summary statement or into a top 5 list (depending on what the given question is).
- Have a spokesperson share their group's final answer with the large group.





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