



LEADER'S GUIDE

AGAINST THE FLOW

FOLLOWING JESUS IN A
CULTURE MOVING THE OTHER WAY

TAUGHT BY TEENS

SIX WEEK SERIES
VINEYARD YOUTH CURRICULUM

vineyardyouth

WELCOME:

Welcome to our first ever teen-taught curriculum! I am so excited for you to listen through these. The teens worked really hard on them and have some great things to say. This curriculum is different from others that we do. We won't be releasing notes for each one, or games to play first. The format is simple: Watch the video together, then go over the small group questions. Most of the videos also have one place to pause for a group discussion question. This curriculum is built around 1 Timothy 4:12, "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity." Each week is based on one of the ways that young people are to be an example to the rest of us in their faith. Below are some small group questions to go over together once you finish the video.

WEEK 1: FAITH IT STARTS ON THE INSIDE

- What do you think about the question "Do you know God or do you know about God?"
- How would you answer that for yourself?
- Are you making your relationship with God a priority in your life?
- What are you feeding your heart and mind?
- Do your actions match your faith?
- Where are you in your relationship with the Lord?

WEEK 2: LOVING MYSELF LOVING ME LIKE GOD DOES

- Name one or two things that you find self-love through, that aren't as consistent as God.
- What thoughts cause you to start to feel down about yourself?
- Are there any lies about yourself that you are more likely to believe when you are feeling down?
- Is it hard for you to believe that God loves you? Why or why not?
- How does knowing God's love help you to love yourself? Try to answer this from your own experience, not just theoretically.

WEEK 3: LOVING OTHERS

LOVING OTHERS LIKE GOD DOES

- Share one story of how God has shown you his love through someone else.
- Why do you think Christians can be seen as unloving in today's culture?
- Which do you think is more effective: telling someone about Jesus, or showing them you love them in the name of Jesus? (To the leader: Obviously these are both important. This question is here to provoke discussion.)
- Sometimes in the church there have been arguments about whether just "doing good" is enough if you don't directly tell people about Jesus. Do you agree or disagree? Is it beneficial to just "do good" (like serve the poor, or feed the hungry, etc) if you don't share with them about Jesus?
- In what ways do you think you could become a better friend? Maybe think about this another way: What stands in the way of you being a better friend? What stands in the way of you loving your friends better?

WEEK 4: PURITY

STANDING APART FROM THE CULTURE

- What can you do when impure thoughts (whether they be lustful, hateful towards others or yourself, vengeful, fearful, etc) come to your mind? How can you battle them? What has worked for you?
- Do you think it is true that "bad company corrupts good character"? Do you ever find your friends being a bad influence on you? What should you do about that?
- How do you know when a friend is a bad enough influence on your life that you should stop being friends with them?
- Do you agree that what you watch can be a bad influence on you?
- If what you watch can be a bad influence on you, what are you supposed to do about it? It is easy to answer this question with, "just cut it out of your life." But who is really going to do that? Are you? What would it take for something to be serious enough that you would actually stop watching or listening to it?

WEEK 5: SPEECH

HOW TO SOUND DIFFERENT THAN THE WORLD

- Do you find that your speech (the words you use, jokes you tell, etc) changes depending on who you are hanging out with?
- Do you think that cursing is wrong? (To the leader: Go for a healthy debate on this one. Many teens today don't see anything wrong with it. Have a discussion that balances the truth and the grace aspect of this.)
- Besides cursing, what other ways do people use their words in a way that isn't godly? (To the leader: gossip, slander, put downs, negative comments about self or others, lying, etc.)
- It is common knowledge that negative words are more powerful in our psyche than positive ones. In other words, it takes multiple positive affirmations to make up for one negative comment. Why do you think this is true?
- Would you consider yourself an encouraging person? Do you naturally look for ways to say positive things about the people around you? Why or why not?

WEEK 6: CONDUCT CALLED OUT BY GOD

- Do you ever feel like you are in the minority as a Christian in your social situations? How does that make you feel?
- Do you ever make decisions in your life based on what other people think about you? Like what? Do you think that's a problem, or are you okay with it? Are there any dangers to doing this?
- How does the way we live our lives affect how people view God?
- Do you have any mentors in your life that you lean on to learn more about faith?
- What do you do when you feel the tension of wanting to show your faith by the way you live, but knowing that others may think differently of you? Is it possible to show your faith without losing friends? Can you show your faith without being pushy?
- How are you using your gifts to serve God? What is one gift that you believe God has given you that you want to (or already do) use for his kingdom?

WELCOME TO VINEYARD YOUTH CURRICULUM

Hello friends. What you hold in your hands is the product of lots of people, lots of prayer, and lots of purpose. The Vineyard movement is at a crucial place, and we believe that the work we do with students will have much influence on what the movement will look like over the next 10-20 years. We set out to design a curriculum that communicates and reinforces the biblical and kingdom values of the Vineyard while inviting students to embrace the reality that they are part of something bigger than themselves.

Understanding the diversity within the Vineyard movement, we purposefully designed curriculum that can be utilized by groups of differing sizes led by either paid or volunteer leaders in any geographical setting or location. Easy, right? We believe we accomplish this by offering a buffet of activities that allow you – the in-the-trenches leader – to choose what works for you and your group. We're pretty sure no one will use all of the material proposed, but we're confident some of it will be a good fit for your group.

Each lesson includes:

- Large group questions to frame a conversation (I.E., not a lecture).
- Application suggestions to reveal and experience the kingdom of God.
- Small group questions each week.

Why This Topic?

Let's be honest. Following Jesus as a teenager in our culture is not easy right now. Christians are often portrayed as judgmental, hateful, or just irrelevant. Often teens who do follow Jesus are either so different that people can't relate to them, or they look so much like the world, that you can't tell the difference. How can a teenager follow Jesus in today's culture?

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