Youth Leaders Only / Music Resource Book / Volume 89 / Fall 2012

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VOLUNTEERS!
APPRECIATING THE UNSUNG HEROES OF YOUTH MINISTRY
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**MUSIC RESOURCE BOOK:**

Volume 89 • Fall 2012 Maximizing Music & Media in Youth Ministry

The Youth Leaders Only Music Resource Book is published quarterly by Interlinc, Franklin, TN

Direct any questions or comments to interlinc at 1-800-725-3300 or visit www.interlinc-online.com
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I sat there in amazement. I had never experienced anything like it before. And I knew that my world had changed forever.

I had taken a group of just-graduated high school seniors on a trip from our town in Oregon to California. On the Wednesday night of our trip we wanted to go to a youth group meeting somewhere, so we headed to a local church that I had heard of before. What we encountered there was a full-blown, pedal-to-the-metal, no-holds-barred program that was aggressively evangelistic. The energy, the production values, and the sheer number of enthusiastic kids blew us away. This program was nothing like our little youth group back home.

I know that we tend to reproduce only what we’ve experienced. Up until that moment, my youth ministry experience consisted of a small youth group. I grew up in a group of maybe twenty kids, led by a part-time youth pastor. When the church I attended during college hired me as their part-time youth pastor, I knew what to do – and I did it well, with up to FORTY kids! But that Wednesday evening rocked my world. I knew a single youthworker could never pull off such a going-and-blowing ministry. I had to find out how that youth pastor did it.

His answer: volunteers.

Since our conversation, I have dedicated my efforts to recruiting, training, and encouraging volunteer youth leaders. In fact, the ministry organization that I run specializes in getting youth ministries up and running in churches that don’t even have a youth pastor. I’ve discovered that volunteer youth leaders are THE key to a healthy, effective, and long-running youth ministry.

Now you understand why I am excited that “flavor” of this Youth Leaders Only is “Volunteers.” I live, eat, drink, and breathe volunteers. I spend most of my ministry hours with volunteers. I’ve discovered that volunteers are probably more effective in the lives of students than paid youth pastors. Volunteers tend to stay involved in a local youth ministry longer than youth pastors, and they get closer to more individual students than a youth pastor can. Since it takes all kinds of people to reach all kinds of people, the more volunteers I can get working in youth ministry means more kids will be reached and discipled for Jesus.

I hope this interlinc resource will help you involve more volunteers with you in the task of youth ministry. The albums, DVD, articles, Bible studies, Reviews, Chord Charts, Annual Thematic Listing, Comparison Chart and even the advertisements are all geared to help you reach teenagers with the love of Jesus, and teach them to follow Him with their whole heart.

Godspeed,

Ken McCoy
Editor
How to Use this YLO MUSIC Resource Book

Sure, at first glance you notice how great it looks—very current, very stylish. Go ahead—flip through this book a bit. Notice the helpful design? Did you catch the organizational details? The more you look at this book, the more you will appreciate the functionality that has been built into it. Here is a quick tour...

**The Cover**
If you’re like most of us, you keep your YLO (Youth Leaders Only) books stored on a bookshelf. When you want to search for a song or video that deals with a certain topic, slide each book out a couple of inches and read the themes and featured articles for each issue. Cool!

**The Index**
Take a look at the index or “table of contents”—notice the colored bars? They represent sections in the book and they clue you in on which albums / Bible Studies are “Main,” “Mild,” or “Hot.” You will notice in the Bible Studies section that each Leader Guide / Student Guide is color-keyed the same way. Wow! Someone’s been thinking!

**Featured Articles**
Each issue of YLO has a certain “flavor.” Around that theme are a couple of “Feature Articles” as well as some of the other items you have in your YLO box. These articles give you insight into the heart and ministry of some of the musicians included in the YLO box.

**Bible Studies**
What makes Youth Leaders Only more than “cheap music” are the music-based Bible Study resources provided for you to use in your programming. Finding good Christian music isn’t hard, but coming up with ways to use it in your ministry with teenagers takes time, talent, and energy. Real-world youth leaders write the Bible Studies; the sessions are field-tested and proven effective with real-world teenagers.

**Thematic Listing**
Not every song on every CD has a Bible Study written for it. That doesn’t mean you can’t use those other songs in your ministry with students.

**Modern Worship Section**
In this section you’ll find encouraging and enlightening resources to help you develop your youth’s worship ministry. You’ll find articles from recent SPIN versions of YLO or other worship leaders and Lead Sheets of songs from some of the CDs in this YLO. Although they are not really the kind of Lead Sheets most bands use, these pages of “lyrics with chords over them” are a great help when you want to teach the high school praise bands new tune. Many youth leaders tell us that the Lead Sheets are an invaluable resource.

**Reviews**
Not every available contemporary Christian music CD can make it into the YLO box. So, we try to give you a taste of what else is available in your local store. Since interlinc often gets “pre-release” copies of upcoming CDs, we can give you a “heads up” to new releases that might just be right for you and your young friends.

We hope this effort helps you reach and disciple more young people to be go-for-it Christians!
YLO For Volunteer Youthworkers

Hints For Using This Material

By Ken McCoy
kennymac@mac.com
**Kids Learn By Doing**

There is a misconception that many adult youth leaders have bought into. This misconception believes that if we can present the truth to youth people, then their lives will change. You might think of this concept as (where “→” means “leads to”):

Absolute Truth → Attitudes/Actions → Godly Lifestyle

However, just because we as adults can move from truth to application doesn’t mean that teenagers will do the same. Most students learn this way:

Experience → Discover Attitudes/Actions → Identify Truth → Carnal Lifestyle

So how is a youthworker supposed to get God’s truth into the hearts of teenagers? By changing the formula slightly. Here’s what you should strive for:

Experience → Personalized Absolute Truth → Attitudes/Actions → Godly Lifestyle

The Bible studies/meeting guides included in this magazine provide you with a step-by-step process that walks you through this kind of learning experience. Each session begins with an experience (Warm Up), moves to helping kids personalize God’s truth (the Song and Bible Study), and encourages students to plan what actions and attitudes they will build into their lives (the Student Guide). Let’s unpack some of these elements to show you how this process can work with your group.

**Warm Up**

Since young people learn by doing, each of the sessions in this magazine begin with some sort of “crowdbreaker” that will get your young friends involved in doing right off the bat. The Warm Up provides your students an experience that you can use to initiate the learning process. By involving your kids in an activity at the outset of your program, you’re sending them the message that your meeting is something they participate in, not just watch.

**Transition/Discussion**

By asking the well-thought-out questions provided in each session, you can help students identify the issues that you will be dealing with. Here are some guidelines for encouraging good discussion:

- Ask open-ended questions and avoid “yes/no” queries.
- Enlist response or rebuttals to answers already given. Young people love to debate!
- If you have more than twenty participants, breaking into smaller discussion groups is wise. By working with small groups, more kids will get involved in the discussion rather than sitting in the back and daydreaming.
- Avoid correcting your students’ responses. In a discussion you are attempting to bring what your students think out into the open. Your instruction opportunity will come later in the Bible Study section of your meeting.

**The Song**

This can be a second experience that you provide your group. To make the most of this valuable resource, make sure you involve not only the ears of your group, but their minds as well. A group listening to a song can soon turn into a “lap looker” experience – something every youth leader wants to avoid. So, you’ll need to get creative to engage the minds of your kids during the playing of the song. An activity such as “fill in the blanks” lyrics or keeping track of how many times a singer says a certain word can be used to keep the students focused during the song.

After listening to the song, another Transition should take place to bridge the group into God’s Word. Lead the group in another discussion, assisting your students to personalize the truth contained in the song. This discussion will serve to introduce the Bible Study.

**Bible Study**

The outlines provided in this magazine are just outlines. Don’t expect to be able to read the Leaders Guide to your group and communicate clearly the points of the lesson. Use the outline as a starting point for your own preparation. Do some background research into the Scriptures used in the lesson. Personalize the outline with illustrations from your own experience. Make the outline work for you, rather than feeling like you have to work the outline.

**Wrap Up**

Young people always have one unspoken question on their minds as you teach: “So what?” You must answer that question, or your teaching will not be effective. In this Wrap Up portion of your meeting, use the Leader Guide ideas to answer that question for your young friends. Give them a means to personalize the truth they’ve learned, and plan to do something about it!

This information can be applied to most youth meeting situations. Sunday School, mid-week youth meetings, outreach events, camps and retreats. The more experience you gain in teaching-through-doing, the better your results will be. This material should take a lot of work off of your shoulders so you can concentrate on leading students to discover God’s truth, and help them put that truth into practice in their everyday experience.

Godspeed!
Leaders Are Learners is a series that I did for volunteer youthworkers to help them in their journey of becoming more healthy and effective.

Before we go any further, I want to thank you for serving God through your love for students and I want to thank you for learning. Leaders are learners and when you stop learning, you’ll stop leading.

Also, thank you for being a significant adult in a teenager’s life. Teenagers need adults who will take an interest in them, love them, and point them in the direction of God’s passionate and unconditional love.

What you and I try to do within youth ministry can be intimidating! I don’t know about you, but I’ve sure thought, “I wonder if I’m doing any good with this kid?” Or, “How can I really care for this student?” When I meet a youthworker who asks these types of questions, I see a good heart – a caring heart. In the church, we’ve come to call this heart, “the heart of a shepherd.” Let’s take a look at the heart of a shepherd and at some practical ways you can better care for the students God has entrusted to you.

Before we jump into this, let’s briefly look at the biblical image of a shepherd – someone who cares for and has the best interest in mind for the sheep. The Bible gives us several images that relate caretaking to that of a shepherd. In John 21:17, Jesus said, “If you love me, take care of my sheep.” In Psalm 23 we are told that the Lord is our shepherd. Because He is a good, caring, loving shepherd, we can rest. The biblical shepherd is a protector and a provider, which translates into someone who loves.

Shepherding students is a great picture of a youthworker who cares for kids on a week-to-week basis with their best interest in mind.

Take a look at this description of a shepherd’s job and track the similarities between shepherds and youthworkers: “A shepherd moves sheep to greener pasture. They drive them to places where there’s more food. The sheep move slowly, feeding as they go, gradually working their way to more ‘fruitful’ places. Sometimes the shepherd uses words to move the sheep and other times the shepherd bashes the sheep with his staff.”

Notice that the description of a shepherd’s job is a combination of words and bashing. Isn’t that a great picture of a youthworker? We shepherd students by trying to help them move from one spiritual level to a more fruitful commitment with Christ. Sometimes we do this gently while other times we take more extreme measures.

However, just agreeing to be a shepherd isn’t enough. The Bible illustrates another kind of shepherd in Ezekiel 34. I don’t think the shepherd in this chapter passed too many of his shepherding classes. Let me paraphrase a couple of verses from that chapter: “Woe to you shepherds who spend more time feeding yourselves than your flock! You slaughter the fat sheep and feed and clothe yourselves without concern for your flock! Your flock has wandered and scattered, and there is no one to search and seek for them.”

Ouch! Could that ever describe your style of shepherding? Maybe you haven’t skinned and barbecued a student lately, but have you put your needs before theirs? I sure have. How about letting your kids wander without following up on them? Or, you’re aware that one of your students is making unwise decisions and you chose not to take the time to confront him or her? The result? The student wanders away from God, your group, and his connection with you. That’s not the kind of shepherd God is calling us to be, nor is it one we want to aspire toward.

Without careful attention, our sheep – our students – get lost. I felt burdened to do this message as a result of this email I received yesterday: “Hey Doug, it’s Jonathan. Just wanted to let you know that I won’t be attending Saddleback Church anymore. Things went on there that really hurt me. I stopped attending for a while hoping someone would have the heart to notice that I wasn’t there. But the people who said they were my friends never called me, not one of them – not even my small group leader. It took four months for someone to call me and say that they hadn’t seen me there. To tell you the truth, after four months I’d rather he not of called at all. It just hurts that for years the people there that said they were my friends could care less I was gone. Now I go to a small church where people know if I’m not there.”

That email breaks my heart. Even within a big church there should be a care structure where this student is missed. This guy’s shepherd lost focus of this sheep – and this student went astray.

Without care and attention, sheep get lost. Let’s be honest, being a shepherd of students isn’t as easy as it sounds. For most youth workers I know, it doesn’t come naturally. But, because we’re learners I want to look at a few action steps that might help us be stronger shepherds.

Used by permission. To read the rest of this article, go to interlinc-online.com/shepherds.
Does any of this sound like you?
- You traded your sedan for a minivan so you could cart a group of kids with you every-where you go.
- You have the exact amount of time it takes to get from your day job to your youth group meeting calculated down to the second.
- You use up your vacation time taking a bunch of kids to camp, music festival, or (insert the name of your “vacation” here.)
- You have never been to a local youth ministry network meeting because they all occur while you are at the office.
- You footed the bill for this inter-ling resource yourself because your church’s annual youth budget wouldn’t pay a youth pastor’s salary for a week.

Parents complain that you either have too many activities for the kids, or not enough (at the same time incidentally). They are also concerned that your students are not growing spiritually. The fact that they pull their kids out of your ministry for every competitive tidily-winks match that comes along is irrelevant. You only get the students for two hours a week – as long as something “more important” doesn’t come up. And parents still ask, “What are you doing with all that time?” You may find yourself asking your church, “You realize you don’t pay me, right?” Or, you may find yourself, “Why do I do this?”

FROM ONE VOLUNTEER TO ANOTHER

You know who you are. You are one of the few, the proud – the volunteer youth leader. You are the person who does youth ministry for the love of Jesus and for the love of teenagers, and you do something else for a living. You saw a need in your church and you filled it. Youth ministry can be both the greatest blessing and the most aggravating frustration. You are a modern day miracle worker who does amazing works with limited resources and almost no money. “Five loaves and two fishes” is a way of life for you.

I have been there. For my entire ministry career, I have been a volunteer. If I were with you right now, I would wrap my arms around you, give you a big hug and say “Thank you!”

Volunteer youth ministry can be tough and seemingly thankless at times. Training opportunities are limited because most of them happen while you are doing what you do to earn a living, or require another week of vacation time to complete. You scrimp and save every nickel of your extremely limited annual budget (if you even have one) and pay a lot out of your own pocket, only to be ques-tioned about what you did with “all that money.” Meanwhile, your full-time youth pastor colleague down the street spent more than your annual budget for a pizza party for his or her group.

Some folks will consider your min-istry to be small and insignificant. Don’t believe it! God has placed considerable trust in you. He has entrusted you with His most precious creations at the most vulnerable, dif-ficult, adjustment-filled period in their lives. Your ministry is critical. Keep at it! Keep going! Keep running your race!

Your kids need someone they can depend on to model Jesus for them — and God picked you.
Many years ago, while I was in college, I did a month-long internship in a church. My role was to shadow the lead pastor so that I could get a good 360-degree view of the whole church.

Throughout the month I learned much as I observed and participated in the various ministries of the church.

One day, while walking into the office area, I saw the open door of an older pastor who was the Minister of Visitation for the church. He greeted me from his desk and invited me into his office. He politely asked me to close the door. After I was seated he said something like, "Son, you are learning from one of the best lead pastors I know. Don’t miss any opportunities to take in everything possible. However, there is one thing I don’t want you to learn – something that I learned the hard way after I had my heart attack. The lead pastor does not do a good job taking days off and taking vacations. Listen closely when I tell you: Take your day off every week and take all your vacation days.”

I had walked into his office as a ripe and young would-be youth pastor ready to change the world. I left his office hearing words that have helped me to become a ripe and older youth pastor who still loves the church, ministry, and working with teenagers.

After 32 years in paid youth ministry I have learned the importance of pace. More importantly, I have learned this is equally or more significant for the volunteers who serve with me. They have responded to my careful attention to their wellbeing by being long-term volunteers rather than losing steam and quitting after one or two years.

Any number of factors can influence longevity, but none is more important than intentionally creating “margins” in our ministries. Defining our boundaries in life helps to keep balance and leaves breathing room for enjoying the life God has given us. Too many people run through life believing that if they can just get through this “busy time” – then they will rest. The problem comes when one “busy time” is followed by another “busy time” until the person who had intended to take a break becomes physically, emotionally, socially, and even spiritually defeated.

How do you minister with margins? I offer six words: Set your priorities and live them! Does this sound cliche and perhaps overused?

Perhaps you are right, but how many actually accomplish this even if they believe it to be true?

Allow me to offer you three priorities (in order of importance) toward creating healthy margins:

**Your Relationship With God**

There is, and can be, no more important priority than this. Letting Christ be at the center of your life is to remember you are first and foremost a child of God – a student of the Word, a praver, a faithful and obedient servant, and witness to the hope within you. *(1 Peter 3:15)*

**Your Family Relationships**

(or, if you’re single - Your Intentional Community)

As a married person, my roles are to honor, love, respect, listen to, and allow Christ to be at the center of our relationship. As a single person, those same roles would be true. As a parent, my roles are to shepherd my children by being a godly example, spending quantity (not just quality) time with them, offering them loving instruction, and equipping them to be capable children of God.

**Your Work**

Your paid work and volunteer work can both be places where you freely give to God your life, your gifts, and talents through ministry to His people.

Note what is first in this list and note what is third. There will always be more to do in youth ministry. There will always be more time you could spend on investing in the lives of youth or helping with the next event. There will be times you need to say “No” to great opportunities – but you will be doing so because you have a sustainable plan to keep you “shepherding” youth for a long time to come.

Let your life decisions first be founded on your relationship with God; secondly, considerate of the welfare of your relationship with your family/community and the effects of that decision on their lives; and finally, find meaning in the fulfillment of and vision for the ministry of Jesus Christ through your service.

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**Ministry With Margins**

By Doug Ranck
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© 2012, INTERLINC. INTERLINC-ONLINE.COM / 800.725.3300
Youth: Challenge Them or Lose Them
The Importance of Volunteerism

By Bob Lenz
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One of the most devastating realities in youth ministry is how many youth are walking away from their faith in Christ after high school.

A 2006 Barna Research study showed 61% of young people in the church disengage from their faith after high school. I propose today that one of the greatest tools for combating the issue of youth walking away is right under our noses.

Volunteerism.

#1 – It’s Biblical.
#2 – It fills a need in the church and the world.
#3 – It promotes a teaching and discipleship model that has motivation built right in.
#4 – It produces missional lifestyles in youth.

#1 – We are often encouraged to go deeper – to take our faith from milk to meat and produce real discipleship. But some have defined this as merely attaining more knowledge. So we provide more information and theology to be learned. However, in John 4:34 Jesus said, “My meat is to do the will of Him who sent me, and to finish His work.” For Jesus, discipleship wasn’t just about maintaining a certain belief structure or growing in knowledge; it was foremost in doing His Father’s will and work. So, volunteerism isn’t just a good idea, it’s biblical. Hey, maybe that’s why it’s a good idea!

#2 – The economy has affected everything, including the church. More youth and children’s ministry paid positions are being eliminated from churches. The need for volunteerism is even greater in times like this. Seek out college-aged students to show that it is possible to hold true to your faith, to impact, serve, and lead junior and high school ministers. Encourage your junior and high school students to serve in Sunday school and other areas for elementary children. Allow your youth to positively influence the generation behind them and be a part of community projects and outreaches outside the church. Let students take on responsibilities like planning and coordinating, rather than just having them show up the day of to take on boring tasks.

#3 – This generation really wants to make a difference, yet we try to gain and maintain their attention by entertaining them. Instead, we need to connect them with a purpose and a project, and help them see the needs around them. Find the passion inside our kids and connect them with something that feeds that passion. Then they will have a reason to learn and listen, and a goal in mind that they look forward to, rather than just sitting through another message that might not be applicable to real life.

#4 – What if instead of just taking kids on a missions trip, we show them where their passion, talents, gifts, and abilities intersect with the needs of the world? That’s when they find their calling. Instead of a mission trip, it becomes a missional life. Instead of one week out of their life, it is their life.

Too often the church has been accused of just asking for money. Honestly, I think to just ask for money is to ask for way too little. Romans 12:1 tells us, “I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – this is your spiritual act of worship.” God asks for our lives, and I wholly believe that volunteerism can be a spiritual act of worship and help make life worth living. It will give impact, spread the Kingdom, and make disciples.

Bob Lenz is an international speaker and author who speaks powerfully to more than half a million young people each year for school assemblies, community events, churches, festivals, and national tours. He is also founder and president of Life Promotions, Inc., a non-profit organization dedicated to instilling hope in youth. Information on Bob Lenz’s ministry to young people is available at lifepromotions.com.
Lecrae is one of today’s most successful Christian rap artists. He doesn’t just have cool beats and catchy lyrics, his songs are full of Scripture and he has a strong desire for the men of this world to Man Up! Interlinc had the pleasure of talking to Lecrae recently – check it out.

How did you come to know Christ? Who have been the main influences musically and spiritually on your life?
I had gotten into trouble – financial trouble, trouble with other people, trouble with girls – I was just running myself into a dead end. So I’m thinking, “I’m seventeen, let me do the mature, adult thing, and go to church.” Grandma was a Christian, so the roots were established through her. By grace there was a young lady that I went to high school with that invited me to a Bible study. I went, and I had never seen Christians who dressed like me or talked like me, so I thought Christians were aliens from another planet! When I saw those kids I said, “Oh you guys are human!” They loved me genuinely and that’s really what started it. I later went to a conference with them where I heard the gospel and became a Christian. Musically and spiritually, Hip-Hop artist “The Ambassador” had a profound impact on me.

How did you go from being a latch-key kid to a professional musician?
I would sit at home for hours while my mother was at work. I had to use my imagination. I’d sit in front of the television so much. She wouldn’t allow me to watch television and she would see if the TV was warm when she got come home, so I had to figure out what I could do with my time. I started writing, experimenting, and just trying to be creative. I knew I had a passion for the arts, but we didn’t recognize it. It was one of my fifth-grade teachers who recognized it and suggested to my mother that I be put in a special class. That class led me to audition for a special school, so I actually went to a performing arts middle school. That’s really where I started to hone my writing skills, I kept at it and always knew it was a passion I wanted to pursue. God strategically placed me with my friend and co-owner of Reach Records years later and the rest is history.

I have heard it said that Christian rap artists are today’s youth culture theologians. What are your thoughts?
I hope that we are an example of what Biblical churches and leaders can produce. We are not pastors nor do we want to replace or diminish such an honorable role. We have a unique platform to express our views on life and truth – scholars we’ve sat under or books we’ve read shaped our work. Our goal is to point people to churches and resources to grow them not to replace those sources.

What do you hope that high school students get from your songs on the new album?
“Gravity” is loosely based on Ecclesiastes: I think what Solomon was trying to do was bring some weight to life and that’s really what I want to do, to paint some sober pictures. You know, there is a sobering picture when you’re overwhelmed with all of the hurt and the pain in this world. There’s a sobering picture of how it’s only for a short period of time, it’s short-lived, or that we still have Jesus. So that’s what I would call a weighty part, a gravitational pull to remind us of who we are in Jesus.

How has being a main player in your genre of music created ministry opportunities for you?
At first I was just one of the guys who was eager to learn. In this season of life I’m applying a lot of that and people are seeing the fruit of it – which leads them to see me as a voice of influence. Being that voice has helped me shed light (especially in urban culture) on how Christianity redefines every aspect of life.

We featured your Man Up project with our Youth Leaders Only members – what has that project been able to accomplish? Tell us about you and your small men’s group are studying now.
Man Up was a campaign that included an album, a short film, a tour, and a conference. The tour sold out, the album has been incredibly successful, and the film is attached to the album so people have been watching it and being encouraged. And at the conference we anticipated about 1,000 people and 2,200 men showed up; three generations – the grandfathers, fathers, and sons. It was mind blowing. Currently the group of men I’ve been meeting with just finished looking at Jesus’ life as a man and how to follow him.

How can you tell when a concert or song has been a ministry success?
Success to me is defined as both Impact and Influence. Impact is when you leave in a dent in the culture that hits hard, maybe brings conviction, enrichment, joy, or laughter. Influence is when that conviction turns into commitment. When people are now following and living out truths due your work that’s success.
MercyMe’s bass player Nathan Cochran was kind enough to answer some questions about their new The Hurt & The Healer album and even share MercyMe’s top 10 Tweets of 2012. Enjoy!

**The Hurt & The Healer – What is the significance of that title for MercyMe?**

It perfectly represents our experiences over the last year. Many times we found ourselves unable to run away from God during times that we honestly wanted to be left alone. But in the midst of our pain we collided with God, and He made a beautiful mess all over our lives.

**How has God used difficulty to strengthen and grow you as a band?**

We have come to understand more and more what His grace really is. It is not like our human attempts at grace that are fickle and swayed so easily by how we feel – whether we are on the giving or receiving end. God’s grace – the unmerited favor that only He can give and make us able to give – is truly life changing.

**How can you tell when a concert of song has been a ministry success?**

When we feel like we could have stepped back and not sang a word because it was obvious that the Holy Spirit was doing the work. That is all we want.

**You’ve been doing music together for a long time – what’s different for you now from those first few years?**

We are a bit more certain of who we are as musicians now. Early on we were a bit gun shy about what we could really accomplish.

**How do you keep yourself current with the teenage youth culture?**

Do we? Ha! We just ask our kids what they like.

**You guys are big Twitter users. What are your top 10 TWEETS of 2012?**

1. I like ham. @BartMillard
2. Weeeeell! @MikeScheuchzer
3. What? I can’t shave in here?!?! @RobbyShaffer
4. Well, that used to be a great piano until that elephant came in. @BarryGraul
5. Certainly you mistake me for a pirate!? @NathanCochran
6. When in doubt, go with the one that smells best. @MacPowell
7. If you can’t say anything nice, then make your first punch count! @MattMaher
8. Wait a second. I thought I was supposed to sing Natalie Grant’s part? @JeremyCamp
9. Someone told me this was a popcorn-flavored jellybean. It was NOT popcorn! Stay away from the yellow ones! @MikeDonehey
10. Tweet. @SylvesterTheCatsStomach

"HEART OF THE ARTIST"

MERCY ME

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Not long ago we had the opportunity to spend time with Andrew Schwab from Project 86. We found him to be engaging, refreshing, and focused on his ministry to students and the youth culture.

Not only is he releasing a new album, he also has a book that will soon be available. Recently we had a chance to talk with him and ask him a few questions.

How did you come to know Christ?
I came to Jesus during my junior year of high school. I was introduced to faith by what seemed to be a random act of kindness from a guy who was then a stranger. I was the new kid in school and a guy walked up to me and asked me out to lunch, where I met a group of Christians. Later, they invited me to a home Bible study – that’s where God met me. If you make yourself available, even in small ways, God can use you to do miraculous and mighty things.

What motivated you to pursue a music ministry?
A friend took me to a Christian bookstore just after I became a Christian, and I laughed at the music I heard! I thought to myself, “Someone needs to do this whole thing in a more legitimate way.”

Then, another friend took me to an underground Christian hardcore concert that featured Focused, Plankeye, and Outnumbered. I saw that it was possible for people of faith to make music that wasn’t cheesy. At that concert I said to myself, “I can do this!” I started to pray about it and from that point on I dedicated myself to pursuing music as a full-time thing.

What is the takeaway from your new album that a youth leader can communicate to his or her students?
We tried to write for anyone who has an obstacle they cannot overcome. We each face “Goliaths” in our lives that we need help from above to defeat – generational family sin, difficult economic situations, addictions, or relationship problems. We want this record to give a boost to the underdog, the underestimated, and the downcast.

Several years ago we featured your first book, Fame Is Infamy. I understand you are finishing a new book called Tin Soldiers. Can you tell us a little about the new book?
The book is about today’s young, believing men who are facing an identity crisis. Trapped in lives of emptiness, hopelessness, and apathy, ensnared in a web of addictions, anxiety, and broken relationships, we are a generation who seem lost, without purpose, and without direction. But this is not who we were meant to be. The book delves into topics such as addiction, pride, lust, relating to the opposite sex, and many others. It’s a collection of daily readings and offers direction for the drifter, purpose for purposeless, and a practical template on how to find something we’ve never had: an identity based in righteous character. While focused around men, women can better understand the issues we face in this work, as well as having a relevant tool to give to the males in their lives who need encouragement.

How can you tell when a concert, a song, or your speaking has been effective?
I think we can only gauge the effectiveness of a particular endeavor in terms of our own motives. Everything beyond that is between other people and God. So, in terms of motive, I can say that our most successful endeavors have been the ones that have been the least about ourselves, and the most about loving others for the sake of Christ!
"I never meant to be a mother. I mean, I guess I did; not right now, though. Not before I was married. Not when I was nineteen. Not to so, so many little people. Thankfully, God’s plans do not seem to be affected much by my own.

I never meant to live in Uganda, a dot on the map in East Africa, on the opposite side of the planet from my family and all that is comfortable and familiar. Thankfully, God’s plans also happen to be much better than my own.

You see, Jesus wrecked my life. For as long as I could remember, I had everything this world says is important. In high school, I was class president, homecoming queen, top of my class. I dated cute boys and wore cute shoes and drove a cute sports car. I had wonderful, supportive parents who so desired my success that they would have paid for me to go to college anywhere my heart desired. But I loved Jesus.

And the fact that I loved Jesus was beginning to interfere with the plans I once had for my life and certainly with the plans others had for me. My heart had been apprehended by a great love, a love that compelled me to live differently. I had grown up in a Christian home, gone to church, and learned about Jesus all my life. Around the age of twelve or thirteen, I began to delve into the truths of Scripture.

As I read and learned more and more of what Jesus said, I liked the lifestyle I saw around me less and less. I began to realize that God wanted more from me, and I wanted more of Him. He began to grow in me a desire to live intentionally, and different from anyone I had ever known.

Slowly but surely I began to realize the truth: I had loved and admired and

WOULDN’T YOU LOVE IT IF KATIE WAS FROM YOUR YOUTH GROUP?
So I quit my life.

Originally, my quitting was to be temporary, lasting just one year before I went to college and returned to normal, American teenager life. But after that year, which I spent in Uganda, returning to “normal” wasn’t possible. I had seen what life was about and I could not pretend I didn’t know. So I quit my life again, and for good this time. I quit college, I quit cute designer clothes and my little yellow convertible; I quit my boyfriend. I no longer have all the things the world says are important. I do not have a retirement fund; I do not even have electricity some days. But I have everything I know is important. I have a joy and a peace that are unimaginable and can come only from a place better than this earth. I cannot fathom being happier. Jesus wrecked my life, shattered it to pieces, and put it back together more beautifully.

During the first few months I lived in Uganda, in fall of 2007, I wrote, “Sometimes working in a Third World country makes me feel like I am emptying the ocean with an eyedropper.” Today, it often still feels that way. I have learned to be okay with this feeling because I have learned that I will not change the world. Jesus will do that. I can, however, change the world for one person. I can change the world for fourteen little girls and for four hundred schoolchildren and for a sick and dying grandmother and for a malnourished, neglected, abused five-year-old. And if one person sees the love of Christ in me, it is worth every minute. In fact, it is worth spending my life for.

Many days, I am still overwhelmed by the magnitude of the need and the incredible number of people who need help. Many days I see the destitute, disease-ridden children lining the streets in the communities I serve and I want to scoop up every single one of them, take them home with me, and feed and cloth and love them. And I look at the life of my Savior, who stopped for one.

So I keep stopping and loving one person at a time. Because this is my call as a Christian. I can do only what one woman can do, but I will do what I can. Daily, the Jesus who wrecked my life enables me to do so much more than I ever thought possible.

People often ask if I think my life is dangerous, if I am afraid. I am much more afraid of remaining comfortable. Matthew 10:28 tells us not to fear things that can destroy the body but things that can destroy the soul. I am surrounded by things that can destroy the body. I interact almost daily with people who have deadly diseases, and many times I am the only person who can help them. I live in a country with one of the world’s longest-running wars taking place just a few hours away. Uncertainty is everywhere. But I am living in the midst of the uncertainty and risk, worshiped Jesus without doing what He said. This recognition didn’t happen overnight; in fact I believe it was happening in my heart long before I even knew it. It was happening as I explored the possibility of overseas volunteer work, it was happening as I took my first three-week trip to Uganda, it was happening as I fell in love with a beautiful country full of gracious, joyful people and immense poverty and squalor that begged me to do more. It was happening in so many ways, and I couldn’t deny it. I wanted to actually do what Jesus said to do.

So I quit my life.

Jesus called His followers to be a lot of things, but I have yet to find where He warned us to be safe. We are not called to be safe, we are simply promised that when we are in danger, God is right there with us. And there is no better place to be than in His hands.

For as long as I can remember, one of my favorite Bible verses has been Psalm 37:4: “Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart.” I used to believe it meant that if I did what the Lord asked of me, followed His commandments, and was a “good girl,” He would grant all my desires and make my dreams come true. Today, this is still one of my favorite passages of Scripture, but I have learned to interpret it in a totally different way. It is not about God making my dreams come true but about God changing my dreams into His dreams for my life.

Today I am living the desires of my heart and I cannot imagine being happier; I cannot imagine living any other life than the one that unfolds before me day by day. But believe me, I am by no means living my plan. I thought that I wanted to go to college with my high school boyfriend, get married, have a successful career and children, settle into a nice house down the road from my parents, and live happily ever after. Today I am a single woman raising a household of girls and trying to teach others the love of Jesus in a land that is a far cry from my hometown and my culture. This is not a life that I dreamed up on my own or even knew I desired. I am watching God work, and as I “delight myself in the Lord” by doing what He asks of me and by saying yes to the needs He places in front of me, He is changing the desires of my heart and aligning them with the desires of His. As I go with Him to the hard places, He changes them into the most joyful places I could imagine…”

Read more from Katie at interlin-online.com/kissesfromkatie and at her blog kissesfromkatie.blogspot.com

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HOW FAITH, FAMILY AND DUCKS CREATED A DYNASTY
For as long as I can remember, my life has centered around three building blocks: faith, family, and food. The dinner table is where the Robertson family shared wisdom, confessions, laughter, faith, and dreams. This was family time, and I am thankful to have learned a good many important life lessons around that table.

Even before we started filming our family dinners for our TV show, Duck Dynasty, I always thought of the Robertson dinner table like a stage in a Broadway play. Whoever was talking at the time had the spotlight and everyone else was the supporting cast. As kids, we learned about how to keep everyone’s attention with a good story and about comedic timing. This is also where we perfected the art of exaggeration. I think Kay’s the best at it, or the worst, depending on which way you look at it. She can turn a story as simple as her dog went missing for thirty minutes into a long gut-wrenching tale of love, loss, and everything in between. Along with the comedic moments, we’ve never lacked in drama, either!

At the family table, I learned how to defend an argument and stand up for what I believe. The Robertson dinner table is like a weekly bar exam. If you offer an opinion about something, you’d better be able to defend it. This is where we learned to argue passionately about our convictions, and the Robertson family, of course, has never been short on opinions. We have arguments about everything from crawfish pie, to religion, to the shotgun someone’s shooting. The debates can sometimes get loud, but they’re never ugly or disrespectful. It’s just that each of us feels very strongly about our beliefs, and we’re not going to change our minds about something unless someone else offers a very good case to the contrary.

The dinner table is where I learned to follow my dreams. This is where Dad told us he was going to start Duck Commander, and where I told my family I was getting married and heading off to college. Our hopes and aspirations were never shot down, never debated, only encouraged. We might have been eating fried bologna at the time because that is all we could afford, but there was hope that one day we would be feasting on a big fat rib-eye steak. I remember one time around the dinner table Alan told my parents he wanted a Chevy Blazer. My dad said: “There will come a day, where we’ll all have Chevy Blazers!” He didn’t actually tell him no! Phil was only telling all of us, “Have patience and believe.” And we did, no matter how difficult things were.

At the dinner table we learned to respect our elders. In a lot of homes, the kids make their plates first, but it was never that way in the Robertson house. At our house, the kids always ate last. We would get what was left after the adults made their plates, which was usually fried chicken neck and rarely a breast or thigh. But we learned to be thankful and content with what we had and that the world didn’t revolve around us.

We learned to be hospitable. There were always extra faces around our family’s table. No matter how little we had, we always had room to set out one more plate. If we had unexpected guests, Mom pulled out more meat from the freezer and added it to gumbo, or made another batch of her delicious biscuits. In the Robertson house, it’s almost an unpardonable sin to not have enough food. Kay likes to say you never run out of three things: toilet paper, butter, or ketchup, but she stocks up on more than that. If the world is ever coming to an end, we’re definitely going to Kay and Phil’s house. That woman’s got enough food in the freezer to live for months and if we did run out, we could count on Phil to go catch something to fill our bellies.

We also learned that a good meal goes a long way. After Phil started Duck Commander, it didn’t take him long to figure out food was a great way to get people to help. All of his workers loved to eat his ducks, crawfish dishes, fried fish, or whatever he or Kay was cooking that day. If a big order needed to be packed up to go out to a buyer, we’d have a fish fry and invite fifty people over. Mom and Dad would feed them and they’d be even happier to pitch in. Phil and Kay never had to pay a dime, only cook for the crew, which always left our house full and happy and hoping to be invited the next time we needed some extra help.

Back when Duck Commander was all being run out of Kay and Phil’s house, my mom cooked lunch every day for our family and employees. Yes, times have changed. Now we couldn’t even fit all of our employees in Mom and Dad’s house! We’ve grown, but all of these lessons still remain. The Robertson’s value our time around the table with our family, we are still trying to one-up each other with the best story, still defending the last stupid decision we made, and still laughing with one another and loving each other along the way.

Early in my life, when my parents were trying to look ahead and figure out what sort of future I might have, my father, the accountant, suggested that I follow him into his profession. “You are good with numbers, and you can always hire other people to be your arms and legs,” my dad said.

Crunching numbers is fun for me. Counting on my fingers and toes is not an option, but thanks to modern technology and my little foot, I can use a calculator and computer easily enough. So in college I went along with the parental plan and majored in financial planning and accounting. The thought of helping people make good monetary decisions, creating wealth for them and mapping out strategic plans for sustenance, appealed to me. I also enjoyed trading in the stock market, where I had both good and bad experiences.

Working as a financial planner seemed like a good way to serve others while supporting myself and, I hoped, my family too. Still, I never felt fully committed to that plan. There was always the sense that God was calling me to follow a different path. I’d begun giving talks about my disabilities to classmates in junior high. They responded to my words. I touched something in them, and God lit the sparks of a passion He’d placed within me.

Over time I spoke more and more about my faith. Evangelism and inspiration became my greatest passions. Speaking about my love of God and the blessings in my life, including my disabilities and the strength they give me, allows me to serve others. It’s given my life a purpose, one that I believe God created for me.

That is a great gift. Many people struggle to find meaning and direction in their lives. They question their value because they aren’t clear on how they can contribute or make a mark. Maybe you haven’t identified where your talents and interests lie. It’s not uncommon to cast about trying one thing or another before identifying your life’s calling. Changing course several times is increasingly common.

I encourage you to identify whatever it is that fulfills you and engages all your gifts and energy. Pursue that path, not for your own glory or enrichment, but to honor God and to make a contribution. Be patient if it takes time to find your way. Know that timing is important and that as long as you hold a true passion in your heart, it will not fade. Understand that even passions can come with risk. Remember, too, that if one passion ends, it is probably because God has something bigger and better in mind for you.

You’ll know you’ve found a passion when your talents, knowledge, energy, focus, and commitment all come together in a way that excites you like a child with a favorite game or toy. Your work and pleasure become one and the same. You feel as though the opportunities are endless. What you do becomes part of who you are, and the rewards that come to you are far less satisfying than those that come to others because of you.

Your passion leads you to your purpose, and both are activated when you put your faith in your gifts and share them with the world. You are custom-made for your purpose, just as I am for mine. Every part of you—from your mental, physical, and spiritual strengths to your unique package of talents and experiences—is designed to fulfill that gift.

You put your faith in action by following your passion, defining your purpose, and building your life around developing and using your gifts to their fullest. What drives you? What makes you excited about each day? What would you do for free just to be doing it?

Finally, before you decide what your passion is, I strongly suggest you check with the Ultimate Authority on the subject. I’m often asked how we can tell what God wants us to do. Whether you are trying to decide what your passion is, or you are facing a difficult situation and uncertain of what to do, my advice is to pursue God’s love and get to know Him as a friend so that you can enjoy His presence. Pray to Him and meditate on His Word.

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Two thousand years ago, Jesus walked up to a handful of men and said, “Follow me.”

Imagine being one of those original disciples. They were ordinary people like you and me. They had jobs, families, hobbies, and social lives. As they went about their business on the day Jesus called them, none of them would have expected their lives to change so quickly and completely. The disciples could not have fully understood what they were getting into when they responded to Jesus’s call. Whatever expectations or doubts, whatever curiosity, excitement, or uncertainty they felt, nothing could have prepared them for what lay ahead. Everything about Jesus—His teaching, compassion, and wisdom; His life, death, and resurrection; His power, authority, and calling—would shape every aspect of the rest of their lives.

In only a few years, these simple men stood before some of the most powerful rulers on earth and being accused of “turn[ing] the world upside down” (Acts 17:6). What began as simple obedience to the call of Jesus ended up changing their lives, and ultimately, the world.

What Is a Disciple?

What does it mean to be a disciple of Jesus Christ? The answer is fairly simple, but it changes your life completely.

The word disciple refers to a student or apprentice. Disciples in Jesus’ day would follow their rabbi (which means teacher) wherever he went, learning from the rabbi’s teaching and training to do as the rabbi did. Basically, a disciple is a follower, but only if we take the term follower literally. Becoming a disciple of Jesus is as simple as obeying His call to follow.

When Jesus called His first disciples, they may not have understood where Jesus would take them or the impact it would have on their lives, but they knew what it meant to follow. They took Jesus’s call literally and began going everywhere He went and doing everything He did.

It’s impossible to be a disciple or a follower of someone and not end up like that person. Jesus said, “A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher” (Luke 6:40). That’s the whole point of being a disciple of Jesus: we imitate Him, carry on His ministry, and become like Him in the process.

Yet somehow many have come to believe that a person can be a “Christian” without being like Christ. A “follower” who doesn’t follow. How does that make any sense?

Many people in the church have decided to take on the name of Christ and nothing else. This would be like Jesus walking up to those first disciples and saying, “Hey, would you guys mind identifying yourselves with me in some way? Don’t worry, I don’t actually care if you do anything I do or change your lifestyle at all. I’m just looking for people who are willing to say they believe in me and call themselves Christians.”

Seriously?

No one can really believe that this is all it means to be a Christian. But then why do so many people live this way? It appears that we’ve lost sight of what it means to be a follower of Jesus. The concept of being a disciple isn’t difficult to understand, but once you understand what it means, it changes everything.

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By

Francis Chan & Mark Beving
“I’ve always said, ‘Choose your friends wisely – those who will build you up and not tear you down.’ I am so thankful to all of you, my youthworker friends, and to my long-time friends at interlinc for continuing to connect us. One thing is still the same – I want to make music that helps you minister to your students.”

— TobyMac
Introduction

Adam Young (Owl City) is no stranger to members of interlinc’s Youth Leaders Only. We’ve had a special relationship with him ever since he first surfaced on the pop music scene. His music and testimony have been featured in YLO, Music Video Loop magazines, and e-zine.

Adam is an outspoken Christian and has a huge soft spot in his heart for youth leaders. He goes out of his way to do what he can to encourage, equip, and invigorate those of us who work daily with teenagers in ministry. He has done special video clips just for this event.

Now we come to the feel-good song of the summer of 2012. It’s quite a story...

When Adam co-wrote “Good Time” he had the idea that it should be a duet. His manager who is a personal friend of Carly Rae’s manager suggested her involvement. This all happened just as her song “Call Me Maybe” was hitting the pop charts. So many more special details took place with this seemingly impossible final result – “Good Time” became Owl City’s first single and Carly Rae’s follow-up single after her huge hit. This type of thing never happens in pop music, so we think “you-know-Who” might have something really cool going on here.

The video, with a cool “woody, outdoorsy, camping” vibe (it was filmed at the Silver Mine area of Harriman State Park in New York) is all about “good clean fun” – which is the overarching theme of this GOOD TIME Event.

Many secular teenagers have a foundational opinion that Christians aren’t allowed to have fun. In most teenagers’ minds, Christians don’t like cool music, aren’t aware of current movies, drive boring cars, and dress in out-of-style clothes. “Fun” for Christians must mean playing Yahtzee with younger siblings and popping old-style popcorn.

This event is aimed at changing that opinion.

The GOOD TIME Event is designed to draw in kids from the community and campus who do not normally attend a local church and give them a real good time, opening up relationships and opportunities to share the great news of Jesus either down the road or at the Event.

Importance

Today’s teenagers have a built-in bias against Christianity. Really. Ask a teen, any teenager (whether he or she participates in your youth ministry or not) to describe “church.” You’re going to hear words and phrases like, “boring” (the all-time champion descriptor), “irrelevant” (which is the root cause of “boring”), “for old people” (another way of saying “boring” and “irrelevant”), or even “I don’t know; I’ve never been to church.”

Those anti-Christian biases are huge barriers for your outreach to secular students. That bias must be neutralized before any teenager will be willing to give the Gospel a fair hearing. This GOOD TIME Event is a primarily a “pre-evangelism” effort, though it can be evangelistic as well, depending on your planning, the type of crowd you expect, etc.

You’re going to show a bunch of teenagers that many of their presuppositions about Christians, church, and following Jesus are off base. When you go all out and implement all of the ideas that we’ve included in this material (and others that we didn’t even think of), you will begin to break down the barriers that keep teenagers from giving the Gospel a fair hearing. You’ll provide for them a “Good Time” with no additional expectations.

They won’t know what hit them.

They will go home and think, “Whoa! THAT wasn’t what I thought it would be! Maybe those Christians aren’t as boring as I thought.”

And THAT is when you’ll know your efforts have been successful.

Timing

Fall is the most effective time for you to try to attract students to your ministry. For some reason, kids are WAY more willing to check different programs out in the fall than they are any other time of the year.

Add to that the influx of curious new freshmen from the upcoming Middle School class, and you KNOW that fall is the most important time to make a great impression.

AND, one last item to add to the list – the “Good Time” song and video has become the “feel good” song/video of the summer. It is on the top of the pop charts and every student in the local high school will know the song!

So, here’s what you do. You plan for this Good Time Event to occur sometime during the first few weeks of school or as soon as you can make it happen.

It might make sense to follow up this event with a three-week “Good Time” series for your mid-week meeting. You could hand out flyers about the series to the students as they leave your Good Time Event, and even send follow-up texts about the series. (We’ll cover more ideas later about following up this event.)

Promotion

Your effort to spread the news about the GOOD TIME Event will be determined by the resources you have, the energy you put into it, and the creativity of your team. Since this will be your big Fall Kick-off event, you’ll want to do everything you can to get the word out! Here are some resources and ideas to help you promote the event:

- Use the really cool “behind the scenes” video about the making of the “Good Time” music video. It’s available on YouTube here: youtube.com/watch?v=nUSbAhwpOGQ
• **Adam has done a short video clip** encouraging young people to check out the **GOOD TIME Event**. Here are his basic words, “Hey guys! It’s Adam Young from Owl City. Everybody is looking for a **GOOD TIME**, and I know exactly where to find it! Keep your eyes peeled for the **GOOD TIME Event** that’s coming up soon!” Download the video at [interlinc-online.com/goodtime](http://interlinc-online.com/goodtime) and use it the following ways to promote your event.
  > Email it
  > Text it
  > Show it to your youth group
  > Show it to your congregation
  > Ask to have it shown on the morning “announcements” video at your local high schools
  > You can surely think of even more ways to use it!

• You can get the official Good Time graphics for you to use in your promotional flyers, cards, temporary tattoos, banner-towed-by-an-airplane, etc. at [interlinc-online.com/goodtime](http://interlinc-online.com/goodtime).

## Program

What follows are a bunch of ideas organized around a “typical” youth meeting structure. That structure is designed to move the crowd from high-energy participation to focused attention. Think of an inverted pyramid, with the width of the pyramid representing the energy level of the students. You want to start with a bang, and slowly transition through stages to where they are quiet and paying attention to what is being communicated.

### Opening

#### 5-Sensing

When does your **GOOD TIME Event** start? When the kids walk in the room? No. When they pull into the parking lot? Bingo! We’ve included this concept in previous materials we’ve produced, but it bears repeating: think through what you want the young people to experience when they first arrive to your event.

Imagine you’re a teenager coming to this youth ministry for the first time. Drive into the parking lot; what do you see that makes you think this event is going to be great? Step out of the car; what will you hear that will reinforce that opinion? As you walk toward the building, what other things will your five senses pick up that will get you in the mood to have a great time?

Here are some preliminary ideas – take them, and then rework, and add to them that which will set your **GOOD TIME Event** apart from the other experiences your young people have.

**See**

- A bustling parking lot
- Several camping tents and backpacks
- A “Sign In Here” banner over a camping table
- A huge bonfire-sized campfire with people around it roasting marshmallows
- An “Outfitter/Guide” dressed as a backpacker

**Hear**

- Loud, thumping music emanating from inside the building
- Crackling campfire
- Greetings from friends (youth group members who arrived earlier)
- “Outfitter/Guide” shouting greetings and directions

**Smell**

- Smoke
- Marshmallows roasting
- Pine

**Taste**

- Smore’s
- Soft drinks

**Touch**

- Sign-in card, pencil
- “Good Time” lanyard or wristband
- Campsite games

### Sign-In

One of the most valuable things you can get from this activity is a bunch of new names, addresses and phone numbers. Make your sign-in procedure as “fun” as possible.

**Cards**

Have plenty of Sign-In cards printed up, and give them to the “Outfitter/Guide” to hand out to students as they enter the area.

Then have a separate sign-in table where the cards are turned in.

**Lanyards/Wristbands**

Having “Good Time” lanyards or wristbands printed up can be relatively inexpensive. Tell the young people that when they turn in their card they’ll get their lanyard/wristband.

### PreActivity

Arrange for some camp-type games to be available for students to play while final preparations are being made inside. You can go simple with activities such as Cornhole and Horseshoes, or you can get elaborate with ropes courses and such. The last thing you want is for kids to show up and then mill around waiting for something to happen!

### High-Energy Participation

Get the group outside for some active and fun games. Be sure to have a talented videographer on hand to capture the kids while they’re playing. You’ll use that video once you get back inside.

#### “Inflated” Activities

There are many activities and games available for you to rent that are “inflated” with air compressors or fans. Anything from “American Gladiator”-type obstacle courses, to “Human Flypaper” velcro walls, to 6-foot-diameter balls, to “Sumo Wrestlers” suits can be used with large crowds. Such contraptions will immediately garner tremendous “brag factor” — where your young people will be bragging to their friends at school about your **GOOD TIME Event**!

### Field Games

There are many active games played on a field that could be adapted to use at your **GOOD TIME Event**. For instance, adjust the rules of “Ultimate Frisbee” to include these additions: guys are “Owl City” — and an “Owl City” can only catch a disc thrown by a “Carly Rae” (girls). A “Carly Rae” can catch a disc thrown by anyone. You know what resources you have, so plan your active field games accordingly.
Get Back Inside

Hold everyone outside until everything is ready. Then turn down the lights, crank the sound system and let the hordes in! While everyone’s finding a place, you could show videos (available online) of various backpacking adventures. If you have a live band available, they should play a high-energy instrumental. Then use the “Good Time” song pumping through the sound system as the kids laugh and cheer as they see themselves and their friends on the big screen.

Welcome

Just before leader comes on stage to welcome the crowd, play this video clip from Adam: “Hi! I’m Adam Young from Owl City. I hope you’re here right now to have a GOOD TIME – because right now is when Good Times are being had! If you’re ready for a GOOD TIME, let me hear how loud you can get! Everyone on your feet, and lemme hear it!” Download the video at interlinc-online.com/goodtime.

Have your best up-front person take the stage and welcome everyone. Briefly describe what the GOOD TIME Event is. Mention that you want to provide a place for them to have some good, clean fun. Emphasize that the theme comes from the song and video by Owl City and Carly Rae Jepsen – that they will be introduced to by watching the video. Also tell them that you hope to encourage them in their spiritual life.

Then have your up-front person get everyone organized into teams for the games. (Be sure to show the crowd what the prizes will be for the winning team.) Depending on your situation, you may want to break into teams by schools, by grades, by towns, by birthdays – whatever is easiest to accomplish in a very short time. You could make this easier by informing them of what team they are on when they sign in.

Settle Down

Indoor Game

Put together a mondo-relay where kids run up to a paper sack, pull out a slip of paper that tells them what to do, and perform that activity a certain number of times. Include as many different activities as you can think of. Some ideas: spin around a baseball bat ten times (with one end of the bat on your forehead, the other on the ground), belch five times, leap frog with someone (ten leaps each), make three laps around the room while holding an egg in a spoon in your mouth, etc. Divide into teams and run the relay. What you don’t tell the kids is that they score points for each repetition, not for how fast they go! Because the kids will think it’s a race, there will probably be some cheating going on. Let ’em cheat! When the relay is over, add up the scores while the group is settling down. Announce the scores, and then explain how points were awarded. Expect some groans from the cheaters.

Live Music

If your youth ministry has a band, encourage them to play a few songs here. If possible, start with a popular secular song such as Cool and the Gang’s “Celebrate Good Times” or Alan Jackson’s “Good Time” or The Fresh Beat Band’s “Good Time” or The Cars’ “Good Times Roll” or, or, or.

The Video

Just before the “Good Time” music video plays, drop in this video from Adam, “What’s up? It’s Adam here from Owl City. In this video of Carly Rae Jepsen and myself performing ‘Good Time’ is a sense of what the topic of this GOOD TIME Event is about. Pay attention to the details of the video – there will be a test!” Download this video from interlinc-online.com/goodtime.

Hand out Student Guides which will have some “How many of these questions about the video can you find the answers for?” items on it. Show the “Good Time” video by Owl City and Carly Rae Jepsen. When the video has finished, go through the “find it” items. Give a prize to winners. Maybe play the video again so that the kids can double-check their answers.

Here are the questions and answers:

- What kind of watch is she wearing? (Casio Baby-G, extra points for noting that the “C” stands for “Cabrio” or for mentioning “ragtop.”)
- What is Adam driving? (1970 Mercury Cougar XR)
- How many people are in Carly’s car? (Three)
- How many people are in Adam’s car? (Three)
- Carly has a patch on her left shoulder that says, “Made in…” where? (Heaven)
- What’s the number on the cabin? (“SM 917”)
- What happens to the orange slushy machine? (The handle breaks, it won’t turn off)
- What time is it at the cabin, according to Carly’s watch? (4:13)
- What KIND of watch is she wearing? (Casio Baby-G, extra points for “BGA131-7B”)
- Adam’s wearing a shirt with three stars on the left chest area. What’s on the right? (An eagle)
- How many marshmallows catch on fire? (Three)
- How many tents are set up? (Four, and a hammock)

Transition

Make statements about “Good Times” and following Jesus. What you say can sound something like this:

Owl City and Carly Rae Jepsen show their version of a “Good Time.” We saw lots of smiles, laughing, dancing, and generally just having a good time! Would you be surprised if Adam Young of Owl City were an outspoken Christian? It’s true! I’m going to make a statement that might...
seen a bit off-kilter to you, but I hope what you’re experiencing here at the Good Time Youth Event might change your mind. Here goes:

Christians can have fun.

There, I said it. It’s out in the open now. Christians can have fun!

I know that idea seems to run counter to what many teenagers believe. Let’s explore this concept a bit more in the next few minutes.

Get To The Point

Have a student talk about how much this youth ministry has given him or her a “good time” and how being a part of this group has changed their mind about Jesus and faith. You’ll want to give this student (and the one noted below in Good Time, It’s My Story) LOTS of “heads up” lead time to prepare what they’re going to say in front of a group of their peers. You may even want to coach them a bit, possible video them saying their part and then critiquing the video together. Be sure to pray, pray, pray with your young friends as they prepare, and then just before the meeting starts!

Make The Point

Use this outline to develop your own 15-minute (no longer than that!) message about having a “Good Time.” Be sure to spice your talk up with a couple of personal stories that illustrate the point!

A Good Time Is God’s Idea – Every teenager wants to have fun. The desire to have a good time is so pervasive that God must have designed it into us. He actually tells us, in the Bible, to have a good time! Check out this:

Ecclesiastes 2:24-25 – People can do nothing better than to eat and drink and find satisfaction in their toil. This too, I see, is from the hand of God, or without Him, who can eat or find enjoyment? Notice that to “find enjoyment” is “from the hand of God.” Apart from Him, we might have “fun” but may not find “enjoyment.”

A Good Time Is God’s Blessing – You might think that a “blessing” from God is something “religious” or kind of mystical. Deuteronomy 12:7 is pretty clear – There, in the presence of the Lord your God, you and your families shall eat and shall rejoice in everything you have put your hand to, because the Lord your God has blessed you. Notice that we can have a “Good Time” because God has blessed us. Rather than being restricted in the fun we can have, Christians, more than anyone, are able to have a “Good Time”!

A Good Time Is God’s Gift – God isn’t sitting up in Heaven, with His arms crossed and a scowl on His face, just waiting for you to step out of line so that He can body-slam you. Since a Good Time is His idea, and comes as a result of His blessing, He really wants you to experience life to the full. Jesus said this in John 10:10 – “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.” Did you catch that last phrase? He wants us to have life “to the full.” He really, really wants us to have a Good Time!

A Good Time, That’s My Story – At this point, a good way to introduce the gospel is to have a student share their story of how they discovered they could know God personally. A well prepared three-minute story by a student has remarkable impact in helping other students consider Christ. The student should be prepared, even to the point of having shared their story with you or one of your trusted leaders and received coaching as needed. The story can have three points: a glimpse of their life prior to knowing Christ – what drew them to consider Him; how they actually trusted Christ – what they did, thought, or said; and the effect their decision has made on their life. Whether you extend an opportunity to the others to trust Christ at the meeting, or only introduce the Gospel through the student’s story, this will move the listener a long way in considering Christ and trusting Him.

Wrap Up

Right after the Message, drop in this video clip from Adam. “As you just heard, being a Christian does not mean your life is boring by any means. I encourage you to check out everything that this youth ministry has to offer. The more involved you get, the more GOOD TIME you’ll have! It’s like the song says, ‘[You don’t even have to try] God bless.’”

Conclude with an emphasis on having a GOOD TIME – in contrast to trying to have fun through not-so-good activities. Explain how being a part of a group like this encourages everyone to have a GOOD TIME. Make announcements about a few of the bigger youth ministry events of the year, emphasize the “Good Time” series you’re having (if you’re having one), and hand out sign-up cards for your next GOOD TIME Event.

Post-Event Activities

If you have the time (in other words, your event isn’t on a “school night”), have the camping games, inflated obstacle course, and other activities running for the young people to enjoy after the meeting. You’ll discover that you and your leaders will have gobs of opportunities for spiritual conversations during these precious minutes! In fact, those conversations could be the “pay off” for all the hard work of pulling together an event like this. Plan for them, train for them, and pray for them.

Follow Up

Your GOOD TIME Event doesn’t end when everyone drives out of the parking lot. In fact, while the heavy lifting is over, you still have a lot of work to do to take advantage of what was accomplished during the program. In the week after your event, you’ll want to...

Connect With New Kids

Take a look at that pile of sign-in cards sitting on your desk. That’s not really a pile of cards; it’s a pile of GOLD! There’s GOLD in them-thar cards! With your volunteer leader team, organize the cards in the manner that fits your situation – by grade, school, gender, etc. Identify which cards represent “new” kids – students who aren’t yet a part of your youth ministry community. Assign volunteer leaders to contact each “new” student sometime in the coming week. They can call the new kids (which is preferred – talking over the phone gives a personal connection that other methods don’t), text them, send them an email, mail them a note
(most teenagers rarely get anything in the mail), or – do them all! CAUTION: Do not “stalk” a new kid by asking to be Facebook friends. Doing so would be “creepy” unless you are already friends with the student.

Promote The GOOD TIME Series

When your leaders connect with the new kids, make sure they emphasize the GOOD TIME series that you’re running. Have them give the new student their physical description so that the new students will know what person to look for when they come to the next meeting.

Advertise Your Next “Big Deal” Event

When you run your GOOD TIME Event, you should already know what your next “big deal” event will be. Make sure you promote that event during your GOOD TIME occasion. And once you have your sign-in cards, send out a promotional flyer to each student.

Final Thoughts

The collaboration of Adam Young of Owl City with Carly Rae Jepsen has opened a huge door for your outreach efforts. Rarely does a booming Christian have such popularity AND create a song that resonates in the heart of every teenager! Interlínc is proud to create these resources to enable you to maximize this opportunity to further God’s Kingdom. We are praying for you, and can hardly wait to find out how God uses you and your efforts to reach teenagers for Him!

Have a GOOD TIME!

The GOOD TIME Event

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>EVENT</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>MATERIALS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T-30</td>
<td>Sign-In</td>
<td>Fill out card, Lanyard/Wristband handed out</td>
<td>Cards, Lanyards/Wristbands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T-30</td>
<td>Pre-Event</td>
<td>Camping games, etc.</td>
<td>Depends on your plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T0</td>
<td>Transition</td>
<td>Get them in the room</td>
<td>Video, music, lights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T3</td>
<td>Welcome</td>
<td>Explain “GOOD TIME” Event</td>
<td>Adam video clip</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

High-Energy Participation

- **T5** Active Games: Outdoors or large room, everyone plays
- **T35** Transition/Video: Announcements, Video of kids playing “Good Time” song, video from games

Settle Down

- **T43** Representative Game: Mondo Relay, Props

Focus Attention

- **T55** Transition: Make statements about “Good Times” and following Jesus
- **T60** Live Music: Youth band plays

Get To The Point

- **T75** Video: Good Time, Adam video clip, “Good Time” music video, “Find It” sheets
- **T80** Testimonies: Student descriptions of a “Good Time” life.

Make The Point

- **T90** Message: 15-minute talk plus testimony

Closing

- **T105** Wrap Up: Adam video clip
- **T120** Post-Event Activities: Same as Pre-Event Activities
Theme
God's Promises

Objective
Students will see that the life God blesses is not the holiest looking but the most surrendered.

Warm Up / The Song
Set up eight stations around the room based on the Beatitudes. (Matthew 5:3-11) Each station should have one of the verses from the Beatitudes, a white flag (a pillowcase will do), a black marker, and one sign containing two questions. To begin your time, hand out the Student Guides and have a student read Matthew 5:3-11. Explain that the song you will play is a worship song based on principles from the Beatitudes. Instruct the students to visit each station while the song plays, and read what the sign says. Say, "If you can surrender to what the sign says, pray a prayer surrendering that part of your life to the Lord, sign the white flag at the table, make any notes you might have on your Student Guide, and move on to the next station." Instruct them that there should be no talking during this worship time. Here are the eight stations:

1. v.3 – "What area of my inward spiritual life can I not seem to fix?" Will you surrender it to God?
2. v.4 – "What am I currently sad or depressed about?" Will you surrender your heart and let God comfort you?
3. v.5 – "What area of my life am I faking being strong at?" Will you surrender your fake life for what is real?
4. v.6 – "What have I let fill me up in the place of God?" Will you surrender the things that have taken the place of God and return to hungering for Him?
5. v.7 – "Where did I not give someone a break this week and instead put him or her down or acted vengeful?" Will you surrender your right to be unmerciful and show mercy to those who may not deserve it?
6. v.8 – "What sin(s) have I committed or keep committing that keeps me from seeing God in myself or in the world around me?" Will you surrender that sin to God so your spiritual vision will improve?
7. v.9 – "In which relationships - family, friends, God - do I not have peace?" Will you surrender your right to be right or to be angry and make peace with whomever you need to?
8. v.10-11 – "Where am I catching heat for what I believe?" Will you stand up for what you believe, and will you pray for and love those who disagree with you?

Transition
After students have visited each station and have returned to their seats, ask them to share a few thoughts.

• Which station had the biggest impact on you? Why?
• At which station did you have the most difficulty surrendering? Why?

Bible Study
After the worship experience, have key adults or students gather up the pillowcases and attach them to dowel rods while you share these three points taken from the song’s lyrics and scripture. Read Matthew 5:3-11 again.

• God loves broken things. God loves broken things. The first line of this song says, “Beautiful is for the broken.” Because of sin, our world is broken and out of sync with God. Jesus went to the cross so that we, the broken, could be made whole. God let His Son be broken and marred by suffering and by taking on our sin. To God, the cross is beautiful, and Christ’s suffering was beautiful because God knew that broken hearts and lives would be mended. What about you? Are you broken? Christ is here to heal.

• I surrender all. “There comes a time to fight and a time to surrender.” So many people are fighting God. They are at war with God. The Bible says that our flesh and God’s Spirit are in conflict with each other (Galatians 5:17). Have you ever wrestled anyone bigger than you? How did that go? Did they sit on you and wait for you to give up? That is what God does; He lets the un-surrendered heart wrestle with this life, the right thing to do, and with God Himself, until that heart is too tired to go on. When that soul cries “I surrender!” (or “taps out”), God steps in and brings strength. But we must surrender to Him to receive it.

• Holy is my God, who is making all things new. God is a God of second chances. He loves broken things, He loves surrendered hearts, and He loves to make old things like new. The Apostle Paul (who was once broken himself and named Saul) said, “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!” (2 Corinthians 5:17) This is your opportunity to have new life in Christ. If you are broken, tired of wrestling with God, and want God to make you new, this is your chance.

Wrap Up
Say, “God is the opposite of this world. When something of ours breaks, we throw it away and buy a new one. God says that the meek will inherit the earth and that those who make peace are blessed. God is honored when we live the opposite of this world.” At this point, have your leaders bring the surrender flags out, parade them up front, and challenge students with the thought that the only way to attain victory is through surrender. Play “My God” again as a closing song.
### Station Thoughts

Write any thought you have about each station.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Station One</th>
<th>Matthew 5:3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Station Three</td>
<td>Matthew 5:5</td>
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<td>Station Five</td>
<td>Matthew 5:7</td>
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<td>Station Seven</td>
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<td>Station Four</td>
<td>Matthew 5:6</td>
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<td>Station Six</td>
<td>Matthew 5:8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Station Eight</td>
<td>Matthew 5:10-11</td>
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</table>
Note
We love the Family Force 5 guys. We've had years to watch them grow, play, and become a great tool for the Kingdom. But we also know that they sometimes get questioned about their heart for ministry because not every song is about a relationship with God. Knowing that God uses them off-stage usually more than on-stage, we wanted to give you a little glimpse into how God took an almost-tragedy to bond them and deepen their desire to communicate how amazing a relationship with God is. Mind you, they are not going to be singing about this from stage – that will still be “party time.” But you should know the guys are forever changed from this and that as they talk and interact with thousands of kids off-stage, the simple fact of “God has me here for this” will be at the front of their minds.

Ideas
Since this video is a bit too long to use in a normal youth group meeting, here are some ways to use it effectively:
• Find a full hour of time to show the video and then go through the four sections.
• Break it into two sections: (1) First half of the video with “I Didn’t Tell Anyone” and “Just That Kind Of Guy” – (2) Second half of the video with “God = A Real Foundation” and “Both Sides”.
• Show the whole video and let some natural discussion come from it.

Theme
Difficulties; Hope Within
“*My times are in Your hands*”
_Psalm 31:15_

Section 1
I Didn’t Tell Anyone
Sometimes we don’t tell anyone what we are going through because we don’t want to hear the words come out of our mouths. It’s as if we say those things, we actually have to be honest with ourselves. God is serious and desires us to be honest with ourselves. Think about _1 John 1:9_. God doesn’t ask us to beat ourselves up over our sin; He asks us to confess, to be honest, to “tell Him” what we did.

Sometimes we fear what people will think about us when we tell them. God is serious about us “doing life together.” When we share our struggles with others we find that God wants to use them in our lives to love, to care, and to be the physical “I’m here” presence of God for us. You see, when we share with other Christians who have the Holy Spirit inside of them, God can use them. But we limit God’s work through others in our lives when we hide what’s going on or fear what we think another believer’s response might be.

Section 2
I’m Just That Kind Of Guy
Josh is a big guy; the tats and the biceps can be “cultural” cues that Josh is a tough guy. But God knows the heart. (If you have time, read _1 Samuel 16:7_.) No matter what someone’s style, image, or even strong personality, everyone is frail and will need someone’s help. There are situations we will face when we NEED the help of others to get through. That’s how God created us. No one is strong enough to go through life on his or her own.

Read Psalm 31:2, 14, 17, 22.
David was always talking to God – sometimes saying things to Him, sometimes crying to Him. God made us to have a relationship with Him. God wants us to be honest with Him.
• What are some of the big factors/issues that keep us from telling others what’s going on in our lives?
• How do you know when/who to share tough things with?
• Why do you think God wants us to share with other believers?
• What do you think happens after we share with someone? What are some positives that can happen?
David (remember the kid that took down Goliath?) is honest about his lack of strength in Psalm 31:7, 9-10. He knows that he does not have the strength on his own to keep going.

- How hard is letting someone see you weak or frail?
- What do you usually do when you feel that you don’t have any strength left?
- When things are going good, how hard is relying on God for strength?

Section 3

God = A Real Foundation

It sounds simple and almost “well duh” to say that God should be our foundation. But we don’t really think or care about foundations until the ground starts shaking. Then we wonder if the house will stay together. It’s very vivid and telling that when things shook hard in Josh’s life, he leaned on God and his family.

During this time in Josh’s life, his prayers were not just cute little “make me feel better” prayers – he cried out to God. This was a time to seek God, to draw near, to begin to deal with wrapping up a short life. Josh had to deal with the very real possibility that God was going to take him home.

While it’s very understandable to get this serious about a foundation in the face of death, God wants us to daily live our lives rooted in Him as our foundation. He has designed us to grow and build on the relationship we have with Him. When we do, when life shakes, we know to hold onto and cry out to the Foundation.

Look at Psalm 31 again. David reminds himself of how strong, steadfast, powerful God is, and of how wonderful God’s love is. Also note the words David chooses as he “tests the strength” of his foundation: he cries out to God (v.17, 22). This is a desperate man holding onto a lifeline.

- How do you know what your foundation is?
- When do you think the strength of a foundation is tested?
- How do you know if your foundation will hold?

Section 4

You Will Be On Both Sides

As you watch and process this video with your students, have them put themselves on both sides of the situation. Encourage them to picture themselves as both being Josh – having this happen to them, and being one of the guys in the band – having a front row seat to be there and watch a brother and friend go through this. Nobody likes thinking about, or preparing for, a difficult situation. But we know that everyone will be on both sides of this fence at some time.

We have a great picture of how David leans on and cries out to God in Psalm 31. You may want to show your students a verse like Galatians 6:2 for the “be there for someone” side of the fence.

- How might a difficult situation in your own life be used in the life of someone else?
- How do you think God can use you in the life of someone else?
- Which side of the situation causes you the most stress – experiencing difficulty, or watching a loved one suffer?
Theme
Worldliness

Objective
Students will discuss the meaning of “worldliness” and compare it to the idea of love.

Warm Up
Form several teams. Have the groups define the word “worldliness” in their own terms, and then race to write down as many examples of worldliness as possible on a sheet of paper. Give the teams two to three minutes to accomplish the goal.

Transition
Go to the white board or collect the teams’ sheets of paper. See how many similar answers the different teams wrote. Define the word “worldliness” according to the dictionary. Discuss the reasons for their answers and see if there are any other answers they can come up with as a group. Ask questions like:
- How does your definition of “worldliness” differ from the dictionary’s definition?
- If a definition is different from the one in the dictionary, does that change any of your answers?
- Is there one thing you can name that is an exact opposite of “worldliness”? (Hint: You are looking for them to answer, “love” – but if they don’t, let them listen to the song, then revisit this later.

The Song
Select one of the artistic people in the group to draw images that reflect the lyrics of the song as the group is listening to the song. This will capture the group’s attention and help them to stay focused on the lyrics.

Bible Study
Let’s compare and contrast these two opposite concepts of “worldliness” and “love” by looking at a couple of passages of Scripture. First, worldliness: Matthew 16:24-26.
- What does this teaching of Jesus mean to you personally?
- After looking at this passage, can you see how we are so often our own worst enemy? Explain.

Now let’s look at Jesus’ teaching concerning the importance of love: Matthew 22:33-40.
- Consider how Jesus lived His life. Can you see how He set an example of how we should live ours? Give some examples of Jesus’ demonstration of “selflessness.”
- Does worldliness have any place in a Christian’s life?
- We all struggle with selfishness and worldliness to some degree. How do we get from where we are to where we need to be?

Wrap Up
Hand out the Student Guides. Give the students a few minutes to write down some things that they are willing to give up to help them move away from being worldly to being a reflection of God’s love to others. Encourage the group to take the paper and place it somewhere they look regularly, like a mirror or locker. Encourage them to visit that paper on a regular basis to see how they are measuring up to their commitment.
HOLLY STARR

My Worldly Struggles
Write a few of the things that tend to draw your attention away from God.

My Godly Priorities
Write a few things that you can do to demonstrate God's love to others around you.
Theme
Difficulties; Hope Within
Objective
Students will understand that Jesus is light in both the darkness of the world and the darkness of their lives.
Warm Up
Set up an obstacle course with chairs and tables. Have the students partner up. One student will be blindfolded at one end of the obstacle course and the other student will stand at the opposite end of the obstacle course. The other student will give verbal directions to navigate through the course. All the students should do this simultaneously. Chaos will ensue!
Transition
Call on several students to explain what navigating the obstacle course in the darkness was like. Ask if they found it easier to navigate when they heard a voice telling them which way to go.

The Song
Have the students partner with the person next to them. Ask them to make a list of all the difficult things the singer says he faces. Play the song.

Transition
Ask students to share with you one thing they heard during the song. Answers to the question will vary, but here are a few of the things they may list: Lost in sea of gray; tangled in the wires; crushed beneath a weight; cursing every step; crippling fear; raging wind. Ask the students if they remember what the singer said he would do when he faced the difficulties. (Answer: Touch this light.)

Bible Study
Ask students to write around the broken bulb in the Student Guide times when they have experienced darkness. Then ask them to write ways that Jesus is the light in our world, and ways He wants us to be light during the Bible study.

Read: John 8:12. Jesus makes the claim of being the “light of the world” – an important title and one of the “I Am” sayings found throughout John’s Gospel.

Light of the World – When Jesus came into the world, He provided a contrast between the “light” and the “darkness” that was not previously available to those who walked in the darkness. In the video, the songwriter is struggling with fear and hopelessness. He is dealing with the darkness that Jesus came to combat. We should follow Him who is the Light of the world, the Light that comes to enlighten all men, the One who comes to give life through His light.

Will Not Walk in Darkness – Thus, the contrast. We cannot claim to be followers of the Light while we maintain a relationship with the darkness. The two are simply not compatible. If we are followers of the Light, we will not walk in darkness, because walking in darkness is not consistent with loving the Light. The songwriter tells us he wants to touch the light. He doesn’t like the darkness he sees around him. He wants out. He wants something more.

Have the Light of Life – Jesus makes clear that there will be a difference between those who follow Him and those who do not. Too many people say they are followers of the Light and that they know Christ and have trusted in Him, and yet there is no difference when their life is examined. We can see clearly from Jesus’ life that this means living in such a way as to imitate Christ. Having the Light of Life means living like the One who can give both light and life.

Wrap Up
The light from the sun is warming every inch of the world around us. That light sustains life here on earth. Jesus says that He is much more important than the sun because there was a time when darkness covered the face of the waters, but when He spoke everything that is now existing came into being. He is the Light of the world and if you follow Him you cannot walk in darkness. Light and dark are in such contrast that it is impossible for the two to coexist. If you are a follower of Christ, you must walk in the Light of Life. You must follow Him and proclaim life as He did and still does through His Word. You must the Light and be, therefore, light in a world that is lost and dying. This world can be such a dark place. However, Jesus is light – so stay close to Him, the source of light and life in this dark and sinful world.
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<tr>
<td>HOUSE OF HEROES</td>
<td>COLD HARD WANT GOTEE RECORDS</td>
<td>TOUCH THIS LIGHT</td>
<td>DIFFICULTIES; HOPE WITHIN</td>
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Around the broken bulb, write down some times in your life when you experienced darkness.

“I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in darkness, but will have the Light of Life” – John 8:12 ESV

Jesus is the Light of the World. He doesn’t want us to walk in darkness. He wants to be light in our lives and also wants us to be light in the world. During the Bible study, write down ways that Jesus is light in our world and ways He wants us to be light.
Theme
Eternal vs. Temporal

Objective
Students will evaluate the things that people chase after and throw their life energy into with those things the Bible says is worthy of our effort, thought, and devotion.

Warm Up
Wrap nice little box nicely with ribbon and bows. Make sure that the only thing inside is a sack of sand surrounded by shredded paper or bubble wrap. Also find a boring-looking book, and slip a gift certificate for a place kids would find desirable into the back pages. Put a bow around the book but otherwise don’t disguise it.

Start by holding up the gift box and book and saying, “I thought that we would start by giving you a chance to earn a surprise! I can’t tell you what is in it, but you can find out for yourself by outbidding your friends.” Naturally, not all the kids will want to take you up on this stunt, but you should have at least a handful willing to make a fool of themselves for the chance at scoring something good; let them go at it for a few minutes and then pick a first and second place winner. Give the first place winner the choice of prizes. Give the book as the consolation prize. The payoff is when the nicely wrapped gift is opened showing that it had nothing of value inside, while the seemingly boring book has a desired gift.

Or… fill a piñata with garbage. Blindfold your kids and let them beat the trash out of it.

Transition
Ask, “Why do you think this opening line is so true? Why is there a sense that something is missing for most people? The Bible resonates with these words; let’s take a look.”

Bible Study
Hand out the Student Guides. Divide into groups of 4-5 students and give each group one of the following assignments.

• Read the story of the guy who had everything found in Luke 12:13-21. Create a series of billboards that could have served as a warning to this man as he drove along surveying all of his wealth.

• Read 1 John 2:16-18 and then create a rap song, corny poem, limerick, or some other verse out of the core idea of these verses.

• Read Mark 8:36 and then create a few sketches for a t-shirt or graphic that illustrates what Jesus meant by those words. (Stick figures are okay; just try to get the idea across.)

• Read Matthew 6:19-21 and create an illustrated version of this passage, something young kids would understand.

Have your students work for 15 minutes or so and then ask them to share what they have created.

Wrap Up
Tell your students, “Let’s give the final word to Jeremy Hartshorn as we play the whole “Voice Like A Mountain” song for the answers to what is important and of value in this life.” Play the song and then close in prayer.
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**Luke 12:13-21**
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**1 John 2:16-18**
Create a rap song, corny poem, limerick, or some other verse out of the core idea of these verses.

**Mark 8:36**
Create a few sketches for a t-shirt or graphic that illustrates what Jesus meant by those words. (Stick figures are okay; just try to get the idea across.)

**Matthew 6:19-21**
Create an illustrated version of this passage, something young kids would understand.

What are the pitfalls of trying to accumulate wealth, power, popularity, etc.?

Why are people who get these things very often unhappy?

How does a person know when they are swinging the energy of their life at an empty piñata?

What does the Bible say is the most important place to put the energy, thought, and concentration of our lives?

Why is this hard?

Why might it be scary or threatening to do?
Theme

Love

Objective

Students will see how loving themselves is an essential step in living out God’s direction to love others.

Warm Up

_Honey, I Love You_ – Playing a couple of quick rounds of this simple game is great way to warm up the group. Have the students stand in a circle, with one person in the middle. (I suggest you start in the middle to explain the game to the students.) The person in the middle walks up to someone in the circle, gets on bended knee and says, “Honey, I love you. Won’t you please, please smile?” That person responds by saying three times, “Honey, I love you, but I just can’t smile.” If that person smiles, laughs, or otherwise breaks up, the two people switch places. Feel free to use funny voices and get dramatic with the lines in your attempt to get “Honey” to smile.

Transition

Hand out the Student Guides. Say, “We hear a lot about love. Write down some things that the world tells us we should love.” When they are finished writing, ask the students to share what they wrote and why. Then ask, “Have you heard of the golden rule? What is it?” (You should get some form of “treat others as you wish to be treated yourself.”) Ask the students to write the Golden Rule on their Student Guides.

The Song

Ask the students to pay close attention to the lyrics of the song, and jot down any lyrics or ideas that come to mind as they listen to the song – particularly those ideas that are connected with love and the Golden Rule.

Transition

Ask for volunteers to share the lyrics or ideas they wrote down, and why those things stuck out to them.

Bible Study

The Golden Rule sounds very similar to a message we hear all through Scripture, yet it is slightly different. We are going to look at a couple of places in the Bible to help us see this.

Have a volunteer read Matthew 7:12. Explain that this sentence was how Jesus summarized His teaching on judging others during His “Sermon on the Mount.” We will see soon how He expanded on this idea.

Ask for volunteers to read Leviticus 19:18. According to this verse, who are we to love, and how? (We are to love our neighbor as we love ourselves.)

This theme is also present in the Gospels. Ask one of the students to read Matthew 22:34-40. According to this passage, who are we to love, and how? (We are to love God with everything we have, and love our neighbors as ourselves.) Ask the students how well they think they follow this rule.

Next, ask the students, “How is this command different from the Golden Rule?” (In the Golden Rule, we treat others as we want to be treated. In this command, we love others as we love ourselves.) The Bible tells us that we can only love others as much as we love ourselves.

In this song, KB is struggling with loving himself. He expresses his struggles to live how he knows God wants him to. Often we are our own harshest critics, some of us have that little voice in our head that continually tells us that we are worthless and unlovable. We will readily forgive others for the things they have done to us, but often we get stuck with letting things go in our own past. We can only truly love others if we truly love ourselves. We have trouble letting go of yesterday. Yet, KB reminds us that each and every day we are forgiven.

Ask the students, “When or why is it sometimes hard to love others? When or why is it sometimes hard to love yourself?”

Wrap Up

The good news is that God forgives us; we’ve been forgiven. He loves us even when we have a hard time doing so. Ask the students to listen and jot down the good news as you read _Psalm 103_ to them. Remind them that God forgives all their sins, heals all their diseases, redeems them, and casts their sin as far away as the east is from the west. He loves them more than they can comprehend! Close in prayer.
### The World Tells Us We Should Love: According To Scripture, Who And How Are We To Love?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The “Golden Rule”</th>
<th>According to Leviticus 18:18</th>
<th>Why is loving others hard?</th>
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<tr>
<td>According to Matthew 22: 34 – 40</td>
<td>Why is loving yourself hard?</td>
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The difference is: The good news is:
LARA LANDON

Theme
Relationships

Objective
Students will identify the reasons behind broken relationships and discover how God longs to heal and mend their relationships.

Warm Up
Find some copies of People magazine, Entertainment Weekly, and some other magazines that have articles about celebrity relationships. Distribute one or two of these to each small group within your larger group. Hand out the Student Guides. Have the youth turn to the Busted Student Guide section and complete the assignment.

Reflection
Give your groups opportunity to reveal their findings. Follow-up with these questions:
- What do you believe are the top reasons relationships sometimes go bad?
- What makes a bad relationship get worse?
- What is at least one action step that you could take as soon as conflicts begin to arise to avoid letting the relationship get to an irreparable stage?

Transition
Say something like, “When sin came into the world, so did brokenness. When they sinned, the perfect relationship Adam and Eve had with God resulted in separation. Their relationship with each other – and all the relationships to follow – struggled with pride, selfishness, and conflict. Let’s look at the question of broken relationships, and the answer of God’s healing power.”

The Song
Listen to the song together and give a few minutes for each person to complete the assignment under The River on the Student Guide.

Bible Study
Say something like, “God longs for our relationships to be healthy and whole. His sacrifice on the cross for us provided hope for our relationship with God and others. Let’s go to the Bible and discover more of what it says about this restoration.” Invite your group to work on the Life in the River section in a solo time and then come back together.

Give everyone opportunity to share their answers and then reflect a little more with these questions:
- What is significant about the source of the river? (It comes only from God.)
- What is important about the trees growing on both sides of the river? (These trees show this water really is bringing life.)
- Why do you think “they will see His face” was so noteworthy? (In ancient times, criminals were banished from the presence of the king; our sin keeps us from seeing God.)
- What is the importance of “light” in our lives in contrast to “darkness”?

Wrap-Up
Ask your group to look at the My Relationship Action Plan section of the Student Guide. Give them a few moments to work through this and then come back together. Allow time for each group member to share their action steps and then conclude the time in specific prayer for each of them.

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Busted
Find one or two other people and look through the magazines you have been given. Find any articles or references to failed relationships (i.e. separation, divorce, no longer dating, etc.) List the names and reason for the break-up.

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The River
Listen to this song by singer Lara Landon and complete the following, using short phrases.

What this song says about the relationship she is describing…

What this song says about God's response through “the river”…

What is the promise God gives to us at the end of verse 5?

What does the angel of the Lord say about these words in verse 6?

Life In The River
Revelation 22:1-6
How is the “river of the water of life” described in verse 1 and the first part of verse 2?

In the second part of verse 2, what is described as being on both sides of the river?

Verses 3-5 tell us there will be no more:

1.
2.
Theme
Evangelism

Objective
Students will explore stories of grace — including their own — and how those stories have motivated others and motivates them to share Christ with others.

Warm Up
Lifegiver – Enlist one student before the session to be the life-giver and give him or her a stack of face cards (Ace, King, Queen, Jack & Joker). As you introduce the game, give each student five playing cards but no face cards. Tell them that they will have three minutes to trade cards with other students (one card for one card) to try to find the “life-giver” (the person with the face cards). Instruct them that once they receive a face card, they are to keep it and not trade it away. There is only one “life-giver.” Anyone who does not have a face card at the end of the game is dead, but if you have a face card you are alive because you had an encounter with the “life-giver.” (Note: make it a point not to say whether or not they can talk to each other during the game.)

Transition
Debrief the game by finding out who is alive and who is dead. Discuss how they came to have a “life-card.” Did anyone tell a friend where they got one? If so, why? In the song you are about to hear, Lecrae talks about how an encounter with the real “life-giver” changed his life and what that causes him to want to do.

The Song
Hand out the Student Guides. Instruct students to listen closely for Lecrae’s testimony and his response to God’s work in his life. Direct them to the basic outline on the student worksheet.

- What his life was like before his encounter with Christ. (Slave to himself, drugs, cursed God, lies, cheating, lust, greed, dead, deep in sin, low down and dirty)
- What Christ did for him. (Brand new, cleaned up my soul, set free, gave new life, clear view, changed/ain’t the same, new name, adopted me, kept rockin’ me)
- What did he say he did to deserve all of this from God? (Nothing)
- What does Lecrae say he wants to do before God beams him up? (“Tell the truth, let the whole world know that I’ve seen Your love and it’s everlasting”)

Bible Study
Have students read 1 Timothy 1:12-16, then have them discuss what similarities and differences they see between Paul’s and Lecrae’s stories.

Have a volunteer read 1 John 5:10-12 aloud while the other students follow along. Ask, “What is the message that we get to tell people?” (God has given us eternal life in His Son.)

Transition
Lecrae’s testimony is a powerful story of grace. We find in Scripture this same motivation for “turning the world upside-down.” As we dig through these passages, challenge students to be thinking about their own story of grace.

Wrap Up
Have each student write a sentence or two describing his or her own story of grace in the My Story section of the Student Guide. Guide them to write two or three names of people on part four of their story.
A Story of Grace
As you listen to the song, listen for specific things in the following areas:

What his life was like before his encounter with Christ.

What Christ did for him.

What did he say he did to deserve all of this from God?

What does Lecrae say he wants to do before God beams him up?

1 Timothy 1:12-16
Similarities...

Differences...

1 John 5:10-12
The message is...

My Story
My life before I came to know Christ was…

This is how I encountered Christ…

Since I came to know Christ, my life is…

Because of what He has done for me, I want to share His message with…
Theme
Self-Identity in Christ

Objective
Your students will think about being found in Christ and how they relate to their peers – do they help each other across the pits of life or throw stones?

Warm Up
Stepping Stones – Mark off boundaries with heavy tape where the alligator/lava/danger pit will be – 15-20 feet long depending on the number of students. Divide the students into groups of at least three. Each group gets half-one as many stepping-stones as students in their group. (Use carpet squares or heavy-duty paper as stones.) The goal is to get everyone on their team across, using the stepping-stones. Once the stones cross the line into the pit, they must be touched by a body part at all times or they will be lost FOREVER. If a student falls into the pit the team must start over. The first team across safely wins. Give the teams a 20-minute time limit.

The Song
Have the students fill in the blanks on their student guide as they listen. Here are the missing words: We are all the same, To fall along the way, You don’t try to run, We could just lift you up, throwing stones, your shame, go alone, go away. It reads with every line, Or even turn back time, That you are too far gone, Not what you have done; wherever you go, high, low, Who you know.

Bible Study
Have the students read the Scripture passages and discuss the questions.

John 8:1-11
• In the game, you used stones to help you through a tough place. The song and these verses talk about throwing stones. How do we “throw stones” at people?
• Do you believe that “sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me”? Why or why not?
• We have a tendency to use passive aggression (eye rolling, silent treatment, posting hateful comments on Facebook, avoidance, talking behind someone’s back, etc.) Have you experienced passive aggression? Does it hurt less or more than physical aggression? Are you guilty of passive aggression?
• What do you think Jesus wrote in the sand?
• Why did no one throw a stone?

Philippians 3:8-14
• The song speaks of being found in “Who you know” and these verses speak of being “found in Christ.” What does this idea mean to you?
• Why is being “found in Christ” important?
• Does it mean we are perfect?

Wrap Up
Give every student a stone – either a physical stone or the representation of a stone you used in the game. (Ex: a piece of heavy weight grey construction paper used earlier that can now be balled up.) Have the students hold their “stone” and listen to the song again.

Close by telling the students they each have a stone and a choice. They can use their stone to help others journey across the dangerous and rough places of this life, or they can choose to throw their stones at others. Send them out with this benediction:

Breathe deep and believe that wherever you go
It don’t matter how high,
It don’t matter how low
It comes down to being found in
Who you know, you know.

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**Fill In The Blanks**

To whom it may concern when will we learn ________________

Do you really think that you’re the first ________________

It may sound crazy but what if ________________

Rather than kick our wounded ________________

We’re not ________________

You are not ________________

You can’t ________________

We won’t ________________

I can see it’s written on your face ________________

Wishing you could somehow just erase ________________

Don’t let yourself buy into the lie ________________

So let us remind you that you’re ________________

Breathe deep and believe that ________________

It don’t matter how ____, don’t matter how ____

It comes down to being found in ________________, you know, yeah

**John 8:1-11**

In the game, you used stones to help you through a tough place. The song and these verses talk about throwing stones. How do we “throw stones” at people?

Do you believe that “sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me”? Why or why not?

We have a tendency to use passive aggression (eye rolling, silent treatment, posting hateful comments on Facebook, avoidance, talking behind someone’s back, etc.) Have you experienced passive aggression? Does it hurt less or more than physical aggression? Are you guilty of passive aggression?

What do you think Jesus wrote in the sand?

Why did no one throw a stone?

**Philippians 3:8-14**

The song speaks of being found in “Who you know” and these verses speak of being “found in Christ.” What does this idea mean to you?

Why is being found in Christ important?

Does it mean we are perfect?

How do you press on after you fall?

What goal are you pressing on toward?

**Romans 8:1**

What does this verse mean to you?

The song says, “It comes down to being found in Who you know.” Do you know Jesus Christ? Would you say you are found in Him?
Theme
Priorities

Objective
Students will be reminded the benefits of making church a high priority.

Warm Up
Hand out pens and Student Guides. Direct students to the Wouldn’t Miss It for Anything section. Have the students list (in no particular order) five activities they miss only under extreme circumstances. These are things students are wholeheartedly committed to attending. Give students a couple of minutes to jot down their responses. Then open up discussion by asking, “What did you write down?” When someone shares, follow up with the question, “Why does _______ (said activity) matter so much to you?”

Transition
Say, “Most of the activities you shared involved other people.” Then discuss, “Why are some activities better experienced with others instead of alone?”

The Song
Say, “Owl City’s ‘Shooting Star’ might have something to add to this conversation. Let’s listen to it and then talk about its message.” Play the song.

Discussion
• What phrases did you like in the song?
• What do you think the song is about?
• What encouragement did you hear in the song?
• What helps you stay grounded in your faith even when the proverbial darkness is all around?

Transition
Ask, “How important to Christians is getting together in a church environment?” Have students explain their answers. Then say, “We like being connected and a part of something bigger than ourselves. Let’s explore the benefits of keeping church high on our Wouldn’t Miss It For Anything list.

Bible Study
Have a volunteer read the lyrics and the Scripture. Then discuss the questions.

Ecclesiastes 4:9-10
• What sports can’t be played alone?
• What situations would you not want to face alone?
• Who has helped you through a tough time? Explain.
• How is a church family like this Bible passage?

Hebrews 10:23-25
• When was the last time you saw a starry sky?
• Do a plethora of stars make the sky prettier? Explain.
• How is church like a starry sky?
• How can a church group encourage one another?
• What are some benefits of staying connected regularly to a youth group?

Wrap Up
Say, “Let’s pause for some reflective thought. I’ll play the song again. As it plays, ask God to show you what He wants you to learn about staying consistently connected to other Christians through church and youth group.” Play the song and then close with prayer.
WOULDN'T MISS IT FOR ANYTHING

1. What phrases did you like in the song?

2. What do you think the song is about?

3. Is there encouragement in the song? Explain.

4. How helps you stay grounded in your faith even when the proverbial darkness is all around?

5. How important is it that Christians get together in a church environment?

SONG CHAT

THE WORD

A thousand heartbeats beat in time / And makes this dark planet come alive / So when the lights flicker out tonight / You gotta shine

Hebrews 10:23-25
When was the last time you saw a starry sky?

Do a plethora of stars make the sky prettier? Explain.

How is church like a starry sky?

How can a church group encourage one another?

What are some benefits of staying connected regularly to a youth group?

MY PRIORITIES

What keeps you from being at church consistently?

If you want your life to shine like a shooting star, what priorities need to change?
Theme
Courage

Objective
This lesson will help participants discover that the courage to handle life’s challenges and obstacles comes from God – with the reward being a deeper faith and eternal life.

Warm Up
Hand out the Student Guides. Direct the group’s attention to the Eeeeeek! section of the Student Guide. Give the students five minutes to work independently to complete the assignment and then come back together. Follow with these questions:

• What is your biggest fear?
• In what situation do you feel most courageous where some others may be fearful?
• What circumstances in life affect why we might be fearful in some situations and not others?

Transition
Say something like, “Each of us faces challenges and obstacles. These circumstances test our faith and often cause anxiety or fear. Today we are going to discover that the courage to handle these times comes from God. The reward of our courage is a deeper faith and eternal life.”

The Song
Have the students complete the Raise Your Claymores High section of the Student Guide as they listen to the song.

Say something like, “The writer of this song says, ‘In the process of writing this record I came to find out that my Irish ancestor came from a region known to have many soldiers who fought in the Irish Brigade of the Civil war. This inspired me to write an Irish-infused battle song, using the metaphor of David and Goliath.’ In this Biblical story, God gave the boy, David, courage to fight his battle. Let’s see what we discover about courage in our own lives.”

Bible Study
1 Samuel 17 – This is a great story but a long chapter. You may choose from the following possible options:

• Summarize most of the story and read some parts.
• Read the whole chapter as a group using different readers.
• Split youth into smaller groups and have them read the whole chapter on their own.

Once the passage has been read or summarized, have the students work individually or in smaller groups (if you decided to use that format) on the A Little Boy with a Big Heart section of the Student Guide. Give them about 5-10 minutes to work through the assignment and then come back together.

Let the group share their findings and then follow up with these questions:

• Why do you think this passage describes Goliath’s armor in such detail?
• What experiences gave David confidence to fight Goliath, a man of such height and strength?
• What most amazed you about David going into battle against Goliath?

Wrap-Up
Say something like, “If people were betting on the outcome of the fight between David and Goliath, very few would have put their money on David. The odds were clearly against him. How many times have we looked at the tests of life and feel there is no possibility of a positive outcome? Like David we are called to remember the ‘battle is the Lord’s’ and that God fights for us.”

Close this time by having the youth turn to the My Giants section of their Student Guide. Give the students a few moments to prayerfully consider their own obstacles.

Finish the time together by having your group share their “giants.”

Close in prayer.
Eeeeeek!
List anything that frightens you.

Raise Your Claymores High
Listen to the song by Project 86 and complete these categories:

What We Are Called To Do

David vs. Goliath
1 Samuel 17
Description of David provided by this chapter (use phrases):

Description of Goliath provided by this chapter (use phrases):

Why We Fight

How King Saul and the Israelites responded to the threat of Goliath:

How David responded to the threat of Goliath:

“With Our Backs To The Wall, We’ll Respond To The…”

My Giants
Make a short list of the big challenges or obstacles you presently face in life:

Identify one way your group can pray for you in the battle(s) you face:

The source of David’s courage:

The source of Goliath’s courage:
### Comparison Chart

Your youth leader has a bunch of these albums that you can borrow. Get one and check out the comparison for yourself!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hip-Hop/Rap/Electronica (1)</th>
<th>Pop/ R&amp;B (1)</th>
<th>Rock (1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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### Notes
- The Comparison Chart includes a variety of album list options from different genres.
- The chart allows users to compare albums from Hip-Hop/Rap/Electronica, Pop/R&B, and Rock genres.
- Each genre category is represented with multiple artists and songs for comparison purposes.
- Users can select an album from any genre and compare it with others from the same or different genres.
### Rock (2)

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<td>The Veronicas</td>
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<td>The Vincent Black</td>
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<td>Superchick</td>
<td>Shadows</td>
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<td>The Wallflowers</td>
<td>Third Day</td>
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| Third Eye Blind   | Switchfoot, Ruth, Strange
| Celebirty         | Nine Lashes, Disciple
| Kutless, Thousand Foot | Needtobreathe |
| Fireflight        | Leeland          |
| Leeland           | Day Of Fire       |
| Building 429, MercyMe | Switchfoot, Rush Of Fools Telecast |
| By The Tree, The Turning Inhabited Switchfoot |

### Punk/ Hardcore (1)

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<td>Desperation Band</td>
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<td>Know Hope Collective</td>
<td>Eric Clapton</td>
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<td>Matt Papa</td>
<td>Hillsong United</td>
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<td>Aaron Shust, Hillsong United</td>
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<td>Roger Williams &amp;</td>
<td>Michael Buble</td>
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<td>The All Mixed Up Quartet</td>
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<td>Joel Engie</td>
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### Punk/ Hardcore (1)

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<th>Mainstream Artist</th>
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<td>3 Doors Down</td>
<td>Everyday Sunday</td>
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<tr>
<td>30 Seconds To Mars</td>
<td>Since October</td>
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<td>A Change of Pace</td>
<td>Number One Gun</td>
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<td>A Skylit Drive</td>
<td>Chasing Victory</td>
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<td>Botch</td>
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<td>Boys Like Girls</td>
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<td>Cartel</td>
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<td>Daugthy</td>
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<td>Death Cab For Cutie</td>
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<td>Dropkick Murphys</td>
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<td>Drowning Pool</td>
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### Who Sounds Like Who

Remember, these comparisons are subjective... that means you might not agree with us. But that's okay!

This isn't intended to convince you that one artist sounds JUST LIKE another artist, it's more about helping you find a style and sound that is similar to something you know you already like.

Youth Leaders: Want to know more about interlining, Youth Leaders Only and how you can get more music and media tools for your ministry?

Check us out at interlining.com
Theme
Surrender

Objective
Students will learn what it means to find a life in Christ by coming to the end of themselves.

Warm Up
Nicknames – Have two students (possibly guy vs. girl) participate in a game-show style competition in front of the group. Create a list of nicknames of famous people. Have the contestants take turns trying to name the celebrity whose nickname you will say out loud. Explain that they could be anything from musicians to movie stars to athletes to Bible characters. It is against the rules for the audience to help in any way. If cheating occurs, the contestant will be docked one point. Some suggestions are listed below. Google “celebrity nicknames” for lists of many more.

- The King of Rock – Elvis Presley
- The Black Mamba – Kobe Bryant
- The Weeping Prophet – Jeremiah
- The King of Pop – Michael Jackson
- J.Lo – Jennifer Lopez
- Da Whoop – Whoopi Goldberg
- The Governor – Arnold Schwarzenegger

Transition
Explain that while God doesn’t really go by any “nicknames”, it is very common for the Bible and God’s people to use metaphors to explain what God is like so that finite humans can better understand the infinite God. The word “river” is one such metaphor. Hand out the Student Guides and explain that the Rhett Walker Band song called “Come to the River” talks about coming to the end of ourselves and finding all God has to offer.

The Song
Have students listen carefully to the song Come to the River by Rhett Walker Band. Encourage students to pay close attention to any concepts or ideas that jump out at them.

Transition
While still in the large-group setting, ask: “In what ways is the image of a river a metaphor for what God is like?” Allow them to answer. Some points to make might include: God is powerful like a river. God’s Spirit is constant and reliable like a river. God’s love can sweep a person away like a river’s current. God carries away impurities like a river can, etc.

Bible Study
Explain that at the end of the Book of Revelation, the Apostle John is inviting those who read the book to respond to the message of Jesus. In Revelation 22:17, John writes, “The Spirit and the bride say ‘Come!’ And let him who hears say, ‘Come!’ Whoever is thirsty, let him come, and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.” Discuss the questions in the Think It Through section of the Student Guide.

- Why do you think the metaphor of water is so often used in Scripture to describe things like salvation, God’s Spirit, eternal life, etc.?
- What does it mean for a person to “come to the end of themselves” in order to “come to Christ for life”?
- Have you come to Christ for life? If not, what has prevented you from His offer?

Wrap Up
Write down the name of one person you are having a difficult time loving right now. Take a couple minutes in silent prayer to pray specifically for that person. Pray also for the supernatural ability to overcome those negative emotions, and to love them genuinely as though you were loving God directly by doing so.
Listen carefully to the song *Come to the River* by Rhett Walker Band. Pay close attention to any concepts or ideas that jump out at you.

**Bible Study**
At the end of the Book of Revelation, the Apostle John is inviting those who read the book to respond to the message of Jesus. In Revelation 22:17, he wrote, "The Spirit and the bride say ‘Come!’ And let him who hears say, ‘Come!’ Whoever is thirsty, let him come, and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life."

**Think It Through**
Why do you think the metaphor of water is so often used in Scripture to describe things like salvation, God's Spirit, eternal life, etc.?

**Wrap Up**
Write down the name of one person you are having a difficult time loving right now. Take a couple minutes in silent prayer to pray specifically for that person. Pray also for the supernatural ability to overcome those negative emotions, and to love them genuinely as though you were loving God directly by doing so.

What does it mean for a person to "come to the end of themselves" in order to "come to Christ for life?"

**Ponder This**
In what ways is the image of a river metaphorical for God?

Have you come to Christ for life? If not, what has prevented you from His offer?
**THE ROCKET SUMMER**

**Theme**
Transformation

**Objective**
Students will learn that they will not only be transformed by allowing God to work in them, they will have the power to transform their friends and world.

**Warm Up**
Find a random object and ask the students to make up a story that explains how that item made its way to this meeting, what the process was to transform the item, and how much time was required to make it. After about 10-15 seconds of describing the object, pass it to the next person for him or her to continue the story. Keep it going as long as you want.

**Transition**
Explain that just as a transformation happened to that object, transformation can take place in us. Read 2 Corinthians 3:17-18. Explain that we, as believers, can truly change the world. Once “revival” occurs, we are being transformed into His image with ever-increasing glory!

**The Song**
Have students listen carefully to the song. Encourage them to pay close attention to any concepts or ideas that jump out at them in regard to “living for God” and how we are to respond to it.

**Bible Study**

**Realize Who You Are!**
2 Corinthians 5:17
• Why do we need to understand that when we trust in Christ for salvation we become “new creations”?
• How can this knowledge change the way you see yourself?

**Reveal Who You Are!**
Romans 12:1-2
Leading a Christian lifestyle is not always easy. We sometimes get angry or upset. We have struggles. We aren’t perfect. Yet, we are called to pursue a different way of living. Like it or not, people are constantly watching to see if we mess up. As we live the life that God has called us to, this will be revealed in every aspect of our lives.
• What makes reflecting God in our lives difficult when we are angry?
• Besides our witness to a watching world, what are some other reasons Jesus would say that it’s important for Christians to love one another?
• How can loving another Christian who wrongs you send a powerful message to other people about who God is?

**Rejoice In Who You Are!**
John 12:32
• We experience a new kind of joy once we realize that the way we live can point others to Jesus.
• When we understand that our actions directly affect others’ lives, we can see the significance of why Jesus said others would know we are His followers when we love one another.
• When we live our lives to honor Him, we can rejoice in knowing others will see Jesus and be drawn to Him because we are different.

**Wrap Up**

**Action Plan** – Are you willing to make an impact on the lives around you? Revival has occurred in your life and now you are transformed.
• Who around you will notice the difference in your life?
• How would you feel to know that people decided to trust God because they saw you acting out of love with other Christians?
• What would reflecting who God is (instead of acting the way you want to act) “cost” you?
Transformation
What is transformation and what does it really look like? Sure, we can observe a caterpillar transform into a butterfly, but can that type of transformation take place in us? When revival occurs in our life, a transformation occurs next. We are a new creation and set apart for God’s work. As you work through this lesson, focus on that time in your life when revival took place and transformation followed.

The Song
Listen carefully to the song “Revival” by The Rocket Summer. Pay close attention to any concepts or ideas that jump out at you that reflect reality of “Revival” and/or “Transformation” in the life of an obedient believer. Write them down if you want to.

Bible Study
Realize Who You Are!
2 Corinthians 5:17
Why do we need to understand that when we trust in Christ for salvation we become “new creations”? How can this knowledge change the way you see yourself?

Rejoice In Who You Are!
John 12:32
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Revel Who You Are!
Romans 12:1-2
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Beyond our witness to a watching world, what are some other reasons Jesus would say that it’s important for Christians to love one another?

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Action Plan
Are you willing to make an impact on the lives around you? Revival has occurred in your life and now you are transformed.

Who around you will notice the difference in your life?

How would you feel to know that people decided to trust God because they saw you acting out of love with other Christians?

What would reflecting who God is (instead of acting the way you want to act) “cost” you?
Me Without You

By: Jeff Williamson
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Memphis, Tennessee
williamson@unionavenue.org

Teaching Point:
When you decide to follow God's will for your life, you were no longer alone. At that point of acceptance you are never without. You will always have guidance and direction.

Opening Questions:
• What was your life before Christ? What is it like now?
• You were rescued, saved and remade—what does that mean to you?

The Song:
Have students listen carefully to the song. Encourage them to pay close attention to any concepts or ideas that jump out at them in regard to being without Christ in their life.

Transition:
Focus in on the three-fold aspect of being “rescued, saved, and remade.” Ask the students to define and expand what each of those mean in regard to their relationship with Christ.

Bible Study:
John 15:1-11 – To be rescued and to produce “fruit” you must keep a constant relationship with God “the gardener.” (v.1) When you are connected, “saved” and have that relationship, you want to be obedient and as a result joy will be the result (v.2-4). Joy will follow when you realize that the life of Christ in you is bringing “fruit” – something you could never produce in your own strength. Producing “fruit” shows that you have been remade! (v.5-11)

The beauty of God’s love is that once you accept Him, you are never without Him, nor will you be unable to produce fruit. He knew you even before you were created. (Psalm 139:13) Once you accepted Him, He became and will continue to be that one true friend who has and will love you when no one else will. (Zephaniah 3:17)

Conclusion:
Without God’s love, “Where would you be?” You might want to give up and “pack your bags”, but God has not and will not give up on you! So, why would you give up on Him?

Steal My Show

By: Jeremy White
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jwhite@valleychurch.com

Teaching Point:
We are unable to accomplish anything of eternal value in this life that apart from God’s presence and power.

Opening Questions:
Have you ever been to a “Christian Event” or church gathering that felt like it was all “show”? What made you feel this way?

The Song:
Play the song, and display the lyrics if possible. Ask students to pay attention to the message that Toby is trying to communicate.

Transition:
As a musician, TobyMac performs in front of thousands of people every year. In this song, he expresses his desire that his performance would be more than a “show” – that it would be an opportunity for God to take center stage.

Bible Study:
John 3:26-30 – John the Baptist was quite a “rock star” in his day. His life was predicted by the prophet Isaiah 700 years before he was born. His task? He was to be the forerunner of Jesus Christ – to announce to the nation of Israel that the long-awaited Messiah was about to reveal himself. At the peak of his ministry, John had accumulated quite a large following. But when Jesus and His disciples arrived, some of John’s followers began to get jealous. Read John 3:26-30 and discuss the following thoughts and questions.

• Why were John’s disciples jealous of the attention Jesus was getting?
• How is John’s humility seen in the way that he answers the concerns of his friends?
• What does this teach us about understanding our role and God’s role in whatever He calls us to do with our gifts, talents, careers, dreams, ambitions and accomplishments.

Conclusion:
In this song, TobyMac invites God to take his plans – even the art and music he’s worked so hard to produce and prepare – and to intervene in any way He wants to. Do you live with that same kind of surrender to the will of God? Is your life’s focus about being in the spotlight – or about being the spotlight aimed at Jesus? What’s the difference between the two perspectives? Can you name a modern day example of this in our culture?

Eye On It

By: Todd Pearage
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Teaching Point:
Our life is a race, and we need to run with our eyes on the prize.

Warm Up:
Set up a fun relay race with all kinds of crazy obstacles that two people can run at the same time. Select several students to compete and allow the two best times compete against each other. Give the winner a cool prize – like TobyMac’s new album!

Opening Questions:
• What’s the best part about competition?
• What’s the worst part?

The Song:
Say something like, “We’re going to listen to TobyMac’s new song called ‘Eye On It.’” Play the song.

Bible Study:
Read Hebrews 12:1-4. Discuss:
• What “race” is this passage talking about?
• What three things do we need to do to run the race well? (strip off every weight that slows us down like sin, run with endurance, and keep our eyes on Jesus)
• How do we strip off every weight that slows us down?
• What does “run with endurance” mean?
• What are some practical ways to keep our eyes on Jesus?
• Toby keeps telling us to keep our “eye on it”. What do you think “it” is?
• How does keeping our eye on the finish line help us run more effectively?

Conclusion:
Toby keeps telling us to keep our eye on it and to not quit. I hope you are encouraged by Toby’s new song. I hope you hear the words of this song in your head tomorrow and the next day and the day after that. We need to keep running – with our eyes on the prize.
Forgiveness

By: Dave Jones
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Teaching Point:
We should never refuse to offer forgiveness or ask for forgiveness. We have all committed acts for which we have needed forgiveness. We have all been wronged and have had forgiveness asked of us. Just as Jesus offered unwarranted forgiveness, so should we. Since Jesus made a way for forgiveness, we should ask.

Opening Questions:
• Have you ever hurt someone and needed to ask for forgiveness?
• How did you feel when that person told you it was okay?
• Have you ever refused to offer forgiveness? Why?

The Song:
Say, “In this song, someone is feeling extreme guilt over his actions. It is affecting his whole person. What he finds is that forgiveness brings great joy and peace.” Play the song.

Bible Study:
Romans 3:23 tells us that “all have sinned.” 1 John 1:9 tells us that God “is faithful and just to forgive…” This is great news! No one can claim to be without sin. However, we do not have to live with the guilt. Too many times we do just that. Maybe we have broken a family rule, or committed a sexual sin, or cheated on a test. Bottom line, we feel guilty. However, that guilt is good. It tells us that we need to do something about our sin.

Life would be nothing but despair if we could not get rid of the guilt of doing wrong. Jesus died on the cross to pay the price for our sin. We do not have to beat ourselves up over past sin, as the song suggests. We can turn to Jesus and accept His finished work on the cross.

When we let go of past sin and guilt and turn it over to Jesus, what sweet joy and peace we feel. When we free someone from the wrong that they have committed against us, what sweet joy and peace we have offered and feel as well. When we live life with a forgiving heart, we live life with the heart of Jesus.

Conclusion:
No one has to live with the guilt of doing something wrong. Jesus has provided a way out. We all need to look to Him for forgiveness so that we may lead joyful lives. We need to look to Him for strength so that we can find the grace to forgive others.

Speak Life

By: Jessica Parent
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Teaching Point:
Even on our worst days, our job is to spread the love of Christ to others.

Opening Questions:
• Have you ever had a day when you felt so down you didn’t want to get out of bed, when you felt like everything you said sounded wrong and you couldn’t do anything right?
• What would happen if I asked you on those days to get up and go witness to others about the love of Christ?

The Song:
While you listen to “Speak Life” by TobyMac, think about how you might feel on these bad days if you went and shared Jesus with others.

Transition:
Tell about a time when you were down and someone cheered you up – how did they do it? How does knowing someone loves you more than anything make you feel special? How about having the opportunity to share that love with others – does that make you happy? Now think about that bad day again, where you were grumpy and in a bad place – would you feel joyful getting up and showing others the love of Christ?

Bible Study:
As Christians we are called on to be like Christ. The day He was crucified was more than likely the worst day of His life. However on that day He showed love for others, Read Luke 23:34. What did Jesus ask God to do to those who were crucifying Him? He asked that they be forgiven. On His worst day Christ was thinking about others and wanting them to join him in Heaven. I know that there will be days when we don’t feel like being happy, however happiness is contagious! Love is contagious!

Read Psalm 118:24. You never get a chance to redo a day – each day is like no other day you will ever get! Our days should be filled with joy knowing that we are children of God. Our job is to get out and spread that joy!

Conclusion:
We have many reasons to want to stay in bed with the covers pulled over our heads, but that is not the life Christ died for us to live! We need to go out into the world and share the joy that Christ has given us. Smiles are contagious – don’t be afraid to share one!

Unstoppable

By: Eric Gargus
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Teaching Point:
Having bold faith in Jesus brings both pain and great reward.

Opening Questions:
• What is the most difficult thing you’ve ever done?
• Have you ever been hurt because of your faith in Jesus?
• How much does reward play in to how hard you try at something?

The Song:
Say, “‘Unstoppable’ is TobyMac’s brand new rhyme aimed straight at encouraging those who are willing to risk everything by having bold faith in Jesus. Let’s listen.” Play the song.

Transition:
Ask, “What catch phrases did you hear in the song?” Then ask, “What do you think the song is about?”

Bible Study:
Read Philippians 1: 20-21 to the group. Say, “Paul declares that ‘living is for Christ and dying is even better.’ TobyMac attests that ‘We are the strangers, we practically endangered… we’d rather burn up than stick to the shade.’ Then ask, ‘What kind of picture does this paint of bold faith?’

Next read Hebrews 12:1-4. Say, “Paul challenges us to endure suffering by keeping our eyes focused on Jesus and the example He set for us by going to the cross. TobyMac sets this truth to a beat by declaring, ‘When we get tripped up we call above for lift up… not of this world so we live on the run.’” Then ask, “What trips up the faith of your peers today and causes them to take their eyes off of Jesus?”

Conclusion:
Say, “Like TobyMac’s Paul-inspired lyrics proclaim, ‘To live is Christ, to die is gain, so break the noise of this world the real Jesus.’”
Lose Myself

By: Jeff Williamson
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Teaching Point:
Get ready for God to work in your life when you are willing to “lose yourself.” You will not only be transformed, you will have the power to transform your friends and your world.

Opening Questions:
How are you acting towards others? How are you re-acting towards others? The ways in which you answer these questions will really determine if you are willing to lose yourself.

The Song:
Encourage them to pay close attention to any concepts they hear about being willing to lose themselves for Christ.

Transition:
What in our lives can be easily transformed?

Bible Study:
John 13:35 – Congratulations! You are a new follower of Jesus. Knowing others will see Jesus and be drawn to Him because we are different and no longer in control.

Conclusion:
We are called to pursue a different way of living. Like it or not, people are watching to see if we mess up, if we live by our plan – or His. As we live the life that God has called us to, this will be revealed, reflected, and realized in every aspect of our lives that we are living by His plan and not our own.

Family

By: Dave Felts
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Teaching Point:
Family relationships can be difficult but are always worth fighting for.

Opening Questions:
• When you hear the word “family,” what does it mean to you?
• Have you experienced times when it seemed easier to avoid family members rather than deal with difficult relationships?

The Song:
Play the song and ask, “What was the writer trying to avoid?” (A break-up of the family) What did he say he would do to keep that from happening? (Fight) Why? (He believes in family)

Transition:
There’s no fight like a family fight and no one can hurt you like family can. Many of us have experienced difficult family situations and have found ourselves hurting as a result. Ask, “Would you agree that sometimes family relationships are difficult?” If you can, share a personal family struggle you have faced.

Bible Study:
Genesis 33:1-15 Jacob had run away because he had wronged Esau (summarize the soup in chapter 25 and the blessing in chapter 27) and was afraid that he would retaliate. (27:41) He was coming back home, hoping Esau would accept him. What did Jacob bring? (Gifts) How did Esau respond? (Acceptance, forgiveness)

Proverbs 19:13 What effect does a “foolish son” have on a father? (Ruin) What is constant arguing between a husband and wife compared to? (Constant dripping – torture)

Ephesians 5:21-25, 6:1-4 God, the inventor of the family, gives some helpful guidelines for family relationships. Discuss the key words in these passages: submit, love, give up life (sacrifice), obey, and honor.

Conclusion:
There is probably no way to avoid all family conflict, but are you willing and ready to fight to keep your family relationships from coming unraveled? That fight begins with self-examination and then finding a way to express submission, love, sacrifice, and honor to the others in the family. Doing so is a challenge, but totally worth the work. Do YOU believe in family?

Made For Me

By: Todd Pearage
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todd@thegatheringdayton.org

Teaching Point:
The Bible has clear guidelines to help make better dating decisions.

Opening Question:
What are some qualities you are looking for in a boyfriend/girlfriend?

The Song:
Say, “We are going to listen to Toby’s new song, ‘Made 4 Me.’ This song is about Toby and his wife Amanda, who’s from Jamaica. It tells the story of their love and marriage. Pay close attention to all the things they don’t have in common.” Play the song.

Transition:
What were some of their differences? Despite their differences they love each other, why?

Bible Study:
Say, “You may not have dated at all, or you may be an ‘old pros.’ No matter how much or how little you have dated, God wants to be included in your relationships. The Bible has very little to say about ‘dating’ because people in ancient times didn’t really date. The fathers of the parties involved usually arranged marriages. But there are some biblical principles that help us make better dating decisions today.”

Pursue purity. (1 Corinthians 6:9-11, 18-20; Hebrews 13:4) While being attracted to someone of the opposite sex is normal and natural, the Bible tells us that sex is off limits until you are married.

Date some who shares your values. (2 Corinthians 6:14) When you go out with someone, engage in lots of conversation and get to know the other person. Observe the other person in church and in various social situations to see how this person conducts himself/herself and how this person treats other people.

Date someone who will make you better. (Hebrews 10:24) You should date someone who will encourage you in your relationship with God – someone who will pray with and for you, encourage you, and protect your purity.

Conclusion:
When we started we asked, “What are some qualities you are looking for in a boyfriend/girlfriend?” Let’s take minute to write down some of the REAL qualities we are looking for in a relationship. Once you have your list, let’s close by praying through the list and for your future spouse.
Thankful For You

By: Dan Schewe
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Rogers, Minnesota
danjschewe@gmail.com

Teaching Point:
We can do nothing on our own; be thankful to those who have helped us.

Opening Questions:
What is something you have done that you are proud of, or that was important to you? Who helped you or made it possible? Who are you thankful for?

The Song:
Explain that TobyMac has learned something about gratitude. Ask the students to listen carefully to see what he communicated in “Thankful 4 You.” Play the song.

Transition:
Just like Toby, everything we have or have done is possible because of the efforts of others.

Bible Study:
The great leader Moses wasn’t always so great. When he was a baby he got a lot of help that allowed him to become a great man. Take a look at the familiar story of his birth in Exodus 2:1-10. Without Pharaoh’s daughter, her servants, his sister, and his mother he would have perished as a child. Do you think Moses was thankful for them?

Most of us are not famous, and neither was an unnamed man in Luke 5:17-26. He was paralyzed. His friends heard about Jesus and decided to take him to Him. Unfortunately they couldn’t get in the front door to the place where Jesus was because it was too crowded. Instead of giving up, they went on the roof and made a hole to lower their friend down. Obviously this man was thankful for Jesus’ healing, but do you think he was thankful for the actions of his friends?

Ultimately, we are all dependant on what Jesus has done for us. He came and died to make things right between God and us. Paul helps us see a wonderful aspect of this in Philippians 3:12-14. We all should try to live a life of love and follow the model of Jesus. But Paul admits that he has not yet achieved this, but as he strives to live this life he is striving for.

Conclusion:
Everything we are and do is possible because of the people who support us, and really because of God. Take a moment this week to thank the people who have helped you get where you are. Also, think about who you know that might need a hand. Remember, you are blessed – and are to be a blessing.

Mac Daddy (Tru’s Reality)

By: Eric Gargus
Marie Baptist Church
Dublin, Georgia
E4christ@aol.com

Teaching Point:
Work is a gift from God.

Opening Questions:
• What household chore do you dislike most? Why?
• What kind of work do you enjoy?
• Have you ever worked hard to save money for a big purchase?
• What kind of work do you do for God?

The Song:
Say, “TobyMac’s son Truett, a.k.a. Tru Dog, is at it again. This time he wants something and his dad wants him to earn it. Check this out.” Play the song.

Transition:
Say, “In one sentence, summarize the song.”

Wait for responses. Then ask, “What is the lesson to learn here?”

Bible Study:
Read 2 Thessalonians 3:10 to the group. Ask, “How does this verse apply to a teenager’s life today?”

Next read Psalm 13:4. Ask, “Can you think of someone who worked hard for a really long time to build a booming business?” (ex: Truett Cathy of Chick-Fil-A, Steve Jobs of Apple, etc.) Then ask, “What can we learn from people like that?”

Finally, read Romans 12:11. Ask, “What type of laziness does this verse warn about?” Then ask, “Can working for material things interfere with working for the Lord?” Explain.

Conclusion:
Say, “Like Tru Dog, we need to learn that we don’t automatically deserve a handout in life. God’s plan is for us to work for what we have. As we close, let’s pray that God will help us crush laziness with hard work both for Him and for the things we need and enjoy in life.”

Favorite Song

By: Chris Keating
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Carthage, Texas
pastorchrisx@sbglobal.net

Teaching Point:
As I play “Favorite Song” by TobyMac I want you to pay attention to the lyrics and try to figure out what his song is about.

Transition:
What do you think is the main point of “Favorite Song”? When something good happens to us we can get a little excited and sometimes we just can’t help but shout or sing because we are so happy.

Let’s look at a passage from the Bible that talks about this same thing.

Bible Study:
Ask your students for a definition for the word “ransomed.” It’s the practice of holding a prisoner or item to extort money or property to secure their release. It is kind of like someone taking you away from family and everyone you know and holding you as a prisoner until your family pays them to get you back.

That is exactly what the devil is doing to people all around us who don’t have a relationship with Jesus.

A long time ago the Israelites were held captive in Babylon, and as you can imagine were anxious longing for freedom. During this time the prophet Isaiah penned Isaiah 35:10. This verse describes the joy the Israelites would experience when they were ransomed or delivered.

But what is the lesson for the church to apply to today?

The exciting news is that Jesus ransomed us from the curse of sin and death. He paid the debt for our sin by His death and resurrection. Isn’t that something to get excited about?

Conclusion:
Like a melody or a “Favorite Song” that gets stuck in your head, God wants to use your life as his favorite song so others can come to know Christ. Is God playing His music through you? Can people feel the love of God when you are around them?
Theme
Renewal

Objective
Students will understand that only God can renew our lives. The world promises, but only God can provide.

Warm Up
Divide your group into smaller gender-same groups of approximately 8 to 10 teens. Have them form a circle standing shoulder to shoulder all facing inward. Each teen puts one hand in the circle and grabs onto someone else’s hand. Do not let go at any time. Then they place their other hand in and grab the hand of a different person. Again, do not let go. When the signal is given, each of the groups attempt to untangle themselves so they form an even circle with no one having their hands crossed or tangled.

Transition
Explain that life is like this game. Things always seem a bit tangled up and the solution is often unclear and confusing. No one is ever happy with that kind of confusion. It may seem fun at first but to make sure you can move forward in your life, you need to have those tangled up messes straightened out; you need to be renewed. War of Ages has a song that talks about that very thing.

Song
Play “Unite” by War of Ages.

Bible Study
Take a look at Zechariah 13:8-9 on the worksheets. The prophet is talking about sin in the lives of people, especially God’s people. God told him that He would put His people into the fire. Have you ever felt like you were in the fire? Write those times under the Branded heading.

Discuss some of their answers. It is not really fun to be there. God uses the fire, or trials of life, to purify us and make us solely His. He gets rid of the junk that can sometimes fill our lives and that can be uncomfortable, but necessary.

Look back at those verses and underline what stands out to you. After the fire, we have been refined, made better, perfected in Christ. In that process, however, we need God to work in our lives to separate the junk from perfection. What does God want to do in your life? How far does He want to take you? The answer is simple. He wants to take you into all eternity with Him. He wants to make you the absolute best you can be. He wants to renew you. He wants to unite with you forever.

Under the Renewed heading, rewrite Zechariah 13:8-9 in your own words to see what God is doing in your life.

Wrap Up
Reassure students that God does love them and wants the very best for them according to His awesome and divine will. Only when God molds us in life can we truly understand His purposes. Trust God and he will never let you go. Pray with the students and specifically address the rough spots they are going through.
My Problems, My Solutions

Zechariah 13:8-9

"In the whole land," declares the Lord, "two-thirds will be struck down and perish; yet one-third will be left in it. This third I will put into the fire; I will refine them like silver and test them like gold. They will call on my name and I will answer them; I will say, 'They are my people,' and they will say, 'The Lord is our God.'"
Theme
Evangelism; God’s Representatives

Objective
Students will be challenged to represent God in all their endeavors.

Warm Up
Make sure each student has a Student Guide and a pen. Then verbally toss these open-ended “If I” statements out to the group, allowing time for several to complete the statements with their own unique responses.
(Note: Encourage them to explain their responses.)

• If I could rap, I would rap about…
• If I could change one thing about my school, I’d change…
• If I were the President of the United States for a day, I would…
• If I had to define my life’s purpose in one rhyme, it would go like this…
• If I had to choose one way to share Jesus with others, I would…

Transition
Say something like, “New hip-hop artist Young Chozen is bursting on the scene with a fresh album that just might make you move a little.” Let’s listen to the title cut, “Class President.”

The Song
Play the song. The Song

Transition
Before you ask these questions, consider how you will answer them yourself. And be honest! Students will respond to your honesty whether you like the style of music or not. When students respond, challenge them to explain their answers while affirming their willingness to speak out.

• What do you think the song is about?
• What lyric do you remember from the song?
• What is the strong message throughout the lyrics of the song?

Bible Study
Read Luke 9:23 to the group. Pause and then read it again. Say, “We’re going to take three song lyrics, pair them with the three big points in Luke 9:23, and see how God wants to merge our lifestyles with the wisdom of the Bible. Young Chozen says it is possible to ‘have fun, love God, and be cool’ all at the same time. Let’s see what he is talking about.” Either divide the group into three sub-groups, or dialogue through the discussion questions together.

HAVE FUN – Young Chozen says: People actin’ up like my Daddy is nothing.’ Jesus says: Turn from your selfish ways.
• What are some examples of good fun and bad fun?
• Which fun do you see people doing more—good or bad?
• What makes bad fun selfish?
• What are some selfish things a person must give up to have good fun?
• How can you represent God in the way you have fun?

LOVE GOD – Young Chozen says: My campaign is to show you the Relevant. Jesus says: Take up your cross daily…
• What does it mean to truly love someone?
• How does your life show appreciation for what Jesus did on the cross for you?
• What is the hardest thing about loving God in how you live every day?
• What are some practical ways you can show God’s love to others daily?

AND BE COOL – Young Chozen says: I don’t gotta compromise who I am just to get a high five. Jesus says: Follow me.
• What is your definition of being “hip”?
• What are some ways teens compromise their standards in an attempt at hipness?
• What does following Jesus mean?
• What is hip about following Jesus?

Wrap Up
Ask, “If we try to give up our selfish ways, live by Christ’s standards in every place of every day, and make Him the leader of every aspect of our lives, what do you think might happen?” Then say, “I dare say that you would feel less guilt and more peace, the people around you would take notice and see Jesus in your life, and some might even start following Jesus too.” Close with prayer.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist:</th>
<th>Album Title &amp; Record Company:</th>
<th>Song:</th>
<th>Theme:</th>
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<tr>
<td>YOUNG CHOZEN 90KWATTS.COM</td>
<td>CLASS PRESIDENT 90KWATTS, LLC</td>
<td>CLASS PRESIDENT</td>
<td>EVANGELISM: GOD’S REPRESENTATIVES</td>
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</table>

**If I…**
- If I could rap, I would rap about…
- If I could change one thing about my school, I’d change…
- If I were the President of the United States for a day, I would…
- If I had to define my life’s purpose in one rhyme, it would go like this…
- If I had to choose one way to share Jesus with others, I would…

**Class President**
What do you think the song is about?

**Jesus Says**
“If any of you wants to be my follower, you must turn from your selfish ways, take up your cross daily, and follow me.” *(Luke 9:23)*

**Love God**
*Young Chozen* says: My campaign is to show you the Relevant.
*Jesus* says: Take up your cross daily…
What does it mean to truly love someone?

**Have Fun**
*Young Chozen* says: People actin’ up like my Daddy is nothing.
*Jesus* says: Turn from your selfish ways.
What are some examples of good fun and bad fun?

How does your life show appreciation for what Jesus did on the cross for you?

What makes bad fun selfish?

What is the hardest thing about loving God in how you live every day?

What are some selfish things a person must give up to have good fun?

What are some practical ways you can show God’s love to others daily?

What is your definition of being “hip”?

**Be Cool**
*Young Chozen* says: I don’t gotta compromise who I am just to get a high five.
*Jesus* says: Follow me.
What are some ways teens compromise their standards in an attempt at hipness?

What is hip about following Jesus?

**Class President**
What lyric do you remember from the song?

What is the strong message throughout the lyrics of the song?

*Dear Jesus, I want to be less selfish, more like You, and most definitely follow You more closely, so that others will see You in me. In Jesus’ name, Amen.*
The Resource Book and page number for these studies are listed after the artist’s name. For a comprehensive list of the Scripture verses for each theme, point your web browser to the “What The Bible Says About…”(wbsa.logos.com) and type in the theme.

### Acceptance
- **Brinson**
  - O.M.G
  - Last But Not Least Outro

### Ambition
- **Dominic Balli**
  - ConGRADulations! Class of 2012 American Dream (feat. Sonny Sandoval)

### House of Heroes
- **Cold Hard Want**
- **Dance (Blow It All Away)**

### Angels
- **KB**
  - Weight & Glory

### Anger
- **Phinehas**
  - Thegodmachine
  - Bad Blood

### Appearance
- **Flatfoot 56**
  - Toll
  - 6' 10"

### Availability
- **Young Chozen**
  - Class President
  - Stereo

### Backsliding
- **Flatfoot 56**
  - Toll
  - Brother Brother

### Bible, The
- **Brinson**
  - O.M.G
  - The Stereotype (Skit)

### Bible; Inspired
- **Flame**
  - The 6th
  - Scripture Alone

### Biblical Manhood
- **116**
  - FEAT. LECRAE / YLO87 Pg. 20
  - Man Up Album
  - Man Up Anthem

### Blessing
- **The City Harmonic**
  - I Have A Dream (It Feels Like Home)

### Brokenness
- **Brinson**
  - O.M.G
  - Breaking Down (feat. Jermel Forehand)

### House of Heroes
- **Cold Hard Want**
  - Stay

### Competition
- **Owl City**
  - Midsummer Station
  - Gold

### Compacency
- **Southbound Fearing**
  - The Anthem Of Angels

### Church, The
- **Casting Crowns**
  - Come To The Well
  - Wedding Day

### City of The Hill
- **The City Harmonic**
  - I Have A Dream (It Feels Like Home)
  - Mountaintop

### Conflict
- **Family Force 5**
  - III
  - Get On Outta Here

### Consistency
- **Casting Crowns**
  - Come To The Well
  - My Own Worst Enemy

### Contentment
- **Brinson**
  - O.M.G
  - Green Grass Theory 80/20

### Conversion
- **Rhett Walker Band**
  - Make Me New

### Courage
- **Casting Crowns**
  - Come To The Well
  - Courageous

### Dependence
- **Leeland**
  - YLO87 Pg. 32
  - The Great Awakening

### Desperation
- **Fireflight**
  - GO
  - Resting In You

### Determination
- **House of Heroes**
  - Cold Hard Want
  - Curtains

### Deceit
- **Phinehas**
  - Thegodmachine
  - My Horses Are Many

### Dating
- **Godly**
  - TobyMac / YLO89 Pg. 56
  - Eye On It
  - Made For Me

### Death
- **House of Heroes**
  - Cold Hard Want
  - A Man Who’s Not Afraid

### Deceit
- **Phinehas**
  - Thegodmachine
  - My Horses Are Many

### Deceit
- **Phinehas**
  - Thegodmachine
  - Grace Disguised By Darkness

### Depression
- **Icon For Hire**
  - Scripted
  - Get Well

### Desperation
- **Fireflight**
  - Now
  - Stay Close

### Determination
- **House of Heroes**
  - Cold Hard Want
  - Curtains

### Determination
- **House of Heroes**
  - Cold Hard Want
  - Out My Way

### Determination
- **Switchfoot**
  - Vice Verses
  - Rise Above It

### Determination
- **Flatfoot 56**
  - Toll
  - Strongman
### Devotion; Seeking God
- Brinson
  - O.M.G
  - Going God (feat. Aye Day & Fothousand)
- Planetshakers
  - Heal Our Land
  - Running To You
- Rachel Chan
  - GO
  - Show Me More
- Switchfoot
  - Vice Verses
  - Restless

### Difficulties; Comfort In
- Wayne Kerr Band
  - Love Stands Out
  - Greatest Day Ever

### Difficulties; Hope Within
- Close Your Eyes
  - Empty Hands And Heavy Hearts
  - Keep The Lights On
- Family Force 5 / YLO89 Pg. 28
  - Vital Sign DVD
- House of Heroes / YLO89 Pg. 32
  - Touch This Light

### Diligence
- Nine Lashes
  - World We View
  - Our Darkest Day
- Thousand Foot Krutch
  - The End Is Where We Begin
  - This Is A Warning

### Discipleship
- The Rocket Summer
  - Life Will Write The Words
  - Soldiers
- Discipleship; Cost Of
  - Jamie Grace / YLO86 Pg. 38
    - One Song At A Time
    - You Lead
- Starfield
  - The Kingdom
  - Innocence And Other Things Lost
- The Rend Collective Experience
  - Homemade Worship By Handmade People
  - The Cost
- Flatfoot 56
  - Toil
  - Work For Them
- Lecrae
  - Gravity
  - Free From It All
  - I Know
  - TobyMac / YLO88 Pg. 39
    - Dubbed and Freq'd: A Remix Project
    - Lose My Soul

### Emptiness
- Nine Lashes
  - World We View
  - The Void

### Encouragement
- Kutless
  - Believer
- Hero

### Eternal Life
- Bluetree
  - Kingdom
  - Destined To Reign

### Eternal vs. Temporal
- KB
  - Weight & Glory
  - Don't Mean Much
- Project 86
  - Wait For The Siren Defector
- Flatfoot 56
  - Toil
  - The Rich, The Strong, And The Poor
- Jeremy Hartshorn / YLO89 Pg. 34
  - Glory Tumbles Out
  - Voice Like A Mountain
- Jimmy Needham
  - Clear The Stage
  - The Only One
- Lecrae
  - Gravity
  - Falling Down

### Evangelism; God's Representatives
- Bluetree
  - Kingdom
  - Shine
- Lecrae
  - Gravity
  - The Drop
- TobyMac
  - Try Me
- The Rocket Summer
  - Life Will Write The Words
  - The Rescuing Type

### Evangelism; Urgency
- Flame
  - The 6th
  - Against The World

### Evangelism; Witnessing
- Flame
  - The 6th
  - Show Out
- Jamie Grace
  - One Song At A Time
  - Show Jesus
- Nine Lashes
  - World We View
  - Write It Down
- Phinehas
  - Thegodmachine
  - Crowns
- Rhett Walker Band
  - Come To The River
  - Get Up Get Out

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### Annual Thematic Listing

You are holding in your hands the Annual Thematic Listing Index! This fantastic resource allows you to reference all the Biblical themes associated with all the songs on the CD's/Download Cards and DVD's (over 600 songs) in the Youth Leaders Only boxes and on the Music Video Loops of this past school year (YLO 86, 87, 88, 89 and MVL 75, 76, 77, 78). The songs listed in red type have complete Bible study sessions written for them which can be found in their respective YLO and MVL Resource Books.

The Resource Book and page number for these studies are listed after the artist's name. For a comprehensive list of the Scripture verses for each theme, point your web browser to the “What the Bible Says About...”(wbsa.logos.com) and type in the theme.

#### Faith

**Cory Lamb**  
Break The Cycle  
Something More

**Holly Starr**  
Focus  
I Believe

**Holly Starr**  
Focus  
Let Go

**Lara Landon**  
Overcome  
Leah

**Rachael Lampa**  
All We Need  
Uncharted Territory

#### Faith: Assurance

**Flatfoot 56** / **YLO88 Pg. 26**  
Toll  
I Believe It

**Icon For Hire** / **YLO86 Pg. 36**  
Scripted  
The Grey

**KB**  
Weight & Glory  
Here We Go

#### Faith: When Weak

**Flame**  
The 6th  
Devil's Bread

#### Faith: Within Trials

**War Of Ages**  
Return To Life  
Silent Night

#### Faithfulness

**Flame**  
The 6th  
Running

#### Family: Conflicts

**Manafest**  
Fighter  
Throw It Away

**Jimmy Needham**  
Clear The Stage  
Daddy's Baby Girl

**TobyMac / YLO89 Pg. 56**  
Eye On It  
Forgiveness

**Phil Wickham / YLO86 Pg. 46**  
Response  
One God

**Jamie Grace**  
One Song At A Time  
Hold Me

**Planetshakers**  
Heal Our Land  
Good To Me

**Phil Wickham** / **YLO87 Pg. 38**  
Home Made Worship By  
Hand Made People

**Rachel Chan**  
Christ Has Set Me Free

**Fireflight**  
Prove It  
Ignite

**The Rend Collective Experience** / **YLO87 Pg. 38**  
Homemade Worship By  
Hand Made People

**The Rend Collective**  
Christ Has Set Me Free  
Remember The Esquire

**Jason Ritter** / **YLO89 Pg. 57**  
Response  
Nothing Like Us

**The One I Need**  
Music Video Loops Of This Past School Year (YLO 86, 87, 88, 89 And MVL 75, 76, 77, 78)  
These songs are found in their respective YLO and MVL Resource Books.

**Flatfoot 56** / **YLO89 Pg. 55**  
Toil  
This Time

**Rachel Lampa**  
I Believe It  
Prove It

**Phil Wickham** / **YLO86 Pg. 52**  
One God  
One God

**Lara Landon**  
Overcome  
Leah

**Flatfoot 56** / **YLO88 Pg. 26**  
Toil  
I Believe It

**Icon For Hire** / **YLO86 Pg. 36**  
Scripted  
The Grey

**KB**  
Weight & Glory  
Here We Go

**Fireflight**  
Prove It  
Ignite

**TobyMac / YLO89 Pg. 56**  
Eye On It  
Forgiveness
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## Annual Thematic Listing

You are holding in your hands the Annual Thematic Listing for the year 2012. This fantastic resource allows you to reference all the Biblical themes associated with the songs on the CD's/Download Cards and DVD's (over 600 songs) in the Youth Leaders Only boxes and on the Music Video Loops of this past school year (YLO 86, 87, 88, 89 and MVL 75, 76, 77, 78). The songs listed in red type have complete Bible study sessions written for them which can be found in their respective YLO and MVL Resource Books.

The Resource Book and page number for these studies are listed after the artist's name. For a comprehensive list of the Scripture verses for each theme, point your web browser to the "What The Bible Says About..." ([wbsa.logos.com](http://wbsa.logos.com)) and type in the theme.

### How they are listed:
- **Theme**
- **Artist**
- **Album Title**
- **Song**

### God’s Protection
- Lara Landon
  - Overcome
  - The Storm

### God’s Provision
- Kutless
  - Believer
  - Need

### God’s Pursuit
- Casting Crowns
  - Come To The Well
  - So Far To Find You
- Jimmy Needham
  - Clear The Stage
  - I Will Find You
- MIKESCHAIR
  - A Beautiful Life
  - You Loved Me First
- Phinehas
  - Thegodmachine
  - From One End of the Sky to the Other

### Rachael Lampa
- All We Need
  - No Escape
- Rachel Chan
  - GO
  - So Close

### God’s Revelation
- Trip Lee
  - The Good Life
  - Know Me

### God’s Sovereignty
- MIKESCHAIR
  - A Beautiful Life
  - Pieces

### God’s Strength
- Planetshakers / YLO88 Pg. 36
  - Heal Our Land
  - Strength of My Life
- War Of Ages
  - Return To Life
  - Final Act

### God’s Sufficiency
- Bluetree
  - Kingdom
  - You Are My Rock
- Casting Crowns
  - Come To The Well
  - Just Another Birthday
- The City Harmonic
  - I Have A Dream (It Feels Like Home)
  - Fell Apart
- Cory Lamb
  - Break The Cycle
  - Storm
- Holy Starr
  - Focus
  - Satisfied
- Jamie Grace
  - One Song At A Time
  - Come To Me
  - Not Alone
- Kutless
  - Believer
  - Carry Me To The Cross

### Rachael Lampa
- All We Need
  - Carry On
- Lara Landon
  - Overcome
  - My One And Only
- Rachel Lampa
  - All We Need
  - My One And Only

### God’s Victory
- Lara Landon
  - Overcome
  - Grace
- Grace
  - Brinson
  - Light Club (feat. Young Chozen & Dre Murray)
- Da Messenger
  - Allen
  - How To Invade

### Shane & Shane
- The One You Need
  - Grace Is Sufficient
- Gratitude
  - TobyMac / YLO89 Pg. 57
  - Eye On It
  - Thankful For You

### Greed
- Phinehas
  - Thegodmachine
  - The Wishing Well

### Growth
- The Ambassador
  - Stop The Funeral
  - Up Down
- Heaven
  - Braille
  - Native Lungs

### Humility
- Casting Crowns
  - Come To The Well
  - Face Down

### Heaven: Longing For
- Jeremy Hartshorn
  - Glory Tumbles Out
  - Saints & Angels
- Jimmy Needham
  - God’s Not Dead
  - Like a Lion
- TobyMac / YLO88 Pg. 39
  - Dubbed and Freq’d: A Remix Project
  - City On Our Knees
  - Tripp Lee / YLO8 Pg. 44
  - "The Good Life"
  - Take Me There

### Hope
- Close Your Eyes
  - Empty Hands And Heavy Hearts
  - Heavy Hearts
- Fireflight
  - Now
  - Rise Above

### House of Heroes
- MIKESCHAIR
  - A Beautiful Life
  - Pieces

### Humility
- Cast iron Crowns
  - Come To The Well
  - Face Down
- Family Force 5 / YLO86 Pg. 34
  - III
  - Paycheck
- Lecrae
  - Gravity
  - Power Trip
## How they are listed:

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You are holding in your hands the Annual Thematic Listing Index! This fantastic resource allows you to reference all the Biblical themes associated with all the songs on the CDs/Download Cards and DVD's (over 600 songs) in the Youth Leaders Only boxes and on the Music Video Loops of this past school year (YLO 86, 87, 88, 89 and MVL 75, 76, 77, 78). The songs listed in red type have complete Bible study sessions written for them which can be found in their respective YLO and MVL Resource Books.

The Resource Book and page number for these studies are listed after the artist’s name. For a comprehensive list of the Scripture verses for each theme, point your web browser to the “What The Bible Says About...”(wbsa.logos.com) and type in the theme.

### Sin: Repentance
- **Manafest**
  - Fighter
  - Prison Break
- **Rush Of Fools**
  - We Once Were
  - The Wrong Things
- **TobyMac**
  - Dubbed and Freqd: A Remix Project
  - Get Back Up

### Sin; Struggle With
- **Cory Lamb / YLO86 Pg. 32**
  - Break The Cycle
  - Break The Cycle
- **Icon For Hire**
  - Scripted
  - Off with Her Head
- **Switchfoot**
  - Vice Verses
  - The War Inside
- **Trip Lee**
  - The Good Life
  - Fallin'

### Sin: Temptation
- **Braille**
  - Native Lungs
  - Nightmare Walking
- **Flame**
  - The 6th
  - Caught In The Lights
- **KB**
  - Weight & Glory
  - Open Letter (Battlefield)
- **Trip Lee**
  - The Good Life
  - Fantasy
- **Trip Lee**
  - The Good Life
  - Heart Problem

### Sincerity
- **Da Messenger**
  - Alien
  - Alien Intro
- **Icon For Hire**
  - Scripted
  - Pieces
- **KB**
  - Weight & Glory
  - Church Clap

### Social Action
- **Icon For Hire**
  - Scripted
  - Make a Move

### Surrender
- **MIKESCHAIR**
  - A Beautiful Life
  - The More
- **Phil Wickham**
  - Response
  - All I Am
- **Rhett Walker Band / YLO89**
  - Pg. 50
  - Come To The River
  - Come To The River
- **Rush Of Fools**
  - We Once Were
  - A Civil War
- **The City Harmonic**
  - I Have A Dream (It Feels Like Home)
  - Yours
- **Worth Dying For**
  - Live Riot
  - Closer

### Testimony
- **Flame**
  - The 6th
  - Devil’s Bread (Intro)
- **Rhett Walker Band / YLO89**
  - Pg. 50
  - Come To The River
  - Come To The River
- **KB**
  - Weight & Glory
  - Anomaly
- **Manafest**
  - Fighter
  - Will You Catch Me
- **Starfield / YLO87 Pg. 46**
  - The Kingdom
  - The Kingdom Of Our God
- **Young Chozen**
  - Class President
  - I’m Gone

### Trust
- **Elizabeth South / YLO87 Pg. 30**
  - Do It Afraid
  - I Will Trust You
- **Starfield**
  - The Kingdom
  - Just Surrender
- **The Ambassador**
  - Stop The Funeral
  - Trust In You

### Truth
- **Flatfoot 56**
  - Soil
  - Territorizing Truth
- **KB**
  - Weight & Glory
  - Tear It Down

### Victory
- **Bluetree**
  - Kingdom
  - Under My Feet
- **Jimmy Needham**
  - Clear The Stage
  - My Victory
- **Leeland**
  - The Great Awakening
  - All Over The Earth
- **Phil Wickham**
  - Response
  - The Victory
- **Shane & Shane**
  - The One You Need
  - Victory
- **Worth Dying For**
  - Live Riot
  - Taking Back
**ANNUAL THEMATIC LISTING**

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AWAKENING PEOPLE TO THE PRESENCE OF GOD

For the Desperation Band, there’s been no greater calling or more profound privilege than worshipping—and linking arms in ministry—with their home church in Colorado Springs, Colorado. And while the group, led by Jon Egan, was born out of the life-changing student ministry that remains one of the hallmarks of New Life Church, they’ve recently seen their reach expand to an even broader, multi-generational, and global audience.

“My heart has always been impacted by young people and what I can do to influence a young heart; it’s just part of who I am,” Jon says. “But what I’m finding is, it’s best for a young heart to worship with the Church at large – young, old and everywhere in between. It’s then that we experience the even bigger picture of what God is doing.”

Naturally, that sense of the “bigger picture” within the context of community couldn’t help but make its way into the band’s latest recording, Center Of It All. Anchored by their passionate approach to worship and memorable reflections of Desperation Band’s continual pursuit of truth, the project’s guiding narrative points are how God is “the center of it all” and the source of all life. “It isn’t even that God should be No. 1 on our life’s list,” explains Jon. “He is the list. He’s at the top, the middle, the end.”

“We’re not trying to be the next big thing or showcase songs; instead, we look at these songs as a cup. We pay good attention to the cup by calling on our creative God so we can help serve the Church,” explains Jon. “But the cup is not the offering. It is simply the carrier of healing and refreshing water.”

Delving deeper into the band’s calling as worshipers and worship leaders, Jon adds: “We have found that our mission is to help awaken people to the presence of God and have our worship naturally flow into action for the less fortunate, the widows, the orphans and the trafficked.”

“We want people to find who they are in the giving away of their lives,” he continues. “I think we so often have it backwards. We ask God to set us free so we can, in turn, become a blessing to others. God tells us to be a blessing to others and, in turn, we will find our freedom. It starts with worship and ends with worship. And there are some pretty amazing things in the middle.”

Rhett Walker Band

Verse 1:
Am F C
Tell me will I ever catch a break,
Am
‘cause the storms roll on
F C G
and where I am, it does not feel safe
Am F C
I don’t know what I should even pray,
Am F C
but here I am, here my hands are raised

Chorus 1:
C Gsus G
The rain keeps falling down as the waters flood this town
Am F C G Am F C
On my knees I’ll be found, all I need, all I need is You

Verse 2:
Show me once again that You are real, oh this wounded heart let it start to feel
You told me love would always be enough, and here I am, my hands lifted up

Chorus

Bridge:
F Am G F Am G
Wash my eyes to see You, wash the stains away
F Am G F Am G
Give me faith to trust You, ‘cause You’re the rising day

Chorus

Tag
C Am F C
All I need is You

CLOSER TO YOU

Jeremy Hartshorn

G  Bm  A
Your love is all around me   Your glory shining down
A
Your beauty’s all I can see in your arms tonight
G  D
Your face    I want to know Your heart
A
Enfold me in Your arms tonight     I want to see…
G  D
Your face    I want to know Your heart
G
Lord I can hear your heartbeat in Your arms tonight
A
You grace, it overwhelms me   Your mercy falling down
G  Bm  A
Your beauty’s all I can see in your arms tonight
A
Your grace, it overwhelms me   Your mercy falling down
G  D
Surround me with Your love
G
Your beauty’s all I can see in your arms tonight
A
Lord I can hear your heartbeat in Your arms tonight

COME TO ME

Jamie Grace (Special BONUS Leadsheet)

(Capo 2) Intro: G  D  Em  F/#D
Verse 1:
G  D
Had a dream I was standing on the shore, Two feet planted in the sand
Em  F/#D
Soaking up Your glory yeah
G  D
I saw You walking from a distance, without a hint of resistance
Em  F/#D
You had your arms open, and a warmth in Your eyes
Am7  D
You took my hand and You whispered
Chorus:
G  D  Em
Come to me when, you’re weary and I’ll give you hope when you’re hurtin’
C
I’ll give you rest from your burden
G  D  Em
Come to me when, you’re weary and I’ll give you hope when you’re hurtin’
C
I’ll give you rest from your burden
G  D  Em
Come to me when, you’re weary and I’ll give you hope when you’re hurtin’
Now…
Verse 2:
I woke up to the weight of the world,
D  Em
Right back into reality
C
All that’s goin’ wrong
Em
‘Cause in the midst of this chaotic life,
D  Em
I try to find peace of mind
G  Em
But You’ve been there all along
C
And even now I hear You whisper
Chorus
Bridge:
D  Em
I feel the weight, I feel the weight is slowly lifting
C
As You close the distance
D  C
And I know it’s gonna be ok when I hear You say
Chorus
Outro: G  D  Em  C

DON’T HAVE LOVE

Holly Starr

Verse 1:
D  A  Bm  G  D  A  Bm  G
Well, I don’t have everything
D  A
But God knows just what I need
Bm  G
And He keeps on showing me
Em  D/G#  G  A
Through all the madness It comes down to this
Chorus:
D  Em
You can have money, and cool friends, a ring on your left hand
G  Em
But it’s never gonna be enough
G  Em
If you don’t have love
D  Em
You can have a fast car, a mansion, and everyone’s attention
G  Em
But it’s never gonna be enough
D  Em
If you don’t have love
G  Em
You don’t have love, you don’t have love
Verse 2:
We’re all made in the image of God / But all this baggage that we carry, hides who we really are / A picture of His love, designed to shine like gold, so No matter where you go
Chorus
Bridge:
Bm  E/Ab  G  Em
Love is never selfish, love is never vain (you don’t have love)
Bm  E/Ab  G  Em
Love doesn’t criticize, love doesn’t blame (you don’t have love)
Bm  E/Ab  G  Em
From the beginning, through every age
Bm  E/Ab  G  Em
Love is the one thing that’s never gonna change
D  Em  G  Em
Oh oh oh …
Chorus
End Chorus and Outro:
D  Em
You can have money (oh o-oh)
G  Em
But it’s never gonna be, never gonna be enough
D  Em
You can have a fast car, a mansion, and everyone’s attention
G  Em
But it’s never gonna be enough
D  Em
If you don’t have love, you don’t have love
G  Em
If you don’t have love, Oh you’ve gotta, you gotta have love

Written by Holly Starr and Christopher Stevens
Holly Starr Publishing (admin by Fun Attic Music) (SESAC) / Chriscendo Music / Meaux Mercy Publishing (BMI)

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THE FIRST TIME

MercyMe

Intro: C9, Gsus, Dm7, F
Verse 1: C Gsus Dm7
Day after day I try to explain You
F C9
Like I can contain You in so many words
Gsus Dm7
But You are the ocean and I'm on the shoreline
F Am7
Thinking I know You like You could be learned
Pre-Chorus: Gsus Am7 Gsus F
It's so amazing that You'd ever save me
Chorus: C9 Gsus
I thought I knew Your face, I thought I'd tasted grace
Dm7 F
But I've never felt anything close to this
C9 Gsus
Just when I'd seen it all, New mercy breaks the dawn
Dm7 F
And with my eyes open wide
C9
It feels like the first time, first time
Gsus Dm7 F
It feels like the first time, first time
Verse 2: After all of my searching, all of my reaching / I'm left with nothing, nothing of worth / You treasure the broken over and over / Give me a hope that can never be earned
Pre-Chorus / Chorus Bridge: Gsus C9 Asus C9
Your beauty, no eye has seen
Am7
Your majesty overwhelming
Gsus F
Your love for me is healing, oh God
Chorus 2: I thought I knew Your face / I thought I'd tasted grace / But it was nothing like this / New mercy breaks the dawn / And with my eyes wide open
I feel alive for the first time, first time / Just like the first time, first time
C9 Gsus
I can see for the first time, first time
Dm7 F
It's just like the first time

THE HURT AND THE HEALER

MercyMe

Intro: A2, A2, Dmaj7, Bm7, Dmaj7, Bm7
Verse 1: A2 Bm7/A
Why? The question that is never far away
A2 Bm7
But healing doesn't come from the explained
Gsus Dm7
Jesus, please don't let this go in vain
Bm7/A
You're all I have, all that remains
Pre-Chorus: F#m7 Esus
So here I am, what's left of me
D Bm7
Where glory meets my suffering
Chorus: A2 Asus A2 Dmaj7, Bm7
I'm alive, even though a part of me has died
Dmaj7 A2, Asus
You take my heart and breathe it back to life
A2 Dmaj7, Bm7
I fall into Your arms open wide
Dmaj7 Bm7 A2
When the hurt and the Healer collide
Pre-Chorus / Chorus Instrumental: Dmaj7(add9), Esus, F#m7, E/G# (repeat) Collide Bridge: Dmaj7(add9) Esus F#m7 E/G#
It's the moment when humanity is overcome by majesty
Dmaj7(add9) Esus F#m7 E/G#
Where grace is ushered in for good and all our scars are understood
Dmaj7(add9) Esus F#m7 E/G#
When Mercy takes its rightful place and all these questions fade away
Dmaj7(add9) Esus F#m7 E/G#
When out of weakness we must bow and hear You say, “It's over now.”
Chorus Tag (x2) A2 Asus
Jesus, come and break my fear
A2 Asus
Wake my heart, and take my tears
Dmaj7 Bm7
And find Your glory even here
Dmaj7 Bm7
When the hurt and the Healer collide
Repeat FIRST THREE LINES OF TAG over diamond on Dmaj7

LET GO

Holly Starr

Intro: E, B, C#m, A
Verse 1: E B
I know that a new day is coming soon
C#m A
But alone I am not prepared
E B
You are the One who brought my dust to life
C#m A
Like a rose in the desert
Chorus: E
I know that I've held on too long
C#m
From everything keeping me from
B E/G# A
Learning to let go, I'm learning to let You
E C#m
Move me closer to a heart that's open
B E/G# A
I'm learning to let go, I'm learning to let go
E B C#m A
Learning to let go, learning to let go
Verse 2: Lord I know that you've called me to this place
Where Your eyes are teaching me grace (teaching me grace)
I can't see where I'm going but I will believe
That You're never gonna leave
You're always holding me
Chorus Bridge: E/G# A
No, there's nothing I own
E B
All you've designed so beautifully sewn
E/G# A
Oh please, help me let go
F#m7 B
'Cause You're in control
Chorus Outro (x2) E B
Learning to let go, learning to let go
C#m A
I'm learning to let go, I'm learning to let go

OUR GOD IS COMING

Desperation Band

Intro:
B

Verse 1:
G#m7(add4) F#/A#     B                    E         F#
Hear the freedom sound broken chains hit the ground
G#m(add4) F#/A#     B                           E        F#
And now the time has come beyond ourselves to live as one

Pre-Chorus:
E                B             G#m7(add4)   F#
We worship our God only only
E           B        G#m7(add4)   F#
The one living God holy

Chorus:
E        B       F#      Jesus we give You our lives
E        B       F#      Jesus we give You our lives

Verse 2:
Lift the banner high the flood of love has changed our lives
All the earth resound singing songs of God's renown

Pre-Chorus / Chorus

Bridge (4x):
G#m7(add4)     B
Look to the skies oh heaven is wide
F#                    C#m7
You are the Christ our God is coming

Pre-Chorus / Chorus

OVERCOME

Lara Landon

Intro:
Gm        C        Gm        C

Verse 1:
Gm        C
History handed down through generations
Gm        C
A truth prevails throughout the ages
Bb        C
Authority over every tribe and nation
Eb        F
Is our God's, Is our God's!

Chorus 1:
Gm        Dm
We will overcome by the blood of the Lamb
Gm        Dm
We will overcome by the blood of the Lamb...

Verse 2:
So rise up prophets, kings and priests
The spirits in you, you hold the keys
We already know every victory
Is our God's, Is our God's!

Chorus 2:
Gm        Dm
We will overcome every darkness
C        D
With our testimony we'll give Him glory
Gm
Until our dying breath - We will overcome!

Bridge:
Eb        Bb/F
Our God is able Through His mighty power
Eb/C        Eb
To do anything, More than we imagine
Bb/F        Eb/C
More than we can fathom, More than we can ask

Chorus 2

Written By Lara Landon (New Reality International Publishing BMI)/ Krissy Nordhoff (Two Nords Music ASCAP) Revelation 12:11

SAINTS & ANGELS

Jeremy Hartshorn

Verse 1:
C#m        B        A        E        C#m        B        A        E
I've been singing for a lifetime About amazing grace
C#m        B        A        E
When your light shines right through me
C#m        B        A        E
I'll know it face-to-face
C#m        B        A        E
Someday I'll stand before you
C#m        B        A        E
Find myself in Your embrace
C#m        B        A        E
Then be caught up with the angels
C#m        B        A        E
Our eternal anthem raise

Pre-Chorus:
C#m        B
Then I'll join that ancient chorus
A/C#                    B
Saint's & angels singing...

Chorus:
E        B        A        B
Glory Glory Hallelujah Forever we will sing
E        B
Holy Holy He is worthy
A        B        ||: C#m , B , A , E :||
Blessed be the King forever more

Verse 2:
It was sung before the ages / An endless hymn of praise
/ A thousand repetitions / Just an opening refrain

Pre-Chorus 2:
C#m        B
I will join that ancient chorus
A/C#                    B
Saint's & angels singing

Chorus

Bridge:
C#m        B
It was sung before the ages
A        B
It's the song I'm singing now
C#m        B
Eternal chorus of the heavens
A        B        A
Voices You created ringing out...

Chorus 2x
SING IT ANYWAY

Jeremy Hartshorn

INTRO: C G / D D D C G

VERSE 1:
D Am C G
What is there to sing to you / that no one's sung before?
D Am C G
How can I describe the infinite / with only words?
D Am C G
There may be nothing new to say but I'm gonna
sing it anyway

CHORUS:
D Am C G
There is no one like You
D Am C G
You are God
D Am C G
It may be nothing new but it'll always be true
D Am C G
You are God
D Am C G
(1st & 3rd Chorus only)
D D D C G
Yeah You are good [guitar hook]

VERSE 2:
D C G
What can I compare You to that You did not create?
D C G
Everything's beneath You Lord
D C G
You are God
D C G
There may be nothing new to say but I'm still lifting
up Your name

REPEAT CHORUS

BRIDGE:
C
God, You are an awesome God
D
Everlasting, Beautiful
C
Above the water, earth and sky
D
Lord I lift Your name on high
C
Your light shines when all else fades
D
Blessed be Your glorious name
C G
I don't care if it's cliché I'm gonna sing it anyway

THE SPIRIT OF
THE LORD

Lara Landon

CHORUS:
Ab Eb/G
The Spirit Of The Lord is upon me
Fm Ab Eb/G Fm
He has anointed me to bring good news to the poor
Ab
He's sent me to proclaim that the
Eb/G Fm
captives would be released
Fm Eb/G Ab
the blind would see
Fm Eb/G Ab
and the oppressed would be set free

VERSE 1:
F Eb
Yeshua Ha-Mashiach stood to read
F Eb
from the scroll of Isaiah's prophecy
F Eb
This word has been fulfilled in me!

VERSE 2:
F Db
Even the gates of hell will not prevail
F Db
I've been anointed to do my Father's will
F Eb
Blessed is the one who believes!

VERSE 3:
F Eb
Everything that you have witnessed you shall do
F Eb
The Father and I will be alive in you
F Eb
I give you my power and peace

THIS I KNOW

Desperation Band

INTRO: F5

VERSE 1:
F5
Who has stretched out the skies like a canvas?
Dm7
Who has scooped out the oceans with His hands?
Bb2
Who has measured the hills from the mountains?
F5
You have

VERSE 2:
F5
Who has given us beauty for ashes?
F5
Who has broken the chains of the captives?
F5
Who has rescued our lives with compassion?
F5
You have

CHORUS:
Bb2 F5
This I know You are a great God
Bb2 F5
This I know You are the one true God
Dm7 Bb2 F5 Csus
You are a great God
Dm7 Bb2 F5 Csus
Risen Savior, King forever, love unending, beautiful
Dm7 Bb2 F5 Csus
One

BRIDGE (2x):
Dm7 Bb2 F5 Csus
Everlasting, all consuming, burning fire, glorious
Dm7 Bb2 F5 Csus
One

CHORUS

**VOICE LIKE A MOUNTAIN**

Jeremy Hartshorn

**Verse 1:**
C D G
The world's a piñata
C D
With nothing inside

And the “something” I'm missing
Em A7
is something I can’t buy
C D G Em

Creator of all
It's Your voice I need
A7 D D7
To tell me who I am To tell me I'm redeemed

**Chorus:**
C D
With a voice like a mountain You're singing to me
Em A7
Telling me that I'm loved, Telling me that I'm free
C D
No one else to impress, Nothing left to achieve
Em A7
Only to know, And be known by a King

**Tag 1:**
C D G Gsus G
Only to know, And be known by a King

**Verse 2:**
C D G
No judge & no jury
C D Em
To tell me that I'm dirty
C D Em G
Just the God of Creation Singing to me
A7 D D7
Telling me who I am, telling me I'm redeemed

**Chorus X2**

**Tag 2:**
C D Em A7
Only to know, And be known by a King
C D G
Gsus G

**Bridge:**
C D Em A7
My Savior, my friend
C D G Gsus G

This song of redemption that You're singing to me
Gsus G
Yeah You're singing to me...

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**WHEN MERCY FOUND ME**

Rhett Walker Band

**Intro:** Ab2 / Eb / | Bb / / /

**Verse 1:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chords</th>
<th>Example Cm Ab Cm</th>
<th>Ab Cm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

I can't count the broken roads I've been down
but all I know something to give

Emaj7 Bb Bm3
Something had to give, 'cause living my life so wild and free
finally caught up and led me broken me hope - less, Ab3
but that's where I met Jesus

**Chorus:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chords</th>
<th>Example Ab2 Eb Cm</th>
<th>Ab2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

And in one moment everything changed,
who I was got washed away when mercy found me

Emaj7 Bb Bm3
My Savior's arms were open wide
and I felt love for the very first time when mercy found me

**Verse 2:**

All those days and all those doubts they don't seem to matter now / His grace is all I need / And the chains that I was in before, they don't hold me anymore / His love has rescued me, oh His love has set me free

**Chorus**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bridge:</th>
<th>Example Ab2 Cm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

My mind found peace, my soul found hope, Bb

my heart found a home

**Instrumental:** Ab2 / Eb / | Bb / Cm / | Ab2 / Eb / | Bb / Cm / Ab2

**Chorus Tag:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chords</th>
<th>Example Eb Bb Cm Ab2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

When mercy found me, Ab Bb Ab2 / Eb / | Bb / / |

when mercy found me

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intro (2x)</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

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**YOU ARE I AM**

MercyMe

**Intro (4ad):** B9, F#sus, G#m7, E

**Verse 1:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chords</th>
<th>Example B9 F#sus G#m7, E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

I've been the one to shake with fear
G#m7 G#m7 E
And wonder if You're even here
B9 F#sus
I've been the one to doubt Your love
G#m7 G#m7 (Repeat Intro 2x)

I've told myself You're not enough
B9 F#sus
I've been the one to try and say
G#m7 E
I’ll overcome by my own strength
B9 F#sus
I've been the one to fall apart
G#m7 E
And start to question who You are

**Chorus:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chords</th>
<th>Example B9 F#sus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

You're the One who conquers giants
G#m7 E
You're the One who calls out kings
B9 F#sus
You shut the mouths of lions
G#m7 E
You tell the dead to breathe
B9 F#sus
You're the One who walks through fire
G#m7 E
You take the orphan's hand
B9 F#sus
You are the One Messiah
G#m7 E, B9, F#sus
You are the One who walks through fire
B9 F#sus
You're the One who conquers giants
G#m7 E
You shut the mouths of lions
G#m7 E

**Verse 2:**

I've been the one held down in chains / Beneath the weight of all my shame / I've been the one to believe / That where I am You cannot reach

**Chorus**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bridge:</th>
<th>Example Emaj7, F#6 G#m7, Emaj7, F#6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

The veil is torn and now I live
with the Spirit inside

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chords</th>
<th>Example Emaj7, F#6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

The same One, the very same One
G#m7 F#sus
Who brought the Son back to life
B9 F#sus
Hallelujah, He lives in me
B9 F#sus

**Chorus Tag**

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Unavoidable. Pervasive. Inescapable. Secular pop music is everywhere. Even if you can get your young Christian friends to switch their listening habits from secular to sacred, they are still going to hear the top popular songs everywhere they go. In this section we provide you some ideas to take advantage of some of the most popular secular songs. Use the opening questions, the thematic concepts and discussion ideas to spice up your Bible study, Sunday School lesson, camp/retreat meeting or outreach event message.

Artist: Carly Rae Jepsen
Song: Call Me Maybe
Album: Call Me Maybe – Single
By: Cindy Engøy wurldgurl@hotmail.com

Teaching Point:
God wants us to know that He is what we’re actually looking for.

Opening Questions:
How many of you have wanted something so badly you just can’t stand it? What was it? Maybe you wanted to meet a guy or girl? Maybe there was something that you really wanted for Christmas, birthday, or that you saved your money for thinking it would be perfect? Did you get what you wanted and then found out it wasn’t really what you wanted or it turned out not be the right thing for you after all?

Discussion:
A line from “Call Me Maybe” says, “I’d trade my soul for a wish…” Sounds a bit drastic, but I’m sure many of us have had those feelings. “I’d give anything for…” What does the Bible say about those things that are important to us?

• Read Matthew 6:20. What is this verse say about our treasures? How do we store treasures in heaven? What are those treasures?
• Read Matthew 6:33. What should our “wish” really be? What will God do for us if we follow His wishes?

From these Bible verses we learn that the only treasures that are real are those we get from God and what we do for God.

So, let’s say that we get what we wish for, but we realize that it wasn’t what we actually wanted. We have all seen “Call Me Maybe” the video – when she finally gets what she thinks she wants, it’s totally not what she expected or really wanted. Is there anything that is what it says it is or seems to be? Well, let’s look at the Bible.

• Read Hebrews 13:8. Is there anyone who is actually “what you see is what you get”?
• Read Malachi 3:6. Will God ever change? Is there anything we can do to cause Him to change?

These verses show us that God is the same, now and always. We don’t need to worry that He will change. We will probably change, but He is who and what He says He is.

Conclusion:
Psalm 33:4 says that God is “right and true” in all He does. In Jeremiah 31:3 God says He loves us “with an everlasting love.” So, do you settle for something that you wish for, or do you find the real thing in God?

Artist: Fun.
Song: Some Nights
Album: Some Nights
By: Dave Felts davefelts@gmail.com

Teaching Point:
This song is about disillusionment and confusion. Sometimes we think we know what we want in life, but when we get it we find it is not what we had hoped it would be.

Opening Questions:
What do you dream about for your future? Fame? Wealth? Leisure? How do you think you would feel if you accomplished all that you had dreamed and found that it had a real down side? Is success sometimes a failure? How?

Discussion:
The imagery of war in the video of this song is coupled with lyrics that are filled with frustration. Even though he (Nate Ruess of Fun.) has found much success, he seems to feel that he has “sold his soul” in order to get there. In the process, he thinks that he has also lost some important relationships. Nate is conflicted about leaving home (Arizona/the desert), especially his mom and sister. He also seems to feel that he has allowed the “industry” to take away his ability to say what he wants to say. [WARNING: There is one expletive in the lyrics. Just so you’re aware.] Feelings like that are not totally unusual but can be tempered by an abiding faith in the One who made us.

Read Joshua 1:6-9. Joshua, having just been promoted to become the leader of Israel after the death of Moses, was facing some huge challenges. These are God’s instructions to him about how to handle that success without “selling his soul.” How can Joshua keep from being “terrified or discouraged?” (By trusting that “the Lord” his God would be with him)

Read Proverbs 3:5-6. How can we avoid driving our life into a ditch (so to speak)? Have you ever had a time when “your own understanding” proved to be totally off?

Conclusion:
Search through Philippians 4:4-7 to find the keys to the “peace of God which transcends all understanding.” (Rejoicing, gentleness, prayer, thanksgiving) If you had an opportunity to talk to Nate, what could you share with him about this?

Artist: Jason Aldean
Song: Take A Little Ride
Album: Take A Little Ride
By: Jeff Williamson williamson@unionavenue.org

Teaching Point:
What is the best plan to follow? The decision is up to you.

Opening Questions:
What is the wise decision? Everyone expects so much of me, what should I do?

Discussion:
Jason Aldean sets the stage for the perfect afternoon after the end of a long hard day of work. The choices are easy – just hop in the pickup track and take a little ride.

We all would love to do that – to take a break from our busy day, kick back, and spend some time doing nothing with our friends. There is nothing wrong with this desire at all. The question is, what will you do with this time? What is the wise decision? You may even feel as though everyone expects too much of you. What should you do?

This may sound odd and out of the norm, but have you thought about taking a little ride with God? Once that choice is made, other choices should be easy. Think of it this way: In light of your past experiences, your current responsibilities, and your future hopes and dreams, what is the wisest way to invest your time?

James 1:13-15 says, “When people are tempted, they should not say, ‘God is tempting me.’ Evil cannot tempt God, and God himself does not tempt anyone. But people are tempted when their own evil desire leads them away and traps them. This desire leads to sin, and then the sin grows and brings death.” And Galatians 6:9 says, “So let’s not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don’t give up.”

Conclusion:
In light of past experiences, current responsibilities, and future dreams, what is the wisest way to invest your time? What is the best choice for you to make that will highlight the non-valuation things in your life, but rather focus on the valuable thing: Christ?
Artist: Linkin Park  
**Song:** Burn It Down  
**Album:** Living Things  
**By:** Todd Pearage  
**E-mail:** todd@thegatheringdayton.org

**Teaching Point:**  
Lies and broken trust – this song is about the negative patterns we experience in relationships.

**Opening Questions:**  
When you think of the word pattern, what comes to mind? What are some “patterns” you have experienced? Have you experienced “patterns” in a relationship? What did they look like?

**Discussion:**  
In the song, the band talks about the pattern of Building Trust > Lie > Breaking Trust > Hurt. The first thing they say is, “The cycle repeated as explosions broke in the sky.” Later they say “You told me yes, You held me high, And I believed. When you told that lie. Can you relate to what they are saying? What emotions do those lyrics evoke?

The relationship in this song is broken because of lies and abandoned trust. One of them had been hiding the truth. The song continues with, “We’re building it up To break it back down We’re building it up To burn it down.” So, in the end, what was their solution?

If you have ever been lied to, you know that hurt follows right behind it. No one likes to be lied to; we may even say we hate it. Let’s see how God feels about it.

Read Proverbs 6:16-19. According to this verse, how does God feel about lying? So how should we view lying?

Some people might say that the truth will hurt people’s feelings. Isn’t it better to lie sometimes? Ephesians 4:15 says, “Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ.” What is an example of speaking the truth in love?

**Conclusion:**  
What are some ways we can begin a pattern of speaking the truth in love this week?

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Artist: M83  
**Song:** Midnight City  
**Album:** Hurry Up, We’re Dreaming  
**By:** Kirk Moore  
**E-mail:** wouldyouever@givingupchurchforlent.com

**Teaching Point:**  
What and where is “church”?

**Opening Question:**  
Where do you find community and love?

**Discussion:**  
M83’s “Midnight City” is a highly danceable, significantly confusing, and oft-discussed pop song. Most of the discussions about the song’s meaning, with a few “I’m sure it means this…” statements thrown in end with all agreeing that they’re not sure what it’s about. The video for the song, according to the band, is a tribute to the films Village of the Damned and Close Encounters of the Third Kind. The video expresses themes of exploitation, imprisonment, escape, and community.

One line in the song says, “The city is my church.” What is the church?

- Is it the building where the community gathers to worship God and live God’s love?
- Is it the community who gathers to worship God and to live God’s love?
- Could it be both?

Where do you find community?

- How is the location important? How is it not important?

Where do you see God’s love being lived out?

- How do you see God’s love being lived out?

What is the church?

- What else are you thinking about today?

**Conclusion:**  
People worship God in many gathered communities and in many places. In church, people find community and experience God’s love lived out. Go and be the church!

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Artist: The Lumineers  
**Song:** “Ho Hey”  
**Album:** The Lumineers  
**By:** Doug Ranck  
**E-mail:** dranck@fmcsb.org

**Teaching Point:** Relationships

**Opening Question:** Have you ever heard the statement, “The grass is always greener on the other side?” What does this mean? How can it sometimes apply to relationships? How can thinking this way be good? How can it be bad?

**Discussion:** God created us for relationships. The very nature of God is relationship, as seen in the Trinity with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. When He created Adam, God stated that it was “not good for man to be alone.” (Genesis 2:18) In relationships, God designed that we help each other and bring fulfillment to each other.

The Lumineers sing a song about a relationship wanted by one and not yet appreciated by the other. In this situation, it seems the grass truly could be greener if this guy and girl were to get together. The writer says, “I’ve been trying to do it right and you belong with me. From this limited perspective, we will never know if this was going to be the best match, but we can be inspired by the guy’s desire for excellence in his relationships.

The Apostle Paul challenged his readers by writing, “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.” (Philippians 4:8, NIV) As a person fixes his or her thoughts on these things, through the power of God, these values become central to all the decisions of life including relationships. God honors our pure desires by bringing people into our lives who also share these values and help us to strive for greater excellence in all we say and do.

The act of finding fulfilling relationships begins in our growing relationship with God by prayer and study of the Bible. This will produce solid relationships with those who share our love for God. Through their counsel and encouragement we can say, “I belong with you.”

**Conclusion:**  
How would you rate your present relationships? Poor? Fair? Good? Best? Who are one or two people that bring reward to your life? If there are none, what is your first step to make it happen?
Unavoidable. Pervasive. Inescapable. Secular pop music is everywhere. Even if you can get your young Christian friends to switch their listening habits from secular to sacred, they are still going to hear the top popular songs everywhere they go. In this section we provide you some ideas to take advantage of some of the most popular secular songs.

Use the opening questions, the thematic concepts and discussion ideas to spice up your Bible study, Sunday School lesson, camp retreat meeting or outreach event message.

Artist: Neon Trees
Song: Everybody Talks
Album: Picture Show
By: Carl Jones
youthguy07@aol.com

Teaching Point:
This song is about lies, rumors, and the damage that words can do to people and relationships.

Opening Questions:
Have you ever been the subject of a rumor? Have you ever been disappointed by the things someone said about you — especially someone who you thought was a friend or a loved one? Have you ever been talked about behind your back? Are lying and gossip just a part of the word that cannot be avoided? Is it true that “Everybody Talks?”

Discussion:
In a social media world, the smallest things can be quickly blown out of proportion. The words we type in texts, on Facebook, and on Twitter can quickly degenerate into gossip, rumor and name calling. We watch TV shows that report rumor and half-truths as if they are the gospel. As the song says, it can become like a drug… like a new addiction. Contrary to the old children’s saying, words do hurt. Most of us have felt that pain, and yet most of us are also guilty of using words to damage others.

How can we break the cycle of using lies and slanders to put others down? Is there any way to speak the truth without doing harm?

Read James 3:5-6 — those verses remind us how dangerous words can be. That is serious stuff and a stern warning. And we know it is true. And, James 3:7-10 tell us just how hard it is to keep our words in check. Do those verses describe you and your friends?

How do we keep our human nature in check? How do we attempt to tame our tongues? In Matthew 5:7, Jesus encourages us to “let your yes be yes, and your no be no.” He is talking about making promises, and it is good advice for all of our speaking. Take measure of your words before saying them. Pray over your words before pressing “send.”

Speak the truth, but speak it in love. The song says, It started with a whisper… and before long, everyone is talking. And damage is done.

Conclusion:
Read James 3:10-12. The world may say that “Everybody Talks” and that lies and rumors are a part of life. Jesus says to speak the truth. Jesus says that He IS the truth. To follow Him is to rise from the mud hole and seek to speak words of love.

Artist: Shinedown
Song: Bully
Album: Amaryllis
By: Aaron Tucker
rev.tucker@gmail.com

Teaching Point:
We’ve all faced bullies, but there is One who also faced bullies and who understands our pain.

Opening Questions:
Have you ever faced a bully? Describe how you’d feel for each of these scenarios:
• To be the weaker one facing the stronger one
• To be the smaller one facing the bigger one
• To be the ignored one facing the one whom everyone knows
• To be the fearful one facing the cocky one.

Discussion:
The song says, Push him to the dirt / ’Til the words don’t hurt / Can you hear me? When someone is being bullied, they often think that no one cares about their situation.

Have someone read Hebrews 12:3-4. Point out that Jesus Himself is the one you can think about when you are struggling against a difficult world. He was not merely bullied, He faced persecutors that beat Him, spit on Him, shredded His skin, and drove nails through His hands and feet. Being bullied is bad, but Jesus totally understands any pain you feel.

Have a volunteer read Hebrews 12:1-2. Point out that Jesus suffered and was killed, but God brought Him back to life — so we know that death is conquered. Now, everyone still dies, but death does not have to make us afraid — any more than bullies have to make us afraid. Why? Jesus’ death is the solution for our sins being forgiven. We all have sinned against God (see Romans 3:23) and the world we live in is a broken one. The fact that there are bullies is proof of that! But Jesus gives us a cause to fight for that is greater than this broken world. Jesus did it for joy, and is glorified with God in heaven even right now for it. We can follow His example and stand up to any bully who comes our way. And when the bullying gets unbearable, we can find hope in the fact that Jesus knows exactly what we are going through and that He has a plan for us, long after that bully is gone!

Conclusion:
End with a prayer that thanks God for the hope He gives us because of Jesus. Thank God for the beautiful promise of someone who understands our pain. Have students read more later about the pain Jesus endured, by reading Luke 23. Tell them the ending of the story is even better, in Luke 24:1-12.

Artist: The Wanted
Song: Glad You Came
Album: The Wanted
By: Jamis Backell
jamisbackell@gmail.com

Teaching Point:
We need one another to do the work God has called us to do. We should be welcoming and accepting of the people in our youth group because God put all of them there for a reason.

Opening Questions:
Have you ever gone some place alone and felt insecure because you didn’t know anyone there? What happens when someone makes an effort to welcome you to the group? As a youth group, are we actively inviting new people and providing an atmosphere of welcome and acceptance?

Discussion:
Youth group is one place where we can make a difference in people’s lives. When a new person shows up and we welcome them, show them God’s love and acceptance, and show them that we are glad they came, that experience can have a great impact on their lives.

We have been given commands, not just suggestions, from Christ to care for each other. Read John 15:12. Jesus gives us the ultimate example: love like He loved. Then, He repeats himself just a few verses later. Read John 15:17. Earlier, in John 13:35. Jesus tells us why we need to love one another. We have something the world needs. When we share Christ’s love with each other, the world sees it and we have an opportunity to share it with those trapped in the world.

Yes, this song is about a guy and a girl and “love at first sight” — but that’s not the love that Jesus is talking about. Our culture tries to substitute God’s love with that “universe will never be the same; you cast a spell on me” feeling. But we understand a greater love, that it’s more than just that warm fuzzy feeling or the initial attraction. Read Romans 15:7 — it’s about following Jesus’ example for God’s sake and glory, not for what we can get out of the relationship. God’s love is about sacrifice and mercy. When we can share that love with those around us, especially those who are on the fringes of our culture, we can help them find what only God can provide.

Conclusion:
Welcoming others into our youth group can help to change their universe, but introduces them to the Creator of the universe that loves them so much that He died for them. (John 3:16) You all know it, let’s share it with our lives, not just with words!
Not every available Christian music album can make it into the Youth Leaders Only box, so we try to give you a taste of what else is available in your local store. Since interlínc often gets “pre-release” copies of upcoming CDs, we can give you a “heads up” to new releases that might be just right for you and your young friends. Artist: The individual or group of musicians. Title: The name of the album or project. Label: The company behind the album or project. Genre: The general musical style of the album or project. TIYL: “Try If You Like” – a comparison of similar musical artists. @: The internet web address of the musical artist. By: The name of the person who wrote the review.

**Jordan Howerton Band**

*We Are Free*

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<tr>
<td><em>We Are Free</em></td>
<td>Indie</td>
<td>Jordan Howerton Band</td>
<td>Modern Worship</td>
<td>Glen Allen Green</td>
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If asked to describe the past 25 years in Contemporary Christian Music with just one word, “worship” might be the main response. Worship continues to dominate many of the more popular song lists (as well as sales charts) and think how far the genre has come from its early beginnings! Today the church is blessed with a “plethora” (“¡Si, El Guapo!”) of styles of worship music. Keep that in mind as I introduce you to the worship album from the Jordan Howerton Band.

First, let’s get to the nuts & bolts: you are going to love the vocals here. Very clear and up front, the vocals dominate each track. As to musical styles, this worship sometimes runs with the guitars pushed up a bit, Hillsong United-ish. You’ll notice this especially on tracks like “We Are Free”, “Faithful And True”, and “Joy.” But JWB can also slow it down as on tracks like “Sleep” and “Come Home.” The album closes on a big note with a ballad, which segues into the anthemic “Awake.”

So, you’ll find the same true of the songs on JHB’s “We Are Free” – very fine stones/songs, which God can and will use in your ministry and personal life.

**The Museum**

*My Only Rescue*

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<tr>
<td><em>My Only Rescue</em></td>
<td>BEC Recordings</td>
<td>The Museum</td>
<td>Rock</td>
<td>Joel Jackson</td>
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On their sophomore effort, The Museum presents a beautiful album full of inspirational lyrics that inspire hope and encourage listeners in the faith. Teens who seek music that will inspire their faith and encourage them in the midst of life’s trials will find much to enjoy about this album. In many ways this album serves as a soundtrack for those who realize their need for Christ in the midst of life’s trials. All teens face trials, therefore all teens can find inspiration and strength through the songs presented on “Only My Rescue.”

“All Over The World” is a song that inspires revival for all peoples, it declares that Christ’s resurrection and the new life promised through resurrection are available for all peoples. “Sold Ground” is a musically strong song that encourages listeners with the fact that Christ is always there even in the eye of the storm, even when the earth shakes, even in our weakness, God remains. “Found in You” encourages listeners with the fact that God chooses to love us exactly as we are. Therefore, we have access to His grace and the salvation offered by His grace. His grace always surrounds us and provides us with strength as we face our fears. The title track, “My Only Rescue” declares that even as the world lets us down, God remains strong. Too often we are tempted to depend on people or things, but the only true hope that we have is in Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. When we feel strong, God makes us stronger still. When we feel weak, God enters into our weakness and holds us. Much of the rest of the album declares these same themes. We find hope and acceptance in Christ who delivers us.

While the whole album ultimately expresses worship to our Lord, “Coming Closer” is a beautiful worship anthem that declares a joyful sound in response to God’s presence. If you know youth who need to experience hope and need to learn what it means to depend on God amidst trial share this album with those youth. If they soak in the lyrics, they will discover that our hope rests on Jesus Christ.

**Pioneer**

*Treason*

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Josh Randolph, Chad Shirrell, Dalton Meyers, Dan Voris, and Nick Berry make up this band from Indianapolis. They were previously known as News From Verona. Oh yeah – these guys know how to ROCK. It’s been awhile since I’ve had the chance to review an album, so I was glad asked to review this one. Treason was a total blast to review, and I’m convinced that fans of Pop/Rock will want to check this one out.

Pioneer means “One who ventures into unknown or unclaimed territory to settle.” And I’ll be the first to say that’s a perfect name for these guys. With new music, a new name, and new tours on the way, Pioneer is venturing into the uncertain territory of today’s music scene. And how do they feel about that? “We’re just a bunch of Midwest boys that want to play rock ’n roll,” says drummer Dan Voris. “That’s kind of the vibe we want to float on.”

“Clarity” opens with acoustic guitar and inspired vocals with passion to spare. 57 seconds later you are hip deep in a rock song called “Lights”. Then it’s the title track, and “Treason” is by far my favorite song – it’s not surprising that it has climbed to the top of the charts. “Whatever It Takes” is a song that delivers exactly what you would expect – a song that will inspire and move you. “Reaching” is one of those songs that will remind you of some of the rock classics. The long intro sets the mood for a total introspective experience. The album closes with “King in Rags”, a powerful ending to a great album. The only thing I didn’t like about this song…was that it marked the end of the CD.

I highly recommend you get this album today. With strong lyrics and catchy tunes, I think they’ll quickly grow a large following – and you don’t want to be left out. I know I’m a fan!
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