HIGH SCHOOL MINISTRY

SERIES TITLE
TEACHING GUIDE
WEEK 4

MAIN SCRIPTURE:	MAIN POINT:	JESUS CONNECTION:
John 15:4-5	Staying connected with your Creator empowers you to keeping living in His identity and purpose for you.	Believing in Jesus starts a life-long relationship with Him.

THE WHAT

WHAT are we talking about and WHY does it matter to me? (3-4 min)

ME

- *Tell a story about a time your phone died and you weren't able to charge it. Your story can be dramatic, if you have one. If not, it can be light-hearted.*
    - *Begin by talking about your favorite apps on your phone and the ways you use your phone the most. Talk about how incredible your phone is, how useful it is, and all the things you can do with it.*
    - *Finish your story by sharing about how frustrated, lost, and/or helpless you felt over something as simple as your phone dying.*
- We've probably all had that moment where our phone died or we rushed to get a charger to keep it from dying.
- Our phones are lifelines to so many things: sending texts and connecting with friends, taking pictures, checking social media, playing games, watching YouTube, etc.)
- *Hold up your phone and turn it off to simulate a dead battery.* But when its battery is drained, it's no longer the essential tool most of us have come to depend on. It's just a brick, a paperweight that can't do anything.

WE

<u>SOMETIMES WE GET DRAINED.</u>

- If we're honest, we've probably had a moment or two (maybe even this week) where we felt a little bit like this dead phone. Sure, we're capable of being alert, focused, productive, kind, generous, talkative . . . but we're just so drained.
- Maybe it's because we're exhausted. Maybe it's because we're busy. Maybe it's because we're going through a difficult season. Whatever the reason, sometimes life leaves us feeling drained.
- This matters because, when we're drained, we can't be everything we're made to be.
- I don't know what happens to you when you feel drained. Maybe you just want to sleep. Maybe you get impatient or angry. Maybe you cry. Maybe you lash out. When we're drained, the best parts of us get overtaken by the worst parts of us.
- When we're drained, we're not the best versions of ourselves.

NOTES

THE WHAT CONTINUED

TRANSITION

- So let's say we're like this drained smart phone. What do you do when your phone dies? Simple; You plug it into a power source.
- *Plug your phone into a power source and turn it on again, showing your students as a visual.*
- Jesus actually had something to say about this. Not about phones, of course, but about what it means to be drained, to fail to be everything we were made to be, and how to get connected to a greater source of power.

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SO WHAT

So WHAT does this mean for my faith and life with God? (4-5 min)

GOD

UNPACK JOHN 15:4-5

- Maybe if Jesus were here with us now, he'd use a smart phone as an illustration (or, more likely, He'd come up with something way better), but 2,000 years ago He used an illustration He knew His audience would understand: a vine, a branch, and some fruit.
- READ JOHN 15:4-5.
- You see, a grapevine's purpose is to grow fruit. The vine is the strong, sturdy, core of the plant. That, Jesus says, is Him. The branch is connected to the vine. That, Jesus says, is you or me — His follower. And the fruit that grows on the branch, according to Scripture, is the result of God's work in our life. And that fruit is connected with our identities.

YOU WERE CREATED TO BEAR FRUIT.

- When you think about your identity — when you try to answer the question, "Who am I?" — you probably think about your personality, your abilities, your interests, and your passions. We talked about a lot of those things last week. But that's not the whole picture.
- Because you were created by God, you were created to know God.
- Not only were you created to know God, but you were also created to "bear fruit" — that is, there should be evidence that you are connected with God. Your life should start to change. You should start to look more like Jesus.
- Knowing and becoming like Jesus is part of who you were created to be. It's part of your identity. It's what your Creator has had planned for you all along.
- But if you want everything your Creator has for you, you've got to stay connected to Him.
- Just like that phone, and just like that branch, it's only when you are connected to a greater source of power, of strength, and of life, that you'll become everything you were created to be.
- Think of it this way: **Staying connected with your Creator empowers you to keeping living in His identity and purpose for you.**

JESUS CONNECTION

- Believing in Jesus starts a life-long relationship with Him.
- Some people might have an emotional moment with God at camp or something and then walk away, not realizing that following Him is a life-long commitment where we start our relationship with Jesus.
- How do you start this relationship with Jesus? By believing God sent Jesus to die on the cross to rescue us from our sin and death; we are not saved by doing good things but by having faith in Jesus Christ.

TRANSITION

- Jesus wants a life-long relationship with you where you continually connect with Him, like our phones continually connect with charges or grapes continually connect with their vines.

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NOW WHAT

NOW that we know, HOW can we live this out? (2-3 min)

YOU

CONNECT WITH GOD WHEN YOU'RE DRAINED.

- We talked today about feeling drained. Maybe you know what that's like.
- Sometimes we feel drained physically or emotionally. Sometimes we feel drained spiritually.
- Remember what we said earlier. When you're drained, you're not at your best. When you're drained, you're not able to be everything God created you to be.
- This week, pay attention to your body, your mind, and your spirit. Pay attention to the moments you feel drained. Maybe you find yourself snapping at your parents, or being less patient or generous than you usually would be.
- Then, when you're feeling drained, pause, and then go connect with your Creator. Talk to Him. Read His Word. Ask Him to fill you up, to give you new power, life, and strength. Ask Him to help you "bear fruit" so you can look more like Jesus.

DON'T WAIT UNTIL YOU ARE DRAINED TO CONNECT WITH GOD.

- After I got stuck with a dead phone a few times, I realized I could avoid draining my battery by plugging into a power source more often.
- That's what Jesus meant when He said to "remain" in Him. A branch will die if it spends most of its time disconnected from its vine.
- If you really want to discover everything God created you to be, stay connected with Him. Don't wait until you're desperate. Connect with Him every day, all day long. Stay connected.

WE

- Let's encourage each other to stay connected to God.

PRAY

- Throughout this series, we've spent a lot of time talking about how you can discover who you were created to be. As we close this series, I want us to remember that we will never fully know who we are created to be apart from the God who created us.
- Close your time together in prayer.
- *As you close, consider playing or performing (or asking someone else to perform) the song "Closer" by GAWVI.*

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