HIGH SCHOOL MINISTRY

YOU BELONG HERE TEACHING GUIDE

WEEK 2

MAIN SCRIPTURES:
Hebrews 10:23-25

MAIN POINT:
You matter to God and you belong here so:
(1) Show up.
(2) Be real.
(3) Go after Jesus.

JESUS CONNECTION:
Jesus wants more than a surface level relationship with you - He wants a personal relationship with you.

THE WHAT

WHAT are we talking about and WHY does it matter to me? (2-4 min)

ME

- Some things are scarier when you have to do them alone.
- *Speaker Note: Include a personal story of a time you did something exciting or scary you might not have otherwise done because of a friend. (Ex: Haunted house, rollercoaster, go to camp, etc.)*
- The Bible starts with "In the beginning God created…" followed by a whole chapter listing all the things God created and how God ranked each thing. (Genesis 1)
- And the first "not good" thing in all of creation was being alone. (Genesis 2:18)
- **We are not wired to be alone. We are designed for connection.**

WE

- Things are simply better when we can journey alongside of other people. And church is the same way. **There are parts of faith that are confusing**. It's easy—and natural—to have doubts and struggles. All of that is less intimidating if **you don't have to face it alone.**
- We don't want church to just be a "sit and listen to the lecture" experience. This is one of the reasons we have small groups**: Because we want church to be a dialogue—a conversation—between you and other people.**
- I recognize you may or may not be into your small group yet. And maybe that's because…
  - You already have friends.
  - You don't like some of the people in your group.
  - You don't trust or know some of the people in your group.
  - You don't want to talk to people.
- No matter the reason, sometimes you may simply wonder, "What's the point of small group?"

TRANSITION

- **But why does small group matter if you already have friends? Small group matters because your spiritual growth matters.**
- Small groups are meant to be more than just somebody to hang out with – it's meant to be secure, unfailing acceptance and connection with others. Let's take a look at Hebrews.

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SO WHAT

So WHAT does this mean for my faith and life with God? (6-8 min)

GOD

- READ HEBREWS 12:23-25 TOGETHER.
- Don't miss this. This is a BIG DEAL! The writer of Hebrews is talking to Jewish Christians, which basically meant they were facing execution and excommunication (that just means exclusion from their community) because of their belief in Jesus. This wasn't just saying "Hey, if it's not too much to ask, could you skip Netflix for a night and make time to come to small group?" No… this ask from the writer of Hebrews was saying "meeting together consistently is worth the risk of putting your life on the line." This was hard times.
- The writer of Hebrews stresses—don't give up meeting together. Why? Let's look back at the verse together:
    - To hold tightly to hope together
    - To encourage one other
    - To motivate one another to acts of love and good works
- Wouldn't our lives be better with those things? Wouldn't our world be better with those things? What is hope? It's being convinced that our future is better than our now, and we all need that.
- And maybe the most important phrase in that whole passage is **not giving up**. The writer of Hebrews knew that it would be suuuuper tempting to skip the church part of following Jesus. He knew that meeting together would require commitment and sacrifice. Showing up and connecting requires re-prioritizing your schedule and guarding the time you get with your group.
- Here's what I'm getting at: This idea of community in Hebrews is more than just a group of friends. This wasn't your average group of friends watching football together or the people you make TikToks with. This was ride or die. These were the kind of people who…
    - Encourage you
    - Cheer for you
    - Say the real stuff to you
    - Listen when you say the real stuff to them
    - Love you enough to tell you what's real even if you don't want to hear it
    - Stick up for you when somebody talks bad about you or tries to hurt you…
- This is bigger than hanging out. This is what we call community.
- And here's the deal. The people who were "meeting together" in the original church…
    - They weren't all alike.
    - They weren't all friends before they came to church.
    - They didn't all agree on every little thing.
- In fact, if I can be real with y*ou*—part of being a mature person is understanding you don't HAVE to be like people to love them.
- And I'm not just talking about meeting together with the other high schoolers in your group. In fact, a lot of the Book of Hebrews is devoted to the idea of having a leader, a person who knows God and is a little further along than you in your life. **The truth is, we all need somebody, an adult somebody, outside of our families who can help us figure out life.** That's what your leader signed up to be, and here's what's wild about this group of adults… They actually want to do this. They signed up for real conversations about your real life. **They don't need a fake or perfect version of you. They signed up to be here every week for the real you.**
- What's the point? The point is that we were made for more than surface-level relationships. We were made for a relationship with God that we experience *with* other people in a very real way. **We can literally alter our experience at church and ultimately grow our relationship with God by altering the investment we put into small group**.

NOTES

JESUS CONNECTION

- And you know what? **God wants more than a surface relationship with you – He wants a personal relationship with you.**
- God created you to be in relationship with Him, but sin broke that relationship.
- That is why God sent His son Jesus to rescue us from our sin and spiritual death; we are not saved by going to church or because of our parents' faith but by having faith in Jesus Christ for ourselves.

TRANSITION

- HSM and small groups are what we make it and we can live out Hebrews together in three simple (but sometimes not so easy) steps:
    - Show up.
    - Be real.
    - Go after Jesus.

NOW WHAT

YOU

- **Show up** – First, don't neglect meeting and actually physically show up to meet together in small group. Second, show up for each other – be there for each other inside and outside of small group. Care for one another.
- **Be real** – Don't build walls between you and others in your small group; build bridges. Connect, even when it's uncomfortable. We all want to be loved for who we are – so share your real self with your group and let them love on you.
- **Go after Jesus**. Encourage one another to learn more about Jesus and how you can own your faith throughout your high school years.
- **The quality of your high school years will be impacted for better or worse by your small group.** What you put in here affects every other area of your life. I can introduce you to graduate after graduate who looks back on their years in high school and tells a story of their small group being where the best memories happened, the toughest conversations happened, the most important moments happened.
- I can also introduce you to graduates who would say the opposite. For them, it was one hour a week in a group of people who weren't real, didn't really care about each other, and ultimately it didn't affect them. Both are possible, and both are ultimately up to you.

WE

- I know some of you are thinking, "Yeah but…my small group sounds nothing like that." But imagine with me for a second...What if it could? What would it take? The fact is, what's said in this verse can be true of your small group experience.
- Meeting together, motivating each other towards love and good works, and encouraging each other CAN be your reality.
- That's what small group can be. Whether that's true for *your* small group is entirely up to you, and that's what we want you to talk about when you meet this week. Because, **when it comes to small group, you get out what you put in.**
- We are about to break out into our small groups to talk more, and I really encourage you to:
    - talk about how you can show up for and support one other,
    - how you can make small group a place you feel free to be real with one another,
    - and encourage each other to grow in your relationship with Jesus.

PRAY

- Close your time together in prayer.

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