



# TEACHING OUTLINE

## STRENGTH IN NUMBERS | WEEK 2

### BOTTOM LINE

WISE PEOPLE CAN HELP YOU, SO CHOOSE  
TO LEARN FROM THEM.



### SCRIPTURE

*Fools think their own way is right, but the wise listen to others (Proverbs 12:15 NLT).*

The Scripture this week is pretty straightforward. It's a no-frills verse from Proverbs that urges us to pursue the wisdom of others. Although wisdom can be found within one's peer group, in this scenario, you'll encourage students to invite the wisdom of step-ahead mentors into their lives. Doing this helps us realize and learn all the things we don't know . . . that we don't know.

### GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

To encourage students to invite step-ahead mentors into their lives who can give them guidance, advice, and feedback.

### TEACHING SCRIPT SUMMARY

#### INTRODUCTION

Sometimes, when you're around people younger than you, they tend to think they know everything—even when they obviously don't.

#### TENSION

We all struggle sometimes with thinking we know everything. The truth is, we don't know everything, we can't see everything, and we can't understand everything. But there's wisdom in admitting that we always have more to learn.

#### TRUTH

In Proverbs, Solomon shared that if we're wise and listen to others, we'll learn. We all need someone who will be our step-ahead mentor for the way we live our lives and live out our faith, because we're better when we have someone a little older, with a little more experience, speaking into our lives. Wise people can help us, so we should choose to learn from them.

#### APPLICATION

You have mentors already in your life: your Small Group Leaders. They love you, love God, and want to help you know God better. They are *for* you no matter what . . . you just have to invite them to speak into your life. *Tell a personal story.*

#### LANDING

We may feel like we know everything, but we'd be considered fools if we didn't ask someone to coach us—because we're stronger and better when someone speaks wisdom into our lives.

Question: Who have you given permission to speak freely into your life?



# TEACHING SCRIPT

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### BOTTOM LINE

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### INTRODUCTION

1 Minute

We're in a new series called *Strength in Numbers*, in which we're talking about friendship. Last week, we talked about how we feel stronger when multiple people agree with us, when others have our backs, or when we're not in it alone. Because of that, it's important to use caution when choosing our friends. And this week, we're going to look at another way we can become stronger through our relationships.

Let me ask you some questions:

*Who has younger brothers or sisters?*

*Who babysits?*

*Who coaches a Little League team?*

*Who works at a camp during the summer?*

*Who volunteers in children's ministry?*

**Have you noticed when you're hanging out with people younger than you that, for some reason, they think they know everything about everything? Sometimes it seems like, according to them, they already know what you're trying to tell them—even when they obviously don't.**

For example, when you show them how to tie their shoes, they push your hands away and tell you they already know how. Or you try to lend a hand and instead get the response, "No! I can do it myself!"

### TENSION

5 Minutes

What if I told you that **we all struggle sometimes with thinking we know everything?** I mean, when I was three years old, I thought I knew everything. Then when I was 13, I definitely thought I knew everything. And when I turned 18, I was convinced there was nothing I didn't understand. As a 25-year-old, I realized I knew nothing when I was 18. And now today, I know more than I ever have in my whole life. The

cycle continues. **No matter what age we get to, we think we know everything.**

Speaking of thinking we know everything, now would be a great time for us to play a little trivia game. For this game, I'm going to need help from some people who know a lot of stuff.



## INTERACTIVE: The More You Know

See the Interactive for detailed instructions.

Wow, it's amazing how much information all of you have tucked away inside your brains! But there were also some things you didn't know, right? There's no reason to feel bad about that. It's so human. And if you're wondering what in the world this has to do with God or the Bible, hang in there. We're about to find out.

The truth is, **we don't know everything.** We can't see everything. And we can't understand everything. Maybe this freaks you out. Maybe you hate admitting you're wrong or

that you don't know all the answers. Honestly, me too. Now, I may not know everything, but here's one thing I do know: **There's wisdom in admitting we don't know everything.**

### TRUTH

3 Minutes

It's a good thing God has a lot to say in Scripture about how much we don't know. In fact, He gave us an entire book of the Bible to help us figure out what to do about all the stuff we don't know. In Proverbs, which was written mostly by Solomon (you remember him—super-smart guy who God gave loads of wisdom), we find incredible insights into how to ask for help even when we think we know it all.

This is what Solomon said:

*Fools think their own way is right, but the wise listen to others (Proverbs 12:15 NLT).*

Ouch. I'm pretty sure Solomon just described me—and I don't mean the part about being wise. I've spent so much time in my life thinking I knew the right way to do things or see things. Sometimes I was right, but sometimes I was flat-out wrong. What Solomon was saying here is that fools fail to realize what the wise know—**that if we listen to others, we'll learn.** It's a good idea to have someone in your life—outside of your friends or people your own age—who you can listen to and learn from.

When I think back to all that I've learned, I realize that **everything I know, I learned from someone else.** It's true, right? If you want to learn something, you usually learn it from someone else.

If you want to learn to dunk, you ask for tips from Lebron James.

If you want to know how to spit rhymes, you look to Drake.

If you want to learn how to write songs that every teenage girl relates to, you call Taylor Swift.

I know I'm not convincing you of anything you don't already know. But it's true; if we want to learn something, we should look to someone who knows a lot about it. We should find someone who knows a little more about it than we do—who is one or two steps ahead—and ask them about it. We should ask for advice. We should ask for coaching. We should spend time with them and observe them. That's how we'd learn to dunk, or to rap, or to write love songs.

But here's the thing: The same is true for life. **We all need someone who will be our step-ahead mentor for the way we live our lives and live out our faith.** I know I do. And I think each of you does, too. We all need a person who is slightly older than us, who has more life experience than us, and who is a little further down the road than we are—both in our lives and in our faith. Because here's something we should all remember: **Wise people can help you, so choose to learn from them.**

Maybe this is something you've never thought of. But doesn't it make sense? Thinking back to our trivia game earlier, did anyone notice that your Small Group Leaders seemed to know about some stuff you didn't? It's not because you're not smart. It's because your leaders have lived longer and had to tackle some things that life hasn't thrown at you yet.

So, if we want to get better, or stronger, or more awesome at life, doesn't it make sense to have mentors who will coach us in navigating things like our friendships, our goals, our dreams, our fights with our family, our faith, or maybe our crushes? **We all need a trusted person who tells us the truth no matter what—not because they get something from us, but because they want something better for us.**



This person should be able to see how God has gifted you, and should encourage you to be who God created you to be. Don't we all want a person we can trust for advice, even if it's not what we want to hear at the time?

Strength in numbers, right? Just like coaches help athletes get better and stronger, you get better and stronger when you have someone around you who is kind of like a coach at life. Life is better when we aren't alone. And **we are better when we have someone a little older, with a little more experience, speaking into our lives.**

### APPLICATION

4 Minutes

So, if what Solomon said is true, then we have to ask ourselves these questions:

*Who are we supposed to look to as mentors?*

*Who are we supposed to listen to for advice?*

Maybe the moment we started talking about this idea, someone came to your mind. Maybe you thought of your teacher, football coach, aunt, or that cool college kid who lives next door. Maybe some of you drew a blank. But what if I told you that you already have a step-ahead mentor?

We've actually set up this environment to place mentors in your life on a weekly basis. They're your Small Group Leaders, and they're awesome. **These are people who love you, who love God, and who want to help you get to know the God who made you, and loves you, and has a big plan for your life.** These are people who show up every week to get to know you, to answer your questions, and to cheer you on. **They are for you**—regardless of whether or not you listen to them. But here's the thing: You have to invite them to speak into your life. And you have to make the choice to receive their wisdom and coaching. *Fools think their own way is right, but the wise listen to others.*

#### TELL A PERSONAL STORY:

Tell a story from your own life that illustrates the following ideas . . .

- Talk about a time when a step-ahead mentor or Small Group Leader invested in you, encouraged you, or helped you make a wise choice.
- Keep it short.
- The goal here is to help students understand how much better life is when we allow someone to have power to speak into our lives by either encouragement or caution.

Just like I did in this situation, we all need someone older and wiser in our lives. We need someone we can share our hopes and dreams with, who will pray for us, and who will encourage us to keep going. And here's the deal: This person also needs permission to tell us when we're wrong. We need to be willing to listen when they say our social media post was inappropriate, our words were mean, or we made a bad choice.

Having someone like that in your inner circle will make you stronger. It will make life better. So do it! Remember, **wise people can help you, so choose to learn from them.**

### LANDING

1 Minute

As we said earlier, we get caught up in thinking we know everything, but we all have blind spots—areas in our lives that we don't see clearly or even know exist. Sometimes it's difficult to listen to what someone has to say about us. It actually feels easier to go through life without allowing someone to tell us what's up. But as Solomon said, **we'd be**

**considered fools if we didn't ask for someone to coach us, because we're stronger and better when we let someone speak wisdom into our lives.**

As you head to small groups, think about this question: **Who have you given permission to speak freely into your life?**



### TRANSITION INTO SMALL GROUPS