



YOUTH GROUP LESSON ON HOLINESS

Created by Ministry to Youth

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While your students live on this earth, they will never be perfect. They're going to mess up and make mistakes. It's a part of life.

On Saturday my family and I arrived home after a weeklong trip to North Carolina. We arrived home around 10pm and were immediately overwhelmed by the fact our dog, BonBon, was covered in fleas. She had spread them everywhere all over our house.

This meant we had to wash EVERYTHING, flea bomb the entire house, and treat BonBon for fleas. It was an awesome "welcome home" gift.

Soon after we initiated “operation destroy fleas”, I walked in my bedroom to see BonBon sitting on my wife’s clothes in her open suitcase. Seemingly unaware that she was spreading fleas all over my wife’s clothes, I lost it. A surge of rage filled my body, and I screamed loudly at BonBon. I really let her have it. She was scared. After a few deep breaths, I realized what I had done and went downstairs to find her curled up in the bathroom with a terrified look on her face.

My heart sank. I apologized to her and rubbed her belly. She needed some affirmation that everything was okay. It wasn’t her fault she got fleas. I had simply taken out my anger about the situation on her. I had really messed up.

When your students make a decision to follow Jesus, they often struggle with what to do when they mess up and make mistakes. They might have the idea that perfection is the goal. But that just leads to frustration and discouragement.

Use this youth group lesson, based on 1 Peter 1:14-16, to encourage students that they can live a holy life with the help of the Holy Spirit. They’ll still mess up and make mistakes along the way, but He’s the one that gives them the power and strength needed.

– *Nick Diliberto, Ministry to Youth*

YOUTH GROUP LESSON ON HOLINESS

Written by Carrie Busch

Bible: 1 Peter 1:14-16; Colossians 3:12-17

Bottom Line: You can live a holy life with the help of the Holy Spirit.

SUPPLIES

- Slips of paper and pen
- Bucket
- List of Charades Words
- A variety of props in a black garbage bag (at least one item per student)

OPENING GAME: IMITATION IS THE HIGHEST FORM OF FLATTERY

GAME PREP

Before your youth service, gather a variety of items from around your church building or bring them from your home.

Items can literally be anything you can think of – clothing, food, random objects, etc.

Take all of the items and place them in a black garbage bag that you will have on hand throughout the game.

Divide students into two teams of equal size and have each team huddle together.

Have someone keep score for the teams throughout the game.

Take the “List of Charades Words” and write each individual word/phrase on a slip of paper.

Fold the slips of paper in half and place them in a bucket.

LIST OF CHARADES WORDS

- Dancing a ballet
- Washing an elephant
- Rock climbing
- Playing soccer
- Flying a kite
- Going bowling
- Building a campfire
- Sewing on a button
- Ironing a shirt
- Making a pizza

- Having a food fight
- Paddling in a canoe
- Riding a motorcycle
- Flipping pancakes
- Hailing a taxi
- Mowing a lawn
- Raking leaves
- Building a sandcastle
- Playing baseball
- Setting up a tent

HOW TO PLAY THE GAME

Say: Today, we'll be playing charades based on the idea that imitation is essential in our walk with Christ.

Each person will get one turn (so that the game does not take too much time).

Give each person a Charades word/phrase to imitate for the group.

Teams will alternate having a person stand in front of the group to act out the word/phrase for their team.

Not only will you have to act out the Charades word/phrase, but when it's your turn you will choose a prop from the garbage bag.

You will have to include the prop in how you act out your Charades word/phrase.

Each turn will only last one minute.

If your team gets the answer within one minute, you will get a point.

If your team can't figure it out, there is no opportunity for the other team to guess – either your team answers correctly, or no point is awarded for that round.

Whichever team has the most points once everyone has had a turn – wins the game!

TEACH

Say: Charades is a fun game because it allows us to imitate something.

Plus, it's loud and crazy and competitive.

Well, the game of Charades reminds us of how important imitation can be, especially if we're imitating Christ.

As you may have guessed, "holiness" is the topic of today's lesson.

Ask: What do you think of when you hear the word "holiness"?

Try to define "holiness" in your own words.

Allow a few responses from students.

It's impossible to separate the word "holiness" from its context in scripture, meaning that we can't just use Webster's Dictionary to define it, but rather God's Word.

In the Old Testament, holiness refers to God's separation of sin, evil and all that is wrong.

God is a holy being completely different from anything or anyone else.

God is altogether different from man: perfect, majestic, and supreme.

If we are to be holy, like God, does that mean we can be perfect too?

Obviously....no it doesn't.

We will always be human, and God will always be God, meaning that we can never compare to his perfect "set apart-ness."

But then how can God ask us to be holy just like He is?

Read 1 Peter 1:14-16.

As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."

Here, scripture seems to define holiness as Holy **character**.

So, put simply, being holy does not mean **BEING** God, but being **LIKE** God in how we act and behave.

It might seem impossible, and we certainly can't even be perfect, but God wants us to conduct ourselves in a manner that would be described as "holy," or set apart. Different than everyone else.

So, how do we do this?

We cannot – I repeat, CAN NOT – live holy lives without the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

So, before we discuss holy living, or being set apart for God's purpose, we must understand that we can't do this on our own.

The Holy Spirit is the One who convicts us of sin and transforms us (sometimes slowly and painstakingly) into the likeness of Christ.

God places a desire in our hearts for holiness. For living different. For being like Christ in our actions and attitudes.

Read Colossians 3:12-17.

Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body.

And be thankful.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

We all want to have these qualities, right?

Compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience are all awesome qualities to have in our lives.

What if you struggle with a few of those? What if you have trouble forgiving? Or being patient?

If so, you are normal!

All Christians make mistakes. As do all humans.

We may have conflicts with family or friends.

We may grow impatient and may yell, kick, or scream.

We may struggle with bossiness or anger.

However, we can't leave it there.

Because the Holy Spirit is in us, we have the desire to “put off” these aspects of our character or behavior.

We simply rely on the Holy Spirit for the power and strength to live differently. We can’t live a life of holiness through will power alone.

It requires us to rely on God’s help to mold and shape us to be like Jesus. We simply live a life of surrender to Jesus. Asking for his grace, power, and strength along the way.

As we pursue God, over time he changes us from the inside out. The Spirit brings to our attention what needs to be changed, and gives us the power to make different choices. Slowly, over time, becoming more like Jesus.

Our goal is to focus on Jesus. He’s the one who changes us inwardly through the power of the Holy Spirit. As we focus on Him, good things come out of our lives.

Close in prayer.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Share a time when you messed up and did something wrong. Also share the consequences of your actions. (Leaders, you might want to go first.)
2. In your own words, what does it mean to be holy?
3. Do you think it is really possible to be holy? Why or why not?
4. Is it difficult for you to live a holy a life? Why or why not?
5. What do you think it means to rely on God's help to be holy?