CHARIS YOUTH

Series: Jesus Influencers

Lesson 4: Every Christian Represents Jesus

About This Lesson

Whether the young people want to represent Jesus or not, when they say "yes" to make Jesus their Lord and Savior, they become a representative of Jesus. Some young people said "yes" to Jesus to secure a place in heaven but don't really want to make all the lifestyle changes to make it obvious that they are a representative of Jesus. This week's lesson shows the benefits of understanding the power they have in the name of Jesus as His representative on the earth.

Key Takeaway: You are God's representative, so use the power and authority He gives you to help reconcile people to God.

Key Verse: 2 Corinthians 5:20 *Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.*

Teaching Outline:

I. EVERY CHRISTIAN IS REQUIRED TO REPRESENT JESUS

2 Corinthians 5:17-21 *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.* [18] *Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation,* [19] *that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.* [20] *Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.* [21] *For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

A. When you believe on Jesus, you are a new creation!

B. You are given a position to make a difference!

III. YOU ARE AN AMBASSADOR (2 CORINTHIANS 5:20)

A. An ambassador has the authority If you were appointed by the president to be an ambassador, you would go to a foreign country to represent your country! Spiritually, you are now a citizen of heaven! You represent heaven.

B. To act on behalf of your home country!
   1. Example (if you didn't use this as an opening activity): In 1803, Thomas Jefferson was president and wanted to buy the port of New Orleans from France. He sent James Monroe (later became the 5th US president), the ambassador, to negotiate and buy this from Napoleon. He was authorized to spend $10 million. Napoleon was facing wars and offered to sell the entire Louisiana territory to the US for $15 million. Monroe seized the opportunity to double the size of the US! This is known as the Louisiana Purchase.

III. YOU HAVE THE MESSAGE OF RECONCILIATION TO SHARE (2 CORINTHIANS 5:18-19)

A. The Greek word for reconciliation is *katallagé*, meaning an exchange, to restore to favor. Reconciliation through Jesus removes the barrier of sin and establishes peace with God.
   1. Jesus, who knew no sin, was given your sin and punishment for it. You, who knew sin, received the righteousness of Jesus (2 Corinthians 5:21).

B. God's exchanges are incredible!!!
   1. He takes losers and makes them winners.
   2. He takes orphans and makes them part of families.
   3. He takes the brokenhearted and makes them whole.
   4. He takes anxiety and gives you peace.
   5. He takes sickness and gives health.
   6. He takes people who are on the way to hell and gives them heaven.

IV. THE GOAL OF REPRESENTING JESUS IS FOR PEOPLE TO BELIEVE IN JESUS AS THEIR SAVIOR

John 3:16 *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

A. When someone chooses Jesus as their Savior. He reconciles them to God because Jesus paid the price for all sin. As a new believer in Jesus, You are given eternal life!

B. What happens when someone dies? Just because you haven't experienced it, you can still know the answer when you read the Bible. There are only two options for the afterlife: heaven or hell.

C. Parable of Life after Delivery

In a mother's womb were two babies. One asked the other: "Do you believe in life after delivery?" The other replied, "Why, of course. There has to be something after delivery. Maybe we are here to prepare ourselves for what we will be later." "Nonsense," said the first. "There is no life after delivery. What kind of life would that be?" The second said, "I don't know, but there will be more light than here. Maybe we will walk with our legs and eat from our mouths. Maybe we will have other senses that we can't understand now." The first replied, "That is absurd. Walking is impossible. And eating with our mouths? Ridiculous! The umbilical cord supplies nutrition and everything we need. But the umbilical cord is so short. Life after delivery is to be logically excluded." The second insisted, "Well, I think there is something, and maybe it's different than it is here. Maybe we won't need this physical cord anymore." The first replied, "Nonsense. And, if there is life, then why has no one ever come back from there? Delivery is the end of life, and in the after-delivery, there is nothing but darkness and silence and oblivion. It takes us nowhere." "Well, I don't know," said the second, "but certainly we will meet Mother, and she will take care of us."

The first replied, "Mother? You actually believe in Mother? That's laughable. If Mother exists, then where is She now?" The second said, "She is all around us. We are surrounded by her. We are of Her. It is in Her that we live. Without Her, this world would not and could not exist." Said the first: "Well, I don't see Her, so it is only logical that She doesn't exist." To which the second replied, "Sometimes, when you're in silence and you really listen, you can perceive Her presence, and you can hear Her loving voice, calling down from above."

1. This example reminds us that there is so much we don't know or understand. The Bible has the answers. When we believe and follow God's Word, we have the truth that sets people free. Each person will spend eternity in heaven or hell. We can be Jesus influencers who help people find and follow Jesus! (Allow time to invite young people to pray for salvation.

Bottom Line:
When we represent Jesus and what the Word says, we can help people know the truth about Jesus. He came to the earth to reconcile us to God. When we ask Jesus to forgive our sins, we gain eternal life with Him!

Small Group Time:

1. Think of a situation where you had to represent someone or someone represented you. Maybe a parent asked you to visit a relative or do a task in their place, or maybe at a competition, you represented your school.
   - How did you feel when you were the representative?
   - Did you act, dress, or speak differently?

2. An ambassador has privileges, such as documenting papers in the name and authority of the leader. They embody the values of their country's leader and must represent that leader well.
   - How would you act differently tomorrow knowing that you are an ambassador for Jesus?

3. As a Christian, you have the ministry of reconciliation because of Jesus. Maybe you need to exchange some things that you brought with you, such as worry, fear, heaviness, or burden. You can give it to Jesus and experience His peace. 1 Peter 5:7 says, *"Casting all your cares upon Him, for He cares for you!"*
   - What exchange do you need to make? Take time and pray with each person who shares.

Declaration:
"I represent Jesus. I am an ambassador for Him. I will use my influence to help people choose to follow Him."

Youth Weekly Journal:

Handout, Email, or Download

- **Question:** How well are you representing Jesus this week?
- **Pray:** Ask God to reveal any areas where you are not representing Jesus the way you know you should.
- **Read:** Each day, read 2 Corinthians 5:17-21. Meditate on the verses. Write down any new insights the Holy Spirit shows you.
- **Live It:** You are a Jesus influencer who represents Jesus. Think about the things Jesus did, such as laying hands on the sick, and they recovered. Make a plan each day to use your power and authority in the name of Jesus to believe the promises of God and speak in faith. As you represent Jesus, you take the logos written word and let the Holy Spirit speak a rhema word to you. Be ready to share the Good News of salvation also!
- **Create:** Design a logo or meme to put up in your room to remind you each day that you represent Jesus as His ambassador everywhere your feet take you, you have power and authority in the name of Jesus.

EXTENDING THE LESSON

Icebreaker Question: If you could be the ambassador to any country, which country, and why?

Opening Activity Suggestion: Talk about being an ambassador and what that means. Look online for a graphic that shows the US and the size of the Louisiana Purchase. In 1803, Thomas Jefferson was president and wanted to buy the port of New Orleans from France. He sent James Monroe (later became the 5th US president) to be the ambassador and to negotiate to buy this from Napoleon. He was authorized to spend $10 million. Napoleon was facing wars and offered to sell the entire Louisiana territory to the US for $15 million. Monroe seized the opportunity and spent $5 million more to double the size of the United States!

Opening Affirmation: "The Bible is my guidebook. I follow what the Word says. I am a Jesus influencer. Others are watching, and I want them to see Jesus in me!"

Giving Time: 2 Corinthians 9:6–7 *But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.* [7] *So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.*

When we understand that our giving is planting a seed that will produce a harvest, we should have a good attitude. Our attitude in giving matters. Don't have a bad attitude, thinking God is taking your money away. The truth is God loves to bless the seed that you sow. Be happy about giving to the Lord's work.

BEYOND – ADDITIONAL APPLICATION FOR CHURCH OR HOME

Challenge: Pray for anyone who wants to better represent Jesus! Invite the young people to stand if they want to be ambassadors for Christ and show people what it really means to have a relationship with Jesus. Have the leaders and youth around them lay hands on them and pray for them to have the power to represent Him and be a strong influence for Him!

Biblical Worldview: When the young people read the Bible, they encounter God's promises. As they believe the promises and see changes and miracles, they have a platform to share those testimonies of what God has done. It is important for them to look through the Bible to find the answers and promises that apply to their lives. As representatives of Jesus, help them take seriously their role to know what the Bible says, believe it, act on it, and share the results/testimonies with others.

Outreach/Missions: Ask the young people to choose a country to which they would like to serve as ambassadors. Then, have them gather with a prayer partner to pray for people in their countries who would have opportunities to hear about Jesus and choose to follow Him.