CHARIS YOUTH

Series: Be Real

Lesson 2: How to Grow as a Believer

About This Lesson

This lesson shows the importance of being real, living for Christ, and growing as a believer. The teens are a chosen generation. This lesson will challenge them to see things the way God sees them and take steps of faith as they grow in their relationship with Him.

Key Takeaway: Being real means being who God created you to be and knowing you are loved and accepted by Him. The abundant life from Jesus will cause growth in your life!

Key Verse: 1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.

Teaching Outline:

I. LEARNED TO SEE THE WAY GOD SEES!

1 Samuel 16:7 *The LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."*

A. Appearances can be deceiving. Learn to see things and people the way God sees them, and learn to see yourself the way God sees you.

1. Samuel went to anoint one of Jesse's sons to be the next king of Israel. David was out in the field with the sheep. Only God saw what was inside David, and the king he would be.

B. Be real! Fake things don't grow!

1. Just as a fake plant can't grow, only something living can grow.

2. You must choose to grow. God won't force you to grow.

C. God uses real people, not fake people.
   1. David could grow into the king God wanted him to be because he was real! He was genuine. He had a heart for God.
   2. When David's dad sent him to check on his brothers, thousands of Israelites dressed up as soldiers were present, but they were all fake (1 Samuel 16:1–13)! None of them were willing to fight. David was real! That's why he was willing to take a step of faith and fight Goliath.
   3. With God, you grow from what is in your heart! It's important to have a big heart with big goals, big dreams, and big faith!

II. BE YOU – YOU CAN'T TAKE STEPS OF FAITH IN SOMEONE ELSE'S SHOES

A. Don't change who you are just to try to be accepted and fit in. Be who God created you to be! Know what He has given you and use it!
   1. You can't fight the enemy in someone else's armor! In 1 Samuel 17:32–49, Saul tried to get David to fight using his armor. David knew he didn't need oversized armor because he had God on his side. David took a bold stand because he believed God's promises.
   2. You can't take steps of faith in someone else's shoes. It comes down to you knowing that God is on your side!

B. You weren't created to fit in—there is only one you! You were created to stand out!

   Romans 12:2 *And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*
   1. If you try to conform and fit in with what the world expects of you, you won't grow the way God wants you to!
   2. Choose to belong to God rather than try to be accepted by the world.

III. DON'T WASTE YOUR ENERGY TRYING TO BE ACCEPTED – YOU ALREADY BELONG

A. Approval addiction will cause you to stop growing. Fear of man is fearing what others will say or think about you. Don't put your mental well-being in other people's hands.

B. It takes too much work to be accepted by people who might not care about you. Belonging is so much better!!!

C. Don't change who you are to try to be accepted and fit in.

D. If someone doesn't really care about you, value you, or see you the way God sees you—don't waste your time, energy, emotions, or life on trying to be accepted by them.

E. When you belong to someone, there is no striving. There is no need to change who you are. There is no need to wear a mask. You can just be real! BELONGING IS AWESOME.

1 Peter 2:9 *But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.*

F. What determines something's value? The highest amount a bidder is willing to pay!

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.*

1. The enemy wants you to focus on people who didn't value you. People who rejected you. People who mistreated you. People who disappointed you. Your value doesn't come from them.
2. He wants you to focus on your own personal mistakes and shortcomings. Your value comes from your heavenly Father!

3. You don't have to strive for acceptance because you already belong! You are chosen! You are valued! You are loved! God has determined your value!!! He said you are worth the highest price!
4. God loves you just the way you are! You don't have to try to be accepted. He wants you to know that you belong to Him!

IV. THE ABUNDANT LIFE FROM JESUS WILL CAUSE YOU TO GROW!

A. When you have the abundant life from Jesus, it will cause growth in your life! Things that are alive grow!

John 10:10 *The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.*

B. Jesus never gives up on you! He will always help you grow! You are accepted and belong, so grow!
Philippians 1:6 *Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.*

C. Your life with Jesus will cause you to grow in 3 areas:
   1. Spiritually - in your relationship with God.
   2. Personally - in academics, job opportunities, healthy friendships, having a sense of adventure, meeting new people and making new friends, trying a new sport, or visiting a new city, etc.
   3. Practically - in your giftings, such as music, creative arts, athletics, finances, and accepting new challenges and responsibilities.

Bottom Line:
Jesus wants you to grow in your relationship with Him. He loves and accepts you. He has given you eternal life. Living things grow, so grow!

Small Group Time:

1. Your life with Jesus will cause you to grow in three areas: spiritually in your relationship with God; personally in academics, job opportunities, healthy friendships, having a sense of adventure, meeting new people and making new friends, trying a new sport, or visiting a new city; and practically in your giftings, such as music, creative arts, athletics, financially, and accepting new challenges and responsibilities.

- Is there a person in your life who encourages you to grow spiritually?
- Is there someone in your life with whom you can be completely real?
- Goals are a great way grow! What are some spiritual, practical, or personal goals you have in life?

2. One way to turn on the light is to confess (speak out loud) the truth from the Word of God! Here are some great truths for us to speak and great lights for us to shine right now!

GROUP LEADER: read the scripture. **STUDENTS:** say each declaration.

GROUP LEADER: John 3:16 *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

STUDENTS: GOD LOVES ME AND NOTHING WILL EVER CHANGE THAT!

GROUP LEADER: Ephesians 1:4 *According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.*

STUDENTS: I AM NOT REJECTED! I AM CHOSEN!

GROUP LEADER: Deuteronomy 31:6 *Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.*

STUDENTS: I AM NOT AFRAID! I AM COURAGEOUS! GOD WILL NEVER LEAVE ME!

GROUP LEADER: 1 Timothy 4:12 *Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.*

STUDENTS: I MIGHT BE YOUNG, BUT I AM A LEADER!

GROUP LEADER: Romans 8:16–17 *The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: [17] And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.*
STUDENTS: I AM A CHILD OF GOD! I AM PART OF HIS FAMILY!

GROUP LEADER: John 8:32 *And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*
STUDENTS: I DO NOT FALL FOR LIES! I KNOW THE TRUTH!

GROUP LEADER: Philippians 4:13 *I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me.*
STUDENTS: I CAN DO ALL THINGS THROUGH CHRIST WHO STRENGTHENS ME!

GROUP LEADER: Romans 8:37 *In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.*
STUDENTS: I AM NOT A LOSER! I AM A WINNER! I AM MORE THAN A CONQUEROR!

GROUP LEADER: Ephesians 1:3 *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.*
STUDENTS: BECAUSE I HAVE JESUS, I AM BLESSED!

Declaration:

"I am accepted and loved by God. I'm alive in Christ and will grow spiritually, personally, and in my gifting!"

Youth Weekly Journal:

Handout, Email, or Download

- **Question:** How can I grow as a believer this week?
- **Pray:** Thank God for accepting you, loving you, and helping you grow.

- **Read:** Choose a book of the Bible and commit to reading that book this week. Mark verses that speak to you.
- **Live It:** Choose someone who you will give permission to speak into your life and advise you in ways you can grow in your relationship with God. Talk with the person and set up a meeting time and ways to communicate.
- **Create:** Write down words that help you reflect on what it means to be real. You might want to write on sticky notes and put them around your room, or use a dry-erase marker to write them on your mirror as a reminder of who God created you to be.

EXTENDING THE LESSON

Icebreaker Question: If you were offered the opportunity to go on a space mission, would you? Why or why not?

Opening Activity Suggestion: Bring in a fake plant and a real plant. Have the young people list all the differences between the two plants. Fake plant: looks greener, no gnats, doesn't take any work or water, ignore it and it won't be affected. Real plant: has some blemishes, leaves are a little withered, has bugs, takes work and water, if ignored, it won't live. Conclude with the biggest difference: the fake plant won't ever grow. Today's lesson shows the importance of being real, living for Christ, and growing as a believer.

Opening Affirmation: "I choose to stand firm in a world of deception. I will grow as a believer who sees things the way God sees them."

Giving Time: Isaiah 32:8 *But a generous man devises generous things, and by generosity he shall stand.*

When a person understands that God blesses them and is their source of everything they need, that person can be generous and think creatively of ways to be generous. Give without fear of lack because the Lord Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth, is taking care of you!

BEYOND –
ADDITIONAL APPLICATION FOR CHURCH OR HOME

Challenge: Speaking truth and declaring God's Word over yourself is one way to grow. Challenge the young people to choose a verse and turn it into a declaration to make each day. Have them review some of the declarations made during small group time. Next week, have them share their verse and declaration with the group and report how that declaration helped shift their attitude for the day.

Biblical Worldview: The Bible is the roadmap for how to live and grow. As young people recognize the importance of using the Bible to understand how God sees things, they will know the truth and be able to share that with their peers. Encourage the youth to carry their "real" Bibles (paper copies), highlight special verses, and write in them what God is speaking to them. The more they use the Bible, the more they will love it and want it near them.

Outreach/Missions: The Great Commission in Matthew 28:19–20 clearly commands Jesus' followers to make disciples of all nations, which are people groups. A disciple is a student who learns and grows. Remind the young people that Jesus did not put an age requirement in place, so they are to make disciples, too. This reinforces the importance of their spiritual growth so they can help disciple. Spend time in prayer for the young people to take this command seriously and have a heart to share the Gospel with their peers. End the prayer time, commissioning them to go out and make disciples.