

**LESSON 3: FAMILY FEUD**

This includes:

- 1. LEADER PREPARATION**
- 2. LESSON GUIDE**

**1. LEADER PREPARATION****LESSON OVERVIEW**

Life is all about choices. Teenagers struggle daily to make the right choices because they want to identify with things they feel are right. Living the Christian life is all about making the choice to follow Jesus. This lesson will help teenagers discover how freedom and liberation can take place for those who are true disciples and followers of Jesus Christ.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES**

- 1. WHAT:** True disciples understand the value of being part of God's family—and how the most important thing in life is passionately cultivating a deep love for Jesus.
- 2. WHY:** Each of us must decide if we will follow Jesus or reject him.
- 3. HOW:** Teenagers can commit to not only hearing and obeying God's Word, but also passionately pursuing a deep relationship with Jesus.

**PRIMARY SCRIPTURE**

John 8:38-47

**SECONDARY SCRIPTURES**

Matthew 6:24; 1 Corinthians 2:13-16; Galatians 5:19-23

**TEACHING PREP**

**LEADER  
TIP**

**Use this short overview to prepare for your lesson. While you may not want to convey this information word-for-word with your group, you'll want to absorb it as you prepare to lead.**

**Read John 8:38-47; you may want to read the entire passage of John 8:31-59 during your preparation to gain a clearer understanding of the context.**

In this passage, the Jews who questioned Jesus were children of Abraham, but the fact that they were Abraham's descendants didn't automatically make them members of God's family. A similar concept is true for each one of us. We are not automatically Christians and members of God's family simply by being born into a "Christian" family or living in a "Christian" nation or attending church once, twice, or three times a week.

This series has been built around John 8, and by the time we get to these verses, the conversation between Jesus and the crowd had escalated—it had become pretty heated. Jesus had questioned their claim as

the legitimate children of Abraham. The people were offended by Jesus' statements, and they responded to him by saying, "Abraham is our father." They were basically saying that they weren't the ones who were illegitimate! Their intent was to kill this proclaimer of truth—Jesus—because they were behaving just like their "true" father: Satan.

Jesus, in turn, responded in the strongest and most powerful way. He declared that by rejecting him, the people were choosing to live as members of Satan's family rather than as children of God. His tone moved from speaking specifically about Abraham to speaking about the people's disobedience. Abraham was a man of faith who knew God and followed him at all cost. Jesus told the people that if they truly knew Abraham, they would automatically follow Jesus. He challenged this specific group of Jews for believing in such distorted teachings and because of their refusal to believe in him.

At the end of the day, this group of people had a choice to make. They were caught in the middle of a struggle. Which family would they be part of? Likewise, we and our students must make a choice, too. Will we follow Jesus or reject him? True disciples keep Jesus' words and passionately pursue a relationship with him. The choice is ours; we must choose well.

## **THE BEFORE & AFTER [OPTIONAL]**

### **TEXTS OR TWEETS**

**Send one or both of these messages to your students prior to your meeting. As with the rest of the curriculum, edit these questions to fit the needs of your ministry.**

- Got choices? Learn how to make the right ones! Come out tonight—you won't regret it!
- Whose team are you on—REALLY? How do you know? Get ready for great conversation this week.

### **PARENT EMAIL**

**Send this email to parents following the lesson to encourage them to continue the conversation at home. Feel free to edit and customize the email to fit your ministry needs.**

Dear parents,

We've wrapped up our "Identity" series. Each week, students have examined a different passage of Scripture to find truths and insights about discovering their identity in Jesus.

In our final lesson, we brought it all home by exploring John 8:38-47, where the conversation between Jesus and the Jews escalated to the point where it became pretty heated. It reached a place where Jesus drew a line in the sand and challenged people to consider if they were legitimate children of God.

It is so important for teenagers to learn how to choose well. The spiritual choices they make will determine whether or not they spend eternity with Jesus. As we conclude this series, challenge and encourage your teenager to understand the value and benefits of being part of God's family—and how the most important thing in life is passionately pursuing a deep love for Jesus.

Here are some questions that can help fuel your conversation this week:

- What people have shaped or influenced your spiritual journey? How have they been like spiritual fathers or mothers to you?
- What are some characteristics or traits of Jesus that you've seen displayed in other people's lives? Be as specific as possible.
- What are some spiritual truths God has been teaching you recently?

Thanks for all your prayers for our students and our ministry. Have an amazing week!

**LESSON 3: FAMILY FEUD****2. LESSON GUIDE****GETTING THINGS STARTED [OPTIONAL]****LEADER  
TIP**

You'll need scrap paper and pens or pencils for the opening activity.

Welcome your students and invite them into your meeting area. Open in prayer, and then lead students in this opening activity.

Have students form groups of three or four, and then give each group some scrap paper and pens or pencils. Explain that groups will have three minutes to create a lengthy list of successful people in our culture—along with the names, groups must write specific reasons those people are considered successful. For example, the list might include LeBron James for his basketball skills, Taylor Swift for selling millions of albums, and Suzanne Collins for selling millions of copies of *The Hunger Games* books. After about three minutes, bring everyone back together.

**ASK:**

- Tell us three names from your group's list: who they are and why they're considered successful.
- What does it take to become successful?
- How about spiritually: What does a "successful" follower of Jesus look like?

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** *Success in life involves making wise choices. It involves setting goals and working hard. Most of all, it involves having a clear sense of direction and knowing what matters most—having solid priorities. When it comes to being a "successful" follower of Jesus, we can see outward evidence of inward change—but it really comes down to our hearts. Genuine disciples and followers of Jesus know that following Jesus is what matters most. They choose to lead a life that is truly, totally centered on Jesus.*

**TEACHING POINTS****LEADER  
TIP**

Use the Teaching Points to help students capture the essence of each lesson with more discussion and less lecture-style teaching. Remember: All throughout these lessons, it's up to you to choose (1) how many questions you use and (2) the wording of the main points—keep ours, or change the wording to make it clearer for your audience.

Read John 8:38-47 together as a group. Consider dividing verses among your students so several people have a chance to read.

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** *In this passage, Jesus drew a line in the sand and challenged people to consider if they were legitimate children of God. Let's spend a few minutes exploring some truths in this Scripture.*

## 1. OUR LIVES WILL REFLECT OUR SPIRITUAL FATHER

### ASK:

- *What are some specific ways you reflect your parents—physically, emotionally, in your personality, with your hobbies and interests, and so on?*
- *Jesus told the people that they were “children of your father the devil,” and that they “love to do the evil things he does.” What’s your reaction to Jesus’ harsh words?*
- *What people have shaped or influenced your spiritual journey? How have they been like spiritual fathers or mothers to you?*

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** *Being a genuine follower of Jesus means choosing to believe and obey God’s Word. It means loving Jesus and loving people. It means loving the truth. It means having people in your life who are living examples of what a Christ-follower looks like. One way or another, our lives will reflect our spiritual father: either God or Satan.*

## 2. WE CAN PRODUCE JESUS-HONORING FRUIT

### ASK:

- *What are some characteristics or traits of Jesus that you’ve seen displayed in other people’s lives? Be as specific as possible.*
- *Do you think it’s possible for someone to truly believe they’re following Jesus but not be? Why or why not?*
- *Is it possible for any of us to really know if another person is a genuine follower of Jesus? Why or why not?*
- *Read Galatians 5:19-23. The first three verses in this passage describe the fruit of someone who follows Satan; the final two verses talk about fruit in the life of a follower of Christ. Now consider that same question: How can we know if another person is a genuine follower of Jesus?*

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** *In life we all must make choices. When it comes to our spiritual walk, God gives us all a free will. God wants us to produce Christlike fruit. In order for that to take place, we must believe Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life, and choose to live according to his Word and not our own desires. True disciples don’t just “look” like a disciple; they live like one.*

## 3. WE CANNOT FOLLOW BOTH GOD AND SATAN

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** *If we straddle the fence, we are still rejecting Jesus. God doesn’t care if we’re a “good” person or if we come from a “good” family. God wants us to be completely committed to him, to lead lives that are built around following Jesus wholeheartedly. It is impossible to live for God and Satan.*

### ASK:

- *Read Matthew 6:24. How is it possible to get caught in the trap of trying to serve two masters?*
- *What are the dangers of trying to be one way today and another way tomorrow?*

## EXTRA DISCUSSION [OPTIONAL]

### ASK:

- Read 1 Corinthians 2:13-16. In this passage, how is the Apostle Paul's use of "spiritual" similar to or different from the way people in our culture talk about being "spiritual"?
- Why do the things of God sound foolish to people who aren't truly spiritual?
- What does it mean to "have the mind of Christ"?
- What are some spiritual truths God has been teaching you recently?

## LIVING IT OUT

Ask students to form groups of two or three to discuss these questions.



### ASK:

- What idea or truth from today's conversation did you find the most intriguing, and why?
- If people who aren't followers of Christ can't fully understand spiritual things, what's a good way to have Jesus-centered conversations with those individuals?
- What habits or choices might help you pursue "the mind of Christ"?

Bring everyone back together, and ask for volunteers to share answers to the previous questions, as time permits.

Ask students to each find a quiet spot in your meeting area for a few minutes of prayer and reflection. Consider praying together as a group or asking if any students would like prayer from the rest of the group.

## SUMMARY



Provide a quick summary or take-home challenge based on (1) this lesson's content, (2) the dialogue that took place today, (3) your understanding of the issues and struggles your teenagers are facing, and (4) the big picture of your youth ministry and what your leadership team wants accomplished with the teaching and discussion time.

## FOR KEEPS [MEMORY VERSE]

Encourage and/or challenge your teenagers to memorize the Scripture below.

*"Anyone who belongs to God listens gladly to the words of God" (John 8:47).*