



COMMUNICATOR GUIDE

The Big Questions / Week 2

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SERIES BOTTOM LINE

Our biggest questions deserve better answers.

GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

To give students a space to process questions about their identity and to point them to the truth that, because of Jesus, who they are is enough.

WEEK 2 BOTTOM LINE

You don't have to prove you're enough.

SCRIPTURE

- John 6:1-15 CEB

TEACHING SLIDES

All Scripture, bottom lines, and teaching points that are bolded in this script are also provided as slides in your weekly "Teaching" folder.

OPTIONAL VIDEOS

*[OPTIONAL MEDIA](#) for this week available for purchase through the XP3 HS Media Package:

- The Big Questions Countdown (10 minutes)
- Comparison Video (for the interactive)
- The Big Questions Teaching Video – week 2

TEACHING OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION

- *Note: Tell a personal story about idolizing someone and failed attempts at copying their identity. End your story with: “There was a big question I was asking: Who am I?”*

TENSION

- What we’re really asking about is our identity. Identity is what makes us “US.”
- The tricky thing about identity is that most of the time, we’re not asking the question with just ourselves in mind.
- We can tend to define our identity based on what others expect of us.
- At the same time, we tend to base our identity on areas where we feel judged by others.
- Also, we tend to base our identity on our image—how we appear to others.
- No matter how we would explain our identity, the question for all of us is the same: Am I enough?
- Some of you may answer yes to this question. But you’d probably say, “Yes, I am enough BUT . . .”
- Others of you may answer the question by saying, “No, I’m not enough BECAUSE . . .”

TRUTH

- Today, we’re going to look back at an interaction between Jesus and a group of people in the book of John, which is one of the four books in the Bible that talk about Jesus’ life on Earth.
 - *After this Jesus went across the Galilee Sea (that is, the Tiberias Sea). A large crowd followed him, because they had seen the miraculous signs he had done among the sick. Jesus went up a mountain and sat there with his disciples. It was nearly time for Passover, the Jewish festival. Jesus looked up and saw the large crowd coming toward him. He asked Philip, ‘Where will we buy food to feed these people?’ Jesus said this to test him, for he already knew what he was going to do. Philip replied, ‘More than a half year’s salary worth of food wouldn’t be enough for each person to have even a little bit’ (John 6:1-7 CEB).*
- Check out what happens next . . .
 - *One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, said, ‘A youth here has five barley loaves and two fish. But what good is that for a crowd like this?’ (John 6:8-9 CEB).*
- Andrew mentions that there’s a “youth” who has some food with them. And we aren’t even told if this “youth” is a boy or girl. In the 1st century culture, that would’ve made this kid not-so-valuable in the eyes of society.
- The young person didn’t have regular bread—he or she had barley bread. Back then, this was the kind of bread that people who were poor ate.
- John continues . . .
 - *Jesus said, ‘Have the people sit down.’ There was plenty of grass there. They sat down, about five thousand of them. Then Jesus took the bread. When he had given thanks, he distributed it to those who were sitting there. He did the same with the fish, each getting as much as they wanted. When they had plenty to eat, he said to his disciples, ‘Gather up the leftover pieces, so that nothing will be wasted.’ So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves that had been left over by those who had eaten. When the people saw that he had done a miraculous sign, they said, ‘This is truly the prophet who is coming into the world.’ Jesus understood that they were about to come and force him to be their king, so he took refuge again, alone on a mountain (John 6:10-15 CEB).*
- Jesus did something only He could do. He took a little bit of barley bread and fish, and He fed the crowd.

- But John makes it a point to draw attention to a different hero. The youth in the story—not given a name, not coming from wealth or privilege, not having a lot of offer—was still featured front and center.
- Because Jesus knew who this child was. This child was made in the image of God.
- Jesus knew that He wasn't limited by what this kid had or didn't have. The same is true for us. Jesus says that what we have and who we are *is* enough.
- You don't have to prove you're enough.
- *Note: The Interactive happens here. See your Teaching Script for details.*
- Jesus takes our feelings of not-enough and tells us we are enough. You are enough because Jesus says you're enough.

APPLICATION

- So, what can we do when those feelings of “not enough” come up? Start by asking yourself these questions:
 - Where in your life do you feel like you aren't enough?
 - When you don't feel like you are enough, do you tend to respond by hiding, proving yourself, or something else?
 - How different would your life look if you stopped trying to prove yourself or hide in this area?
 - When you feel that way, how are you going to remember that you ARE enough?

LANDING

- When we battle the feeling of not being enough, one of the worst things we can do is to believe that we have to deal with it alone. That's why we care so much about small groups and small group leaders.
- You don't have to prove you are enough. Jesus says you are enough.



TEACHING SCRIPT

The Big Questions / Week 2

PRELUDE SOCIAL WORSHIP STORY GROUPS HOME

BOTTOM LINE

You don't have to prove you're enough.

INTRODUCTION

2 MINUTES

Communicator, start by telling a personal story about idolizing someone and failed attempts at copying their identity. Your story should take about a minute to one minute and 30 seconds to tell. Keep it humorous or upbeat. End with, "There was a big question I was asking: Who am I?"

Example

If you have an older brother or sister, you probably know the feeling of wanting to be just like them, especially when you were a kid. We go through phases when we look up to the siblings ahead of us. They can do no wrong, and their attention means everything to us.

It's why when my older sister got really good at gymnastics, I decided that I wanted to try the sport. I had high hopes of nailing the roundoff back handspring like she did. After a few months, I quit because the best I could do was somersaults across the gym.

It's why when she ran for school president and won, I thought I should try my hand at politics and ran for treasurer. But then I lost the election, so that dream ended as quickly as it started.

It's why when my sister won a public speaking contest, I decided to sign up for a speech and drama elective to get better myself. But then I realized that one of the assignments was to sing a solo in front of the whole class. And even though my lie about having laryngitis bought me a little bit of time, there was no getting out of the assignment. Let's put a check in the box for one of my most embarrassing moments!

Looking back, I realize that some of me imitating and copying my sister was because I looked up to her. But it was also me trying to figure out who I was. Was I supposed to be just a younger version of my older sister? Or was I supposed to be someone different with my own interests?

I may not have used these words. But there was a big question I was asking:

Who am I?

TENSION

3 MINUTES

Like me, you might not use the *actual* words, “Who am I?” but you may have wondered or thought about some version of this question. What we’re really asking about is our identity. Identity is what makes us “US.” It’s what makes us unique and causes us to be different from everyone else. And if you’re like me, you can sometimes struggle to even begin to understand how to answer this question.

The tricky thing about identity is that most of the time, we’re not asking the question with just ourselves in mind. We’re deciding who we are based on what the people around us think of us, or based on who they are.

- **We can tend to base our identity on what others expect of us.** We think about what other people want us to be or need us to be. We constantly feel the pressure to live up to expectations of family, friends, teachers, and coaches. Our parents want us to be responsible, so we see “responsible” as being part of our identity. Or a coach wants us to be a leader, so we make that part of our identity. It’s not who we *actually* are as much as it is what people think we should be.
- At the same time, **we tend to base our identity on areas where we feel judged by others.** We see ourselves through the lens of being not enough of whatever they expect from us. We’re not _____ enough. Not funny enough. Not tall enough. Not confident enough. Not smart enough. The list goes on and on. We define who we are based on areas where we feel like we don’t measure up. Maybe you feel like you have to act or be a certain way because of your race or cultural background. And for you, maybe you realize that you’re more than the label or judgment others have placed on you, but you’re not sure what that means or looks like. You just know that what others have given you is an incomplete picture, and there’s more to you than that.
- Also, **we tend to base our identity on our image**—how we appear to others. Others see us as the star athlete, so that’s how we see ourselves. Our teachers see us as a below-average student, so that’s how we see ourselves.

But no matter how we would explain our identity, the question for all of us is the same. It’s really the question underneath “Who am I?” This one big question feeds our insecurity, drives the decisions we make, and determines the friends we have. The question is . . .

Am I enough?

Some of you may answer “yes” to this question. But you’d probably say, “**Yes, I am enough BUT . . .**” And you may be quick to point out the areas where you’re not measuring up. Because let’s be honest, the areas where we *don’t* measure up seem to take up a lot more of our thinking than the areas where we *do*, right?

Others of you may answer the question by saying, “**No, I’m not enough BECAUSE . . .**” No matter what anyone tells us, we just have a hard time believing that we could ever be enough.

However you’d answer that question, here’s the good news. What we talk about today has the potential to be a game-changer for you in the way you answer it moving forward!

TRUTH

9 MINUTES

I probably don't have to tell you this, but people have been wondering, "Am I enough?" since the beginning of time. Today, we're going to look back at an interaction between Jesus and a group of people in the book of John, which is one of the four books in the Bible that talk about Jesus' life on Earth.

In John's book, he records a miracle that Jesus performed. Check it out . . .

After this Jesus went across the Galilee Sea (that is, the Tiberias Sea). A large crowd followed him, because they had seen the miraculous signs he had done among the sick. Jesus went up a mountain and sat there with his disciples. It was nearly time for Passover, the Jewish festival. Jesus looked up and saw the large crowd coming toward him. He asked Philip, "Where will we buy food to feed these people?" Jesus said this to test him, for he already knew what he was going to do. Philip replied, "More than a half year's salary worth of food wouldn't be enough for each person to have even a little bit" (John 6:1-7 CEB).

So right away, there's a problem. Jesus could tell that the people are hungry. The disciples are freaking out. I would be, too. Hungry people become hangry people really fast! I lose my mind when I skip a meal. So the disciples are wondering what to do. None of the disciples make enough money to buy enough food to feed all these people. But Jesus doesn't seem worried.

Check out what happens next . . .

One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said, "A youth here has five barley loaves and two fish. But what good is that for a crowd like this?" (John 6:8-9 CEB).

Andrew mentions that there's a "youth" who has some food. We aren't even told if this "youth" is a boy or girl. It's just a young person—maybe even a child. And in the 1st-century culture, that would've made this kid not-so-valuable in the eyes of society. In fact, children tended to be viewed only as property. The only value children had was in what they could do for their family.

But there's something else to notice. The young person didn't have regular bread—he or she had barley bread. And it's interesting that John decided to include that detail. Because back then, this was the kind of bread that people who were poor ate. This was the kind of bread you ate when you didn't have a lot of money or status. This child obviously didn't come from a family with a lot, but he or she was willing to use what they had anyway.

John continues . . .

Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." There was plenty of grass there. They sat down, about five thousand of them. Then Jesus took the bread. When he had given thanks, he distributed it to those who were sitting there. He did the same with the fish, each getting as much as they wanted. When they had plenty to eat, he said to his disciples, "Gather up the leftover pieces, so that nothing will be wasted." So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves that had been left over by those who had eaten. When the people saw that he had done a miraculous sign, they said, "This is truly the prophet who is coming into the world." Jesus understood that they were about to come and force him to be their king, so he took refuge again, alone on a mountain (John 6:10-15 CEB).

Jesus did something miraculous, something extraordinary, something that someone with supernatural power could do. He took a little bit of barley bread and fish, and He fed the crowd. There ended up being so much food that there were even leftovers. That's a crazy miracle! Jesus is the obvious hero of the story, but John makes it a point to draw attention to a different hero.

The youth in the story—not given a name, not coming from wealth or privilege, not having a lot of offer—was still featured front and center.

And I wonder if John doesn't want us to forget the role Jesus allowed that kid to have in the story. Jesus could've provided the food with no help at all. I mean, he made blind people see and brought dead people back to life. It would've taken much to bring food out of nowhere. But that's not what happened. Jesus takes the food from a barely-noticed child and makes the child a part of the story taking place. Why? Because Jesus knew who this kid was. **This kid was made in the image of God.** And that alone made this young person a part of the story worth celebrating.

Jesus wasn't limited by what this kid had or didn't have. And the same is true for us. Jesus says that what we have and who we are *are* enough. Think of it this way . . .

You don't have to prove you're enough.



*OPTIONAL MEDIA for this week available for purchase through the XP3 HS Media Package:

- Comparison Video (for the interactive)

Communicators, for this Interactive, you'll need 3 or 4 clear glasses or vases. Wrap painter's tape around the glasses to form a line at different heights. Write the word ENOUGH on the painter's tape on each glass. You also want a pitcher of water with food coloring or Kool-Aid in it. The idea is to pour the liquid into the glass, which symbolizes students' efforts to be "enough" in different areas of their lives.)

We struggle with feeling like enough. For example, take grades. (Communicator, pour liquid into one of the glasses.) You may not think you're the smartest person in the world, but in your mind, there's a certain level of success in this area that will be "enough" for a teacher, parent, stepparent, or guardian to approve. Or, if you make it over the line of being enough (fill glass above taped line), they'll be super-happy with you.

Or take the extracurricular things you're involved in. (Communicator, pour liquid into another glass.) Maybe you're not the best player on the team or the best actor in your theater group, but in the position or role that you play, there's a certain expectation you have for yourself—or possibly a coach or director has placed on you—that equals a good performance in that role. And if you can do what you're expected to do without messing it up, you'll be "enough." That coach or director will be happy with you.

This happens in so many areas of life. We believe that success and great performance inevitably leads to being liked and accepted. If we're funny enough, smart enough, skinny enough, trendy enough, fast enough, pretty enough, strong enough, winning enough, successful enough, and even "Christian" enough, then we'll be enough . . . right? But there are some challenges with this mindset.

1. The first challenge? We compare ourselves to other people. We know the areas where we do pretty well and get close to the "enough" line, but we also know the areas where we don't do as well. And we all tend to focus on the negative. We focus on the people who seem to be above the "enough" line in those areas, which naturally leads us to compare ourselves with people who seem smarter, cooler, better, nicer, more popular, or more responsible than us. And since we feel like we could never measure up to them, we decide that we will never be "enough." In other words, there is always someone who is

better than us, which in turn makes us feel like we have to get better in order to be enough.

2. And the second challenge with this mindset? We compare ourselves to ourselves. We all have an invisible standard we want to live up to. And as soon as we fail in that area, we decide we're not "enough." Let's say you play a great game. But then that game becomes your new standard, which means you expect yourself to play like that every time. (Communicator, take the painter's tape off of one of the glasses and move it up.) It's like we've raised the standard for what is "enough." You reach the "enough" line only to find that it still isn't enough. So, you move that line higher and higher, hoping you will feel enough next time. But because of that, you continually find yourself in a no-win situation. Everyone in this room has felt not enough at some point—even the people who seem like they have it all together. It's a universal experience. And if we're honest, we all have a hard time liking the person who doesn't measure up, the person who isn't enough, the person who is . . . us.

But, when we add Jesus to the equation, we can stop trying to prove we're enough (communicator, remove the painter's tape), because He takes whatever we have and makes it enough (fill the glass until it overflows).

Jesus takes our feelings of not-enough and tells us we are enough. See, it's exhausting to have so much of our identity tied up in what other people think, expect, or want from us. It makes it feel like the bar is always moving, and the standard is always changing for who we should be. We may be enough in this situation with this person today, but what about tomorrow? Who knows?

Which is what makes what Jesus says—and does—such good news for us. His love for us doesn't change. He isn't temperamental. Jesus isn't waiting to see how we perform. He isn't wondering what we can offer. **You are enough because Jesus says you are enough.**

APPLICATION

2 MINUTES

The feeling of not being enough is a normal part of being human. At some point or another, we'll all deal with it. In response, we may try to PROVE that we have what it takes. We practice harder, study harder, work harder, and put in more energy. We try to prove to people that we're the best athlete, the most accomplished student, or the employee of the month. Or, we try to HIDE so that no one notices. Feeling like we're not enough feeds our insecurities, so we do everything we can to keep people from seeing it.

So, what can we do when those feelings come up? Start by asking yourself these questions . . .

1. **Where in my life do I feel like I am not enough?** Around friends, at home, when it comes to grades, sports, at church?
2. **When I don't feel like I am enough, do I tend to respond by hiding, proving myself, or something else?**
3. **How different would my life look if I stopped trying to prove myself or hide in this area?** Or, to put it another way, what would it look like to believe Jesus when he says I am enough?
4. **When I feel that way, how am I going to remember that I AM enough?** A tip from my own experience: Memorizing what God said is true about me helps when I start to believe differently. Ephesians 2:10 may be a good place to start. Here, the apostle Paul writes, *For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do (Ephesians 2:10 NIV).* That first phrase is a great place to start. We are God's handiwork. A piece of art.

LANDING

2 MINUTES

When we battle the feeling of not being enough, one of the worst things we can do is to believe that we have to deal with it alone. That's why we care so much about small groups and small group leaders. Because everybody needs someone to remind them what is true when it doesn't feel true to them.

I imagine that even the youth in the story we read, wanted to provide for more than just himself or herself. I imagine that this youth wanted to do something to help. That's why they offered their food to Jesus. But it's also important to note that Jesus was able to create a miracle, to create "enough" where there wasn't enough. Being enough is about more than feeling good about yourself (though that's important). It's also about knowing you have everything you need to be a major force for good in the lives of others.

Imagine what might be possible if you started to believe that you are enough and that God can use you to be a force of good in the lives of others. And what if the people in your small group started to believe that they were enough? What if you walked into school believing that about yourself so that you could take a break from trying to prove or hide? Imagine what you may feel instead. I really believe it could change you and the people around you. **You don't have to prove you are enough.** Jesus says you are enough. That's really great and really TRUE news!



TRANSITION INTO SMALL GROUPS
