



COMMUNICATOR GUIDE

Take A Bow / Week 3

SERIES OVERVIEW

This series encourages high schoolers to explore the interesting tension between living a life of humility and confidence at the same time. Anchored in Jesus' understanding of humility, students will be challenged to occupy their God-given space in the world and to learn how to constantly weigh the tendency for entitlement and arrogance against Jesus' call to be humble.

SERIES BOTTOM LINE

A high schooler's guide for taking up your God-given space in the world.

WEEKLY BOTTOM LINES

WEEK 1: Don't leave your space blank

WEEK 2: When you follow Jesus, you will find real rest

WEEK 3: Don't measure your God-given space by the space occupied by someone else

WEEK 4: Your space in the world will change over time

SCRIPTURE

And all of you, dress yourselves in humility as you relate to one another, for "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble" (1 Peter 5:5b NLT).

NOTES FOR THIS WEEK

THINK ABOUT THIS

Comparison is a vicious cycle. Depending on what and to whom they're comparing, students either come out feeling like a boss or like a loser. At least they do until things change! In one breath, they may feel on top of the world in comparison to others, but in the next, they may feel like the bottom of the barrel. The point? Comparison never takes us anywhere; it's an endless cycle. The only way out? To put on humility! As you talk about that this week, be sure to make the distinction for students that humility doesn't mean being smaller, letting themselves be walked on, or never acknowledging their own gifts and accomplishments. Rather, it's about seeing themselves and others the way God sees them and recognizing that as what matters most about who we all are. When we think of everyone (ourselves included!) that way, there's nothing to compare!

INTERACTIVE 1: DRESS IN HUMILITY

OVERVIEW

This is where you'll put on different items of clothing to represent different ways students can put on humility.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- A hoodie
- A jacket
- A hat, beanie, or scarf
- One pair of gloves
- One pair of glasses

PREP

- Place all the clothing items on stage where you can access them easily during your talk.

TEACHING OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION

- *[Tell a story from your own life about a time when you were a student that you found yourself comparing something seemingly silly about yourself to someone else.]*
- Sometimes, we get into the habit of comparing ourselves to others or measuring our safety or wellbeing against their ability, talents, or characteristics.
- We're less worried about who we are individually and more worried about how we compare to the people around us.

TENSION

- While there are certainly extreme examples of what comparison can look like, a lot of us tend to do this in some less noticeable ways.
- When we think about success or achievement, we might be quicker to look at the failures of other people around us than we are to look at our own successes. *[Give relevant examples.]*
- We like seeing people fail more than they win because we're always playing the comparison game.
- Maybe you don't mind doing whatever you have to do to excel, even if it's at the cost of someone else. *[Give relevant examples.]*
- Maybe it even makes you look like you have it all together, but what does it do to the other person?
- If any of these things sound familiar, it could be that we're allowing comparison to control our views of ourselves and our actions.
- In some ways, it's what we're taught to do if we ever want to get ahead.
- We think we need to maximize our space in the world and minimize someone else's.
- Sometimes, the world around us can make us feel as if winning or being better than others is all that matters.
- If we buy into that idea, we try to make someone else feel worse, all so we feel better.
- While we might think that our success is dependent on other people's failure, what if there is a better way?

TRUTH

- In this series we've been talking about holding both humility and confidence in a healthy balance.
- God has created you to be uniquely you; you do not have to be any more or any less than who you are.
- When we move past humility and confidence to pride, arrogance, or entitlement, we try to be more, and our words and actions affect people and places in ways that aren't good for others or ourselves.
- A guy named Peter was one of Jesus' closest friends and followers and wound up being one of the leaders of the church Jesus started.
- In a letter he wrote that is now called 1 Peter in our Bible, he wrote about the topic of humility.
 - *And all of you, dress yourselves in humility as you relate to one another, for "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble" (1 Peter 5:5b NLT).*
- Peter said followers of Jesus are to "dress" in humility, meaning it's something we are to put on like we put on clothes.
- He also told us when to do it: as we relate to one another.
- Peter knew that true humility can only exist in the context of our relationships.
- Humility doesn't mean having low self-esteem or trying to play down who we are. It doesn't mean we never accept a compliment.
- Instead, true humility starts with relating to others well.
- It has less to do with how we act on the outside and more to do with what is happening on the inside.
- Dressing ourselves in humility means we aren't comparing our lives to the lives of others.
- Instead, if we learn to be for other people—for their success, happiness, and well-being—that is how we can learn to dress ourselves in humility.
- If we can learn to love and serve the people around us and work to be for them, that will tear down the comparison we can so easily hold onto.
- Don't measure your God-given space using the space occupied by someone else.
- Instead of comparing someone else's life to your own, what if we helped them see how they can be the best version of the person God created them to be?

APPLICATION

- Dressing ourselves in humility starts with realizing that it's an active choice we make every day.
- If we choose to resist comparing our lives to someone else's, then we can dress ourselves in humility and confidence.
- *[INTERACTIVE: Dress In Humility: This is where you'll put on different items of clothing to represent different ways students can put on humility.]*
- We can "dress" ourselves in humility by:
 - Looking for opportunities to serve.
 - Looking to people who consistently live humbly.

LANDING

- True confidence and true humility begin when we stop using other people to determine our own value.
- Don't measure your God-given space by the space occupied by someone else.
- Do I use other people to determine my own value?

TEACHING SLIDES

All bolded words and phrases in the Teaching Script are also provided as teaching slides for Premium Tier subscribers.



TEACHING SCRIPT

Take A Bow / Week 3

BOTTOM LINE

DON'T MEASURE YOUR GOD-GIVEN SPACE BY THE SPACE OCCUPIED BY SOMEONE ELSE

INTRODUCTION

1 ½ MINUTES

To start today, I have to tell you a story!

TELL A PERSONAL STORY

Tell a story from your own life that illustrates the following thoughts or ideas...

- Talk about a time when you were a student that you found yourself comparing something seemingly silly about yourself to someone else.
- Keep it short and funny.
- A sample story is included below.

When I was a kid, I went on a school trip to learn about nature. As we were walking through the forest, our leader turned around and said the most out-of-pocket thing ever.

“If you see a bear, you don’t have to be the fastest runner—you just have to be a little faster than the person behind you!”

This is terrible advice, but you get the idea, right? As long as you are faster than someone else, you’re going to be all right.

Sometimes, we get into the habit of treating people the exact same way.

Comparing ourselves to them.

Measuring our safety or wellbeing against their ability, talents, or characteristics.

We’re less worried about who we are individually and more worried about how we compare to the people around us. We do this all the time. We think, *I don’t have to be the most popular person, or have the most followers, or be the most unique. I just have to be better than someone else. Or even, As long as I’m not last, I will be okay. As long as my deal is better than someone else’s deal, it’s no big deal.*

TENSION

2 ½ MINUTES

While there are certainly extreme examples of what comparison can look like, a lot of us tend to do this in some less noticeable ways.

When we think about success or achievement, we might be quicker to look at the failures of other people around us than we are to look at our own successes. For example, when was the last time you got

frustrated because you saw someone else succeed in a way you wanted to? It's easy to let someone else who we perceive is doing better than us make us jealous or frustrated. It's why we might secretly love seeing people fail.

Think about this...

- It's pretty much every reality TV show ever, right?
- It's every piece of gossip that we love hearing whispered around school.
- It's every wild story that gets told on TikTok.

We like seeing people fail more than they win because we're always playing the comparison game. And if someone is doing better than us? Well, it can be much harder to use their success to make ourselves feel better.

Maybe you're not actively or purposefully doing this. Instead, maybe you don't mind doing whatever you have to do to excel, even if it's at the cost of someone else. These are the moments when we find ourselves trying to flex because of how that flex makes us look to the people around us.

- It's making fun of someone so that everyone else laughs.
- It's not doing something a family member asked you to do because you don't like being told what to do.
- It looks like spreading rumors about something someone did, regardless of how it makes them feel.
- It looks like commenting on that person's post to make fun of them or calling them out.

It feels fun at the time. Maybe it even makes you look like you have it all together. But what does it do to the other person?

If any of these things sound familiar, it could be that we're allowing comparison to control our views of ourselves and our actions. And if we get really honest with ourselves, we do these types of things all the time. In some ways, it's what we're taught to do if we ever want to get ahead.

Put yourself first...

Win at all costs...

Never let people see you down.

When we live that out, we become something we don't want to be. We end up looking at the space we occupy in this world and comparing it to others. Why? Because **we think we need to maximize our space in the world and minimize someone else's.**

Sometimes, the world around us can make us feel as if winning or being better than others is all that matters. That means we must make ourselves bigger than who we actually are. In order for you to be okay, you think you have to be better than those around you. And if we buy into that idea, we end up criticizing and tearing others down, all because their life doesn't look like ours. We try to make someone else feel worse, all so we feel better.

And while we might think that our success is dependent on other people's failure, what if there is a better way?

TRUTH

3 ½ MINUTES

If you've been here the past few weeks, we've been in this series talking about holding both humility and confidence in a healthy balance. God has created you to be uniquely you. You do not have to be any more or any less than who you are. But when we move past humility and confidence to pride, arrogance, or entitlement, we try to be more, and our words and actions affect people and places in ways that aren't good for others or ourselves. It might be one thing if we lived in isolation, but we don't. We were created for relationships and to live in a community, so our lives all exist next to each other.

A guy named Peter was one of Jesus' closest friends and followers and wound up being one of the leaders of the church Jesus started. And he really got this idea. In a letter he wrote that is now called 1 Peter in our Bible, he wrote about the topic of humility. He was writing this letter to Christians who had been spread out across different cities because of the bullying they were facing for following Jesus. They were spread into new communities and cultures, and Peter encouraged them to be different than the people they were surrounded by. Rather than allowing themselves to be filled with pride, they should become people of humility. Look at what he wrote:

And all of you, dress yourselves in humility as you relate to one another, for “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble” (1 Peter 5:5b NLT).

Peter said followers of Jesus are to “dress” in humility, which might sound weird to us! It means that humility is something we are to put on like we put on clothes. Peter not only told us to put on humility, but he told us *when* to do it: **as we relate to one another.**

Peter knew that **true humility can only exist in the context of our relationships.** He challenged the people reading his letter to think about how they interact and relate to one another, how they see people, how they speak to them, how they treat them, and even how they think about them.

Humility doesn't mean having low self-esteem or trying to play down who we are. It doesn't mean we never accept a compliment. Instead, **true humility starts with relating to others well.** Humility doesn't mean pretending that we're never proud of ourselves or that we never do anything good, but true humility does mean paying attention to how we view the people around us. It has less to do with how we act on the outside and more to do with what is happening on the inside.

Dressing ourselves in humility means we aren't comparing our lives to the lives of others. When we spend all of our time comparing, we'll never find confidence in the life we have because we're too busy trying to be better than other people. If we want to see someone else fail, then we'll have a hard time learning to relate with them well.

Instead, if we learn to be for other people—for their success, happiness, and well-being—that is how we can learn to dress ourselves in humility. Not by comparing ourselves or lifting ourselves above someone else but by actively serving them. If we can learn to love and serve the people around us and work to be for them, that will tear down the comparison we can so easily hold onto.

Think about what Peter was saying this way:

Don't measure your God-given space using the space occupied by someone else.

Instead of comparing someone else's life to your own, what if we helped them see how they can be the best version of the person God created them to be? When we learn to do that, it works against the pressure we feel to compare ourselves to others.

APPLICATION

2 MINUTES

Dressing ourselves in humility starts with realizing that it's an active choice we make every day. Humility won't happen by accident. But if we choose to resist comparing our lives to someone else's, then we can dress ourselves in humility and confidence.

INTERACTIVE: Dress In Humility

This is where you'll put on different items of clothing to represent different ways students can put on humility.

We can "dress" ourselves in humility by:

- **Looking for opportunities to serve.** *[Put on a hoodie.]* Put on serving. Opportunities to serve others and build them up are all around you. We don't often see them because we're too busy looking for the opposite: opportunities to compare. But if we start taking opportunities to serve when they present themselves, they may just slowly become how we live and who we are.

This can start simple:

- *[Put on jacket.]* It's encouraging someone and calling out the good you see in them.
 - *[Put on a hat, beanie, or scarf.]* It's choosing to speak well of someone instead of gossiping.
 - *[Put on gloves.]* It's celebrating someone else's success. When your friend wins, make a big deal out of it.
- **Looking to people who consistently live humbly.** *[Put on glasses.]* You can choose who you look up to. You can choose who your role models are. If the only people we look up to are people who spend more time comparing and climbing over others than they do, loving, encouraging, and serving others, then we'll lack the example we're looking for. Our heroes say a lot about who we want to be. And it is not a bad idea to edit our heroes to make sure the people we look up to and want to emulate are people who balance humility and confidence well and serve others. Take note and see if you can apply that in your own life.

LANDING

1 MINUTE

True confidence and true humility begin when we stop using other people to determine our own value. Peter's encouragement to the church to dress themselves in humility was pretty unique. When we learn to live differently—looking for opportunities to love, encourage, and serve others—and when we start following the example of people who do the same, then we're joining in a long line of people who followed Jesus and did the same.

Remember, **don't measure your God-given space by the space occupied by someone else.**

When you go to Small Group, consider your answer to the following question: **Do I use other people to determine my own value?**



TRANSITION INTO SMALL GROUPS