



FIERCE: SAMPLE LESSON

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FIERCE

SAMPLE LESSON: FIERCE FAITH

Bible: Proverbs 28:1; Hebrews 11:1; Romans 8:17; James 2:14-19

Bottom Line: When you know who you are in Christ, you become bold and fearless in your faith.

OPENING GAME: “Who Am I?”

Today’s game will focus on the concept of identity, which will help the youth leader set up today’s lesson on our identity in Christ and how it leads to our boldness to live for God.

OPTION #1: ONLINE YOUTH GROUP

SUPPLIES

- Computer with Internet access
- Smartphone
- Google Doc- Shared ahead of time with all students’ emails (note: do not allow students editing privileges- keep the document “View Only”)

HOW TO PLAY THE GAME

Leaders: Set up a chat group using your choice of chat platform (Facebook live, Zoom, etc.) and invite students ahead of time. Create a Google doc with each student’s name on it.

1. Once all students have joined the live chat group, ask each of them to send you a private message (through text or email or your preferred method of communication) with one hard-to-guess fact about themselves.
2. If your students struggle to come up with facts, give them the following ideas: it could be a hobby, interest, story from childhood, interesting memory, or (as a “fierce option” to make the game even more hilarious) an embarrassing moment.
3. Have any youth leaders who are participating in this online lesson follow the same instructions as well.
4. In a random order, read out the facts about the students, but do not say the name of the student associated with each fact.

5. Have the group come up with a consensus about which student or youth leader the fact should be associated with. Type that fact below the person's name in the Google Doc.
6. By the end of the activity, each name should have just one fact beneath it, so you'll have to allow some time for students to change their minds about where the facts should be placed.
7. Once all names have one fact written beneath, tell the students which ones were right and which were wrong.

OPTION #2: IN-PERSON YOUTH GROUP

SUPPLIES

- Index cards (three for each student and youth leader)
- Pens or pencils (one for each student and youth leader)
- Optional: Hat or bucket to mix index cards
- Double-sided tape or masking tape
- A whiteboard

HOW TO PLAY THE GAME

Leaders: Before the students arrive, put your name(s) and each of the students' names on the board with some room beneath them to place index cards.

1. Give each student three index cards and a writing utensil.
2. Have each student write down one (preferably unknown) fact about themselves on each card. Note: they should only write on one side of the card, and they should not write down their names.
3. If your students struggle to come up with facts, give them the following ideas. It could be a hobby, interest, story from childhood, impressive memory, or (as a "fierce option" to make the game even more hilarious) an embarrassing moment.
4. Have all youth leaders follow the same instructions as well.
5. Collect all of the cards and shuffle them or place them in a hat/bucket.
6. Read each card to the class and let them come up with a consensus about which student or youth leader the fact should be associated with.

Place the card below that person's name on the board using the tape.

7. By the end of the activity, each name should only have three cards located beneath, so you'll have to reread several of the cards as students change their minds about where the index cards should go.
8. Once all index cards have been placed under a name, read the cards out loud and let the students find out where they were wrong or right.

TEACH

Say: Today's lesson is going to be about fierce faith.

But before we move into a discussion of fierce faith—what it means and what it looks like—let's go straight to the Word.

Read Proverbs 28:1.

The wicked run away when no one is chasing them, but the godly are as bold as lions.

This verse contrasts the nonbeliever and the believer by their behavior, specifically concerning fear.

In this verse, God tells us that fear rules the life of the nonbeliever, but that the godly walk in boldness.

Ask: In your experience, does this appear to be true?

In what ways do you see fear ruling the life of those who don't believe? Fear of what?

Allow a few responses from students.

When we talk about faith, we must also discuss identity.

Why? Because our faith in Christ and what He has done for us identify us as children of God.

Think that's not a big deal?

That's where you'd be wrong.

Knowing who we are in Christ is EVERYTHING for the believer.

It motivates us, makes us feel safe, and takes the pressure off of us all at the same time.

Maybe this doesn't make sense to you.

Maybe you're unmotivated, or you don't feel safe being bold for Christ, or perhaps you are constantly overwhelmed by the pressure to perform and be a "good Christian."

If this is the case, you probably don't understand who you really are in Christ.

And that's okay, because today, we're going to figure all of that out.

Our first step in understanding who we are is to define faith.

Hebrews 11:1 (NLT) says:

Faith shows the reality of what we hope for; it is the evidence of things we cannot see.

Another translation (NIV) says:

Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.

Note that the words "confidence" and "assurance" are used as synonyms of "faith."

That means that faith isn't defined by how "good" you are, but rather by your assurance ("how sure you are") of what Jesus has done for you.

Uh-oh.

That might bring up another problem.

You might be thinking, "But I'm not always sure..."

"But, I have questions..."

Or even, "I don't know everything there is to know about Jesus yet..."

All of these are natural thoughts that virtually every believer ponders—even if they don't admit it.

And thankfully, God can do more with an ounce of faith than we can do with a billion dollars.

And thankfully *again*, He knows our hearts better than we know our own.

Just reflect on how Jesus dealt with doubt in the gospels.

If you don't know, I'll give you an example.

Jesus confronted doubt in so many of his followers, including John the Baptist, of whom Jesus said there was "none greater."

He didn't attack, he didn't reject, and he didn't mock those who doubted.

He simply reminded them of the truth.

And that's what he's doing right now through this Bible study time.

He's reminding you that, no matter your doubts, He is the one true Savior.

Ask: What must we do to be saved?

Allow a few responses from students.

Before we move on, I think it's important to talk about what salvation is.

God's Word says that this salvation that comes by faith is a gift from God.

So, questioning whether you've saved based on how "good" you are, goes against this very simple teaching.

By measuring yourself against others based on behavior and action, you're essentially saying that you believe you've saved yourself.

So, no, your "goodness" cannot, and will not, save.

Faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (for YOUR sins) is what saves.

The Bible tells us that we can test ourselves to be sure we are in the faith.

And we do so by examining our lives for the fruit of salvation.

Ask: Do you desire to honor God with your life?

Does your life show evidence of growth in the Lord—even if it's been a slow process?

Do you desire to see others come to Christ?

Do you want to follow God's teachings and feel convicted by your sin?

Allow a few responses from students.

These are just some of the questions that you can ask yourself to find assurance that you are saved.

And if your answers are "yes," then you already see the fruit of salvation in your life (remember: you're not perfect; you WILL mess up).

This truth does not negate your salvation).

But, for the sake of time, we're going to move on to the final part of the lesson.

Let's go to **Romans 8:17**.

And since we are his children, we are his heirs. In fact, together with Christ we are heirs of God's glory. But if we are to share his glory, we must also share his suffering.

In these verses, Paul is clarifying the extraordinary beauty of salvation, and he's explaining that we get to share in God's glory!!!!

This concept is hard to grasp, so let's dig into it.

Often, believers will talk about what they've been saved *from* sin, death, hell.

But it's also important to talk about what we've been saved into - the family of God, righteousness, eternal life, an inheritance like no other, and suffering on behalf of Christ.

Wait; what?

Suffering?

Indeed, suffering on behalf of Christ is part of being aligned with Him.

He loved.

We love.

He showed compassion.

We show compassion.

He was righteous.

He gives us His righteousness.

He suffered.

We suffer in order to see Him glorified.

He spoke bold truth.

We speak bold truth.

Yes, as Christians, we are to *be like Christ*, and our faith should produce a boldness in us to shout His Gospel from the rooftops.

So then, what does fierce faith look like?

Let's see what James says about the topic.

Read James 2:14-19.

What good is it, dear brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but don't show it by your actions? Can that kind of faith save anyone? Suppose you see a brother or sister who has no food or clothing, and you say, "Good-bye and have a good day; stay warm and eat well"—but then you don't give that person any food or clothing. What good does that do?

So you see, faith by itself isn't enough. Unless it produces good deeds, it is dead and useless.

Now someone may argue, "Some people have faith; others have good deeds." But I say, "How can you show me your faith if you don't have good deeds? I will show you my faith by my good deeds."

You say you have faith, for you believe that there is one God. Good for you! Even the demons believe this, and they tremble in terror.

To be clear, these verses teach us that true faith produces works.

In other words, faith is *believing in the truth of the Gospel*, the result of which is *action*.

In this summer series, we're going to learn a lot about being a fierce Christian, boldly proclaiming the Gospel despite all odds and any persecution.

That's what thousands of Christians—probably even millions—have done before us, and that's what we'll do.

But we won't do it by our own might.

We'll do it because we've been saved into an inheritance with Christ, and His Spirit lives in us, giving us the boldness to do God's work!

When we understand that we are children of God (and if you're saved, that's precisely what you are), then we must live out fierce faith!

If that doesn't excite you, I don't know what will.

Let's spend some time in prayer and ask God for the boldness that only His Spirit can give us.

End lesson and close in prayer.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Take some time to discuss some of the simple biblical truths you've learned (or have been reminded of) today.

Which one hit you the hardest?

2. Does fear ever hinder you from sharing the Gospel?

If so, what might you be afraid of?

3. Do you ever doubt your salvation?

If so, reflect on what causes you to doubt and discuss with the group whether your doubts align with what Scripture says.

4. What does bold faith look like?

Give an example of someone you know who has done or said something bold for Christ.

5. Read John 20: 24-29.

How does Jesus respond to Thomas' doubt?

6. Why are Christians willing to die for the Gospel?

Can you imagine yourself proclaiming His name even if you were threatened with death?

7. In what ways does our American culture hinder us from understanding suffering along with Christ?

8. Who is a role model for you when it comes to fierce faith? Why?

9. How does knowing our identity in Christ produce boldness?