



WORDACTION'S LEADER'S GUIDE

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Standards

Faith&Culture

Change

Wealth



Walk Thru the Bible

YS
Youth Specialties



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Each topic in the YouthWalk Leader's Guide includes six sections:

- **OBJECTIVE:** contains the purpose of each week's meeting. Read this section first. Knowing the goal will help you adapt the material to meet the needs of your group.
- **HOOK IT UP:** gives an opening activity to get the group involved in the lesson.
- **LOOK IT UP:** reveals the biblical perspective on the topic.
- **THINK IT THROUGH:** gives some thought-provoking questions and activities.
- **WORK IT OUT:** recommends ways to apply the lesson.
- **ADAPTATION:** gives activity ideas that you can either substitute for the Hook It Up material or use as a supplement if your meeting time runs longer than 45 minutes.

Have students read the appropriate *YouthWalk* topic during the week *after* the meeting. Be prepared for questions about the material in the magazine (which means, of course, you'll have to read it yourself).

ONE STANDARDS

• OBJECTIVE

Students will understand that they must establish personal standards based on God's Word.

• ADAPTATION

For Hook It Up, divide students into groups and assign each group a popular TV sitcom family they're familiar with (i.e., the Simpsons, the Hennessy family from *8 Simple Rules for Dating My Daughter*, etc.). Ask each group what the sitcom family thinks about the following topics:

- 1) sex;
- 2) alcohol and drugs;
- 3) cheating;
- 4) lying.

What are the family "policies" or rules about each of those topics? What do you think is the sitcom family's basis for establishing these sets of rules for their family?

Then ask each group to share with one another how their own families address each topic and the rules (implied or otherwise) they have set up for each one.

• HOOK IT UP—15 minutes

To begin, survey your class with the following questions:

- According to most people in your school, when is it OK to cheat?
- According to most people in your school, when is it OK to have sex?
- According to most people in your school, when is it OK to lie?
- According to most people in your school, when is it OK to steal?
- According to most people in your school, when is it OK to use alcohol or other drugs?

Then repeat the questions with the following variation: Ask them what their personal standards are for those things. "When do you think it is OK to _____?"

• LOOK IT UP—10 minutes

Write the following verses on the board and look them up as a group, one at a time: Proverbs 10:9 (cheating), 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 (premarital sex), Colossians 3:9 (lying), Ephesians 4:28 (stealing), Ephesians 5:18 (alcohol and drugs). After reading each verse, ask students, "When does God say it is OK to _____?" (Adapt the five questions given in the Hook It Up section.)

• THINK IT THROUGH—10 minutes

Have the students gather in groups of four. Have the group elect a leader whose job is to facilitate the discussion and make sure everyone gets a chance to participate. Have the students brainstorm the consequences of these actions: cheating, premarital sex, lying, stealing, and the use of alcohol and drugs. If students are comfortable being vulnerable, ask them to share past examples of when they've stepped outside of God's standards and the natural consequences they faced as a result. When they're finished, ask them to discuss: (1) Would they have faced certain consequences and tough situations if they had abided under the umbrella of God's guidelines? (2) Why do you think God wants us to abide by His standards?

• WORK IT OUT—10 minutes

At the end of class, give everyone a piece of paper and a pen. Ask them if they or their friends are struggling in one of these areas. Then ask them to come up with a three- or four-step plan of action that they can take to help overcome this temptation. (For example, who can you recruit to encourage you to avoid the temptation? What situations should you avoid? What friends should you distance yourself from because they tempt you to sin?) Remind them that Christ promises forgiveness to those who sin (1 John 1:9-2:2) and He promises to help in overcoming the temptation (1 Corinthians 10:13).

• OBJECTIVE

Students will recognize spiritual themes which appear in culture, and learn practical ways to use their knowledge of culture to impact the beliefs of others.

• ADAPTATION

For the Hook It Up section, you will need to do a little research. Go to a music lyrics Web site (like www.lyrics.com*) and print out song lyrics to some of the top songs on the charts. Choose a variety of musical styles, like country, hip-hop, R&B, rock, and pop. Make sure you read over the lyrics to verify if they are appropriate for your group.

At the beginning of your time with your students, divide them into small groups and give each group two printed lyric sheets. Ask the group to find any spiritual concepts that are expressed in the song and find a verse from the Bible that expresses a similar message. Have each group present their song, message, and verse.

* for lyrics to songs from Christian music, visit www.todaychristianmusic.com/lyrics.htm

• HOOK IT UP—10 minutes

Ask students to get in groups of 3 or 4 and discuss the movies they've seen recently. Have students explain the movie plots and themes to group members who may not have seen them. Ask the students to discuss spiritual concepts the movies touched on. If they're stumped, jump-start their brains with an example. (For some ideas, check out the books *Videos That Teach* and *Videos That Teach 2* by Doug Fields and Eddie James, available from www.youthspecialties.com.)

• LOOK IT UP—15 minutes

Have volunteers read these verses: (a) John 4:7-9, 27; (b) John 2:1-2; (c) John 15:5, and (d) John 10:11. Explain the cultural settings for each of the verses. For example, Jews didn't usually associate with Samaritans and women held a low position in society (John 4:7-9, 27). A wedding during Jesus' time was the equivalent of a major modern-day party (John 2:1-2). And vineyards (John 15:5) and shepherding (John 10:11) were common elements of everyday life.

Then ask students: How did Jesus connect with the people in His day? How did Jesus know what the people of His day were dealing with? Explain that Jesus used the people's culture (their beliefs, ideas, and lifestyle) to teach them about spiritual things.

• THINK IT THROUGH—10 minutes

In their groups, have students discuss some common spiritual themes that appear in today's culture and in their world. What types of things are their friends talking about? What movies and TV shows are they watching? What bands are they listening to?

Then, discuss whether or not students tend to separate the world around them into "good" and "bad" or "Christian" and "non-Christian." Ask: Do you avoid certain aspects of the world around you because they do not seem to have any positive spiritual value? Do you concentrate more on the negative ways culture can affect you rather than the positive ways you can affect culture?

• WORK IT OUT—10 minutes

Challenge students to observe bands, music, Web sites, movies, and TV shows their friends listen to, visit, and watch. Ask students to pick out spiritual themes that appear in pop culture, and encourage them to brainstorm ways to use those themes as platforms to share their faith with their friends. (Keep in mind that this is not a license to sin and use *Philippians 4:8* as a guide.) Close this session by praying that God will create opportunities for each student to find a way to share their faith in Jesus Christ with someone by using pop culture.

(A word of caution: Some students may not be allowed to participate in consuming pop culture due to the guidelines their families have established. Be respectful of that, and do not encourage students to disobey their parents. However, even though they may not be allowed to view current TV shows and movies, or listen to the hottest new tunes, they can still know the messages being put out into culture by reading publications like Focus on the Family's Plugged In magazine or reading movie/TV/music/book reviews in magazines like Entertainment Weekly.)

WARP ARE CHANGE

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• OBJECTIVE

Teens will realize that at this point in their lives, when so much is changing, God never changes.

• ADAPTATION

Before the meeting, write each of the following on separate pieces of paper. Make two sets.

- Exchange shoes with someone on your team.
- Collect 32¢ in change.
- Explain three changes you've gone through in the last year.
- Change the time on someone's watch ahead one hour.
- Make up a four-line song about change and sing it to your team.

Place identical sets of instructions in two paper bags and put the bags across from two teams lined up for a relay. At go, the first person in each line should race to his or her team's bag, draw a piece of paper, and do what it says. The first team to complete all items in the bag wins.

• HOOK IT UP—15 minutes

Select a member of the group to play "MindWarp." Instruct that person that whenever they are asked a question, they should give a different variation of their answer. For example, if they are asked what their name is, they should say "Bill." But when people try to address them by that name, the student should correct them and say, "No, my name is William."

Tell the class that they should ask the person 10 questions. At the end of those ten questions, they should know: the person's full name, the city where the person lives, the person's age, his/her favorite color, and his/her favorite Bible verse.

After the group is totally frustrated by the changes in the student's answers, then tell them that change is a big part of our lives. It can be incredibly frustrating, but God is a constant in the middle of change.

• LOOK IT UP—10 minutes

"What doesn't change?" Brainstorm some answers. Have volunteers read these verses: Psalm 71:3; Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 13:8. Then discuss: "What difference does it make that God doesn't change? What is constant about God? How does God's unchanging nature add security to your life?"

• THINK IT THROUGH—10 minutes

Have everyone stand in a circle. Hand out copies of this responsive reading based on Psalm 71:3. Give the L lines to a number of students to read aloud at the right times, and the group should read the responses marked G.

L: My life may be constantly changing, but	G: God is my Rock.
L: I may have changes forced on me, but	G: God is my Rock.
L: I may feel overwhelmed by change, but	G: God is my Rock.
L: My world may be falling apart, but	G: God is my Rock.
L: My tomorrow may be nothing like today, but	G: God is my Rock.
L: I may not understand why things change, but	G: God is my Rock.

• WORK IT OUT—10 minutes

Now have students choose one area of their lives which seems out of control (things like physical change caused by growth, loss of money or friends, moves, family change, spiritual change).

Then hand out a paperweight-sized rock to each student, explaining that it is a reminder that God is our Rock—His unchanging nature in our constantly-changing world. Say something like: "Change is inevitable. We can't avoid it. Many times it's painful. But God is our secure place. We can rely on Him through our constant changes."

As your teens work through the *YouthWalk* devotionals this week, tell them to keep their rock nearby. Artistic types can paint or write Psalm 71:3, Malachi 3:6, or Hebrews 13:8 on it.

Close in prayer, thanking God for His unchanging nature, and asking Him to teach us all to draw security from Him.

FOUR WEALTH

• OBJECTIVE

Students will become more aware of the emphasis they place on possessions and money.

• ADAPTATION

For Hook It Up, tell your group to list all the things they would do if they were holding a \$10 million winning lottery ticket or had just won a sweepstakes contest.

Now have them go back through the list and ask them how the item they listed would change their lives, maybe even their attitude. Also, how might that item cause them to lose their focus on God as the main priority in their lives?

• HOOK IT UP—10 minutes

Hand out paper and pencils. Say something like: “Normally we reserve Christmas time for making our ‘wish list’ of things we really want to get. So let’s get a jump start on Christmas 2003. (Play a Christmas CD at this point.) Take a minute now to write down what you want for Christmas. No one else will look at this list unless you reveal it, so don’t be afraid to make it complete.”

After a minute or so, have them put their lists in their pockets.

• LOOK IT UP—15 minutes

Have someone read Ecclesiastes 5:10-12 aloud. Remind them that Solomon was extremely wealthy. Ask: (1) Why do you think Solomon had a negative attitude about wealth? (2) What do these verses say to someone who wants to become a millionaire?

Have someone read the following verses on money. After each reading, ask what the biblical principle is. Write the principles on the board.

- Psalm 24:1 (Everything in the world belongs to God.)
- Psalm 119:36-37 (It’s important to keep our priorities straight.)
- Proverbs 18:11 (Money gives the illusion of security.)
- Proverbs 28:25 (Greed causes problems.)
- Matthew 6:24 (No one can serve both God and money.)
- Luke 18:23-25 (Money can become a person’s god.)
- Philippians 4:11-12 (We should learn to be content with what we have.)
- 1 Timothy 6:10 (Money can cause lots of problems.)
- 1 Timothy 6:17-19 (We should be generous and willing to share.)

• THINK IT THROUGH—10 minutes

Explain that people tend to compare themselves to those who have more, not less. For example, a person who makes \$50,000 a year might say he’s not rich because he doesn’t make \$75,000 a year, while a person making \$100,000 a year thinks he’s poor by not making \$250,000. By comparing oneself with someone who has more, a person can find it easy to rationalize a lifestyle based on possessions and money.

Tell your students to take a few minutes to compare their lives to people who are desperately poor. Invite volunteers to say what some of the differences are. Ask them to show and explain symbols of affluence they have with them (car keys, money, designer clothes, photos, jewelry, contact lenses, etc.).

• WORK IT OUT—10 minutes

Now have your students take out the lists they made in Hook It Up. Ask how they might modify their lists if they wanted to apply the principles on the board. Give them a minute to do this. Then have volunteers tell what they changed and why.

Point out that the *YouthWalk* readings for the week will focus on wealth. End with a challenge about centering our lives on Christ, not on stuff.