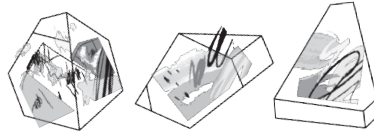


FEARLESS

CONQUERING THE FEAR THAT HOLDS YOU BACK



Session 2:
FEARLESS IN THE
MIDST OF DOUBT

What We Want Students to Learn: That if they have a saving relationship with Christ, they have no reason to doubt their true identity.

Main Scripture: Mark 2:1-12

Supporting Scripture: Galatians 2:20

Session Snapshot: Identity formation is a huge part of what it means to be a teenager. And much of the fear and insecurity teenagers face is tied to their identity, especially younger students. The fear of being singled out or ridiculed is a real one. So much of this is tied to doubt about who they are. In this session, Jesus was put in a situation where people very much doubted His identity. In a powerful way, Jesus fearlessly stood firm on His identity, proving that He was who He claimed to be. As Christ-followers, your students' identities are hidden in Christ. Paul says their old life is gone. In its place is a life lived for Christ. As your students seek to navigate the world they live in, there should never be any doubt about the nature of their identities. They can fearlessly be who they are called to be because of their identity in Jesus.

BIBLE BACKGROUND

The Bible Background is a focused, brief overview of some of the background info for the main passage you will be teaching.

TEACHER PREP VIDEO

Each Small Group Leader's Guide comes with a Teacher Prep Video. These are simply short videos designed to help you grasp the main point of the lesson as you prepare to teach.

To access your FEARLESS lesson 2 Teacher Prep Video, login to your account, navigate to your Small Group lesson 2, and click on the "Background" tab in your Lesson Manager. You'll notice the Teacher Prep Video at the top of the Lesson Manager window.

THE DETAILS

WHO WROTE THIS BOOK?

The Gospel of Mark was written by its namesake, Mark, also known as John Mark, is believed to have received most of his information for his Gospel from Peter's firsthand accounts.

WHEN WAS IT WRITTEN?

Mark is thought to have written his Gospel in the mid 50's AD.

WHAT WAS THE PURPOSE FOR ITS WRITING?

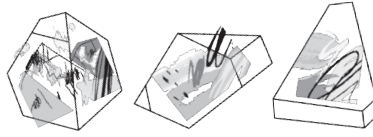
Mark was writing primarily for a non-Jewish audience. His Gospel explains Jewish customs to non-Jews in an effort to get them to see the big picture of Jesus' identity.

THE MAIN POINT

The main point in this passage is that Jesus confirmed His identity as the Messiah, God's Son sent to save humanity from their sins. When Jesus told the paralytic that his sins were forgiven, the scribes cast doubt on who Jesus was. So, Jesus did what only God can do: he healed the man. This made an emphatic and undeniable statement about Jesus' identity.

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THE TAKEAWAY

The takeaway for your students is to look at Jesus' example about how to deal with their identity in moments of doubt. As your students seek to live out their faith, they will have people who doubt them and their identity as Christ-followers. Jesus experienced the same thing. And yet, Jesus responded boldly, confirming His identity. Your students can do the same thing. Your students don't have to fear who they are in Christ. They can boldly live out their faith in the assurance that their identities are hidden with Christ in God.

LESSON PLAN

The Lesson Plan contains three elements: an introductory activity called Getting Started; the Bible study section called Digging In; and an application-focused segment called Wrapping Up.

GETTING STARTED

- **Student Book Pages**
 - This lesson will utilize pages 13-17 in the FEARLESS Student Book.
 - This activity will use page 14.
- **Additional Instructions**
 - Make sure students have something to write with.

FIRST, have a volunteer read the Session 2 intro on page 13 of their Student Books. Then, direct their attention to page 14. Explain that since this lesson is all about identity, you're going to play a game to see who can guess some of the true identities of some famous people, both real and fictional. Decide if you want to do this as a group or if you want to break students into teams.

THEN, process through the activity. If you're doing it as a group, read aloud a one of the celebrity names then have students try to guess their true identity from the names in the word bank. If you're doing it as a competition, allow teams a few minutes to try and guess all the correct names. Come back together and see which group got the most correct. Regardless how you conduct the activity, the answers are below:

- **Katy Perry (Kathryn Hudson)**
- **Drake (Aubrey Graham)**
- **Jamie Foxx (Erin Marlon Bishop)**
- **Vin Diesel (Mark Sinclair Vincent)**
- **Bruno Mars (Peter Gene Hernandez)**
- **Batman (Bruce Wayne)**
- **Captain America (Steve Rogers)**
- **Superman (Clark Kent)**
- **Wolverine (James Logan Howlett)**
- **Catwoman (Salina Kyle)**

NEXT, when you've finished the activity, lead your students in a short discussion (answers will all vary based on individual responses). Ask something like:

- **Why do you think celebrities choose stage names?**
- **If you could have a stage name, what would it be?**
- **Superheroes all have secret identities. What would be the best part about having a secret identity?**
- **What would your superhero name be?**

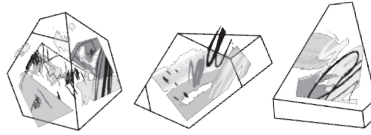
FINALLY, begin to transition to the Digging In portion of your lesson by saying something like:

- **Our identity is central to who we are. And while it would be nice sometimes to have alter egos, we can't. We have to be who we are. Sometimes this can make us nervous or fearful.**

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But what we're going to learn in this session is that it's possible for us to stand firm in who we truly are, regardless of who doubts us. Let's see how Jesus modeled this very thing for us.

DIGGING IN

- **Student Book Pages**
 - This activity will utilize pages 15-16 in the FEARLESS Student Book.
- **Additional Instructions**
 - You'll want to make sure students have something to write with, and a Bible or Bible app.

FIRST, direct your students' attention to the top of page 15. You'll notice four questions there that will help you set the stage for the Bible study you're about to have. Walk students through these questions, allowing them to answer as they will. Your goal here is just to allow students the chance to begin talking about this concept. You're not really trying to teach anything yet. The questions are listed below for your convenience:

- **Come up with a few situations where it's hard for teenagers to be themselves.**
- **Come up with a quick list of emotions a person might feel who finds himself or herself in these situations.**
- **In the situations you've discussed, what would be some reasons teenagers might be tempted to hide their true identities?**
- **Is there anything wrong with changing who you are to fit the situation? Explain.**

THEN, once students have finished, instruct them to turn to Mark 2 in the Bibles or Bible apps (additionally, the passage is listed at the bottom of page 15 for reference). Provide some of the basic context for the passage using the Details section of your Bible Background. Then, read or have a student read Mark 2:1-12. When you've read the passage, direct students' attention to page 16. Work through the questions you see there as a group. Answers have been provided below where applicable:

- **Read verses 1-4. Summarize exactly what's going on here by describing the scene surrounding the story.**
 - Answers will vary. Make sure students cover the fact that large crowds of people came to Jesus based on stories or accounts they had heard of Jesus' ability to perform miracles. This is important as you begin to set up the concept of Jesus' identity.
- **What do the crowd's actions, including the actions of the four men, say about who they believed Jesus to be?**
 - Answer: It's a little bit of a trick question. There is every reason to believe that many in the crowd would have acknowledged Jesus' true identity as the Messiah. We also know from the rest of the gospel accounts of people interacting with Jesus that there would have been some people who either doubted or were confused about Jesus' identity and yet they still came to be healed or to watch Him heal others. What we can say for sure is that the people knew there was something unique about Jesus regardless of whether or not they truly equated this with Jesus' identity as God's Son.

Explain to students that this was of course setting up a showdown of sorts between Jesus and the scribes. Say something like:

- **What we're about to see is that oftentimes we can be acting completely in line with our identities and people will doubt us or otherwise make fun of us for simply being who we are. This is exactly what Jesus is about to experience. Let's see how He handled it.**

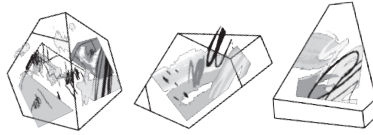
NEXT, continue with your discussion of the passage. Ask:

- **Look at verses 5-7. What is surprising about Jesus' response?**
 - Answer: Jesus was healing people. The paralytic's friends expected Jesus to heal their friend. Jesus had to know this. But Jesus didn't do as they expected. He told the man His sins would be forgiven.
- **What is the issue the scribes have with Jesus? What is their problem?**
 - Answer: The scribes' real issue with Jesus is that they heard His response and doubted who Jesus was. They did not think He had the ability to forgive sins because they did not think He was the Son of God. And so they doubted Him.

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Remind students that this is interesting because Jesus is indeed the Son of God. Say something like:

- **Jesus' response was perfectly in line with who He was. He was acting in accordance with His identity. And yet, He was doubted. The scribes, relatively important people within the Jewish community, looked at Jesus and took a shot at His identity. Can you relate? Have you ever had people doubt you or take shots at you? If so, we can learn a ton from how Jesus responded to the scribes. Let's look closer.**

THEN, begin to wrap up your Bible study time by asking the following questions:

- **Now look at verses 8-11. Jesus responded to the critical thoughts of the scribes. What can we learn from His response?**
 - o Answer: Jesus didn't back down. He didn't shrink away. He didn't apologize for who He was or try and fit in with the scribes. He simply acted in a way consistent with who He is.
- **Explain why Jesus replied the way He did. What was He accomplishing?**
 - o Answer: Jesus was confirming His identity. He was standing up to the doubt of the scribes.
- **In verse 12, the man walks. What did this prove?**
 - o Answer: This proves that Jesus was exactly who He said He was. By doing nothing more than being who He was, Jesus proved the doubters wrong about His identity.

Help students see that this is a powerful story of Jesus leading people to see who He was. Remember that Jesus' goal was to lead people to a saving relationship with Himself in order to redeem them from their sins. We have the chance to see our lives in a similar manner.

FINALLY, help your students understand how they can begin to apply what Jesus' example has to teach us in this story. Say something like:

- **As you go through your life as a teenager, there will be times when people try to knock you down or cast doubt about you because of who you are. This may have to do with you publicly identifying yourself as a Christ-follower. You may get made fun of for standing up for what you believe in. But just like Jesus showed us, you don't have to fear this. You can be bold in the face of people who take shots at you because of who you claim to be. And by doing so, you actually prove that your identity is true. As we wrap up this session, we're about to see why, if you have come to a saving faith in Jesus, you can be so confident in your identify.**

If students don't have any additional questions, transition to the Wrapping Up portion of your session.

WRAPPING UP

- **Student Book Pages**
 - o This activity will utilize page 17 in the FEARLESS Student Book.
- **Additional Instructions**
 - o Make sure students have something to write with.

FIRST, direct your students' attention to page 17. Have a student read Galatians 2:20. Then, ask students:

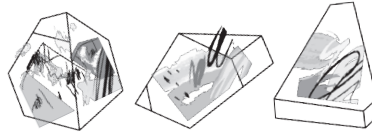
- **What does it mean to be crucified? What is the result?**
 - o Answer: To be crucified is to be put to death.
- **As we think about our identity, what does it mean when Paul says that we have died and that the life we actually live is not us, but God living in and through us?**
 - o Answers will vary. This is slightly abstract stuff, especially for younger students. So help students see that what Paul is saying is that when we come to faith in Christ we're new creations. The old us is gone. The life we live day in and day out is a life lived for Christ, where all that we do is centered on bringing glory to God.
- **How does this impact how you see yourself? In other words, how does this affect your identity?**
 - o Answers will vary.

THEN, instruct students to draw two silhouettes of people, side by side. Under the first one, have them write the word "Me." Under the second one, have them write the word, "Christ." Then, explain to them that

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they essentially have two choices. They can live a life where their identities are built on the foundation of themselves, or built on the foundation of God. Lead them in a brief discussion. Ask:

- **Remember the first part of our Bible study? We already talked about what this looks like. When people say things about us, when they question whom we really are, what happens if our foundations are built on us?**
 - o Answers will vary. But lead them to see that it's easy to be fearful when our foundation is built on us.
- **But if they question us and our foundations are built on Christ, then we are on firm footing, right? What is the difference in the outcome?**
 - o Answers will vary.

FINALLY, wrap up your time together by saying:

- **This is super important stuff. Because we know people are going to doubt us. We know people are going to make fun of us, or otherwise try and bring us down. But if we build our identities on the foundation of Christ, being confident that God is in us and works through us, we will be able to stand up to anything that comes our way.**

Ask students if they have any questions or additional comments. Inform students of the devotions located on pages 35-41 in their Student Books. Provide them with a schedule or some structure as to when you would like for them to work through them. If there are no more questions, close in prayer for your group.