



# Wonderful youth

Five multicultural studies for youth groups to affirm all young people between the ages of 13 and 16 and help them become  
'The best that you can be'

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The five studies in this resource may be used in any order.

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### Be the best you can be: Purity

- » Leaders' Notes

*[It is very important that you feel confident using the material in this session, and omit it if you are not comfortable facilitating it.*

*Good relationships with the young people are key to getting the best from them during the session, and some discussions may be best facilitated in girl or boy only groups.*

*We also advise you to have both male and female leaders facilitate the session together.]*

# Introduction

Even though there is a vast number of resources on the Christian market to aid young people reflect on their Christian faith few, if any, intentionally enable young people of colour to see their image reflected in the resources. This resource aims to address that imbalance. Drawing on culturally diverse images, exercises and activities, *Wonderful Youth* is unapologetically multicultural. The material seeks to affirm, both theologically and culturally, all young people between the ages of 13-16.

So how and why did *Wonderful Youth* come about? Three worshippers from Six Ways Baptist Church, Birmingham and two from John Bunyan Baptist Church, Oxford (both multicultural churches) have been responsible for writing this challenging and stimulating resource. Both worshipping communities are acutely conscious of the importance of providing their young people of colour with material that resonates with their world view. Commissioned by the Baptist Union Racial Justice Group, *Wonderful Youth* attempts to do just that. Among its various aims, the team responsible for writing these sessions are seeking to equip young black and minority ethnic people to appreciate and love God's Word. Aware that this is not easy to achieve, it seeks to enable these young people to interpret Paul's letter to Timothy through the lens of young people of colour.

The five sessions are designed to be used during Black History Month in October 2017.

*Wonderful Youth* provides a window of opportunity for churches and youth groups to engage with the resource throughout October, exploring and celebrating some of the historical and current unique contributions from people of colour.

1 Timothy 4: 12 has been chosen as the basis of the sessions because of Paul's encouragement to Timothy to be an example of a Christ-centred youth, striving for excellence: *'Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young but set an example for believers in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity.'*

Each week during Black History Month, one of the five character references: speech, conduct, love, faith and purity can be explored by both leaders and youth. The sessions and material have been designed so that they can be adapted to suit the youth group's requirements or time allocation. For example, the session on Faith starts by making a comparison between the message of Paul and that of Dr Martin Luther King. The leader could choose to view King's speech via YouTube, read a section of it, or leave it out altogether. Leaving it out would require simply rephrasing questions to exclude King and focusing solely on Paul's intent.

Preparation is key. Downloading some material and photocopying worksheets ahead of time will ensure that the teenagers get the best out of each session. Extra resources have been supplied to offer further information, give examples, enhance teaching and reinforce ideas. Additional activity resources are also provided. Feel free to use ideas from one session in another session if it fits or seems appropriate.

We are aware there may be some younger people in your church who might find the material stimulating and challenging but lay outside our 13-16 age range. In some instances, therefore, age involvement will be largely influenced by the youth's maturity and at the leader's discretion. Those responsible for facilitating the discussions need to be flexible. Adapting the sessions to suit a younger or older group is also a possibility. You may wish to consult with some parents before embarking on certain decisions and sessions.

As this is the first time that Baptists Together has produced this kind of material, the Racial Justice Group would value your feedback before developing the sessions for 2018. Please feel free to send your thoughts and any suggestions to the writing group by emailing [whudson-roberts@baptist.org.uk](mailto:whudson-roberts@baptist.org.uk)

Happy reading and thank you for your participation

Be the best you can be:

# Speech

Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers **in speech**, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity. *1 Timothy 4:12 (NIV)*

## Aim

To encourage young people 'be the best they can be' by reflecting on the power of words/speech.

## Lesson outcome

In the area of language, to help young people 'be the best they can be' by using language and speech that encourages others to meet their potential and 'be the best they can be'.

## Bible notes for leaders

The first of Paul's final series of letters (which, along with 2 Timothy and Titus are called the Pastoral Epistles) the letter to Timothy offers pastoral advice from the ageing apostle Paul to a young pastor named Timothy working in the church at Ephesus. Paul had first met Timothy in the city of Lystra, in Asia Minor where Timothy was respected by the Christians (Acts 16: 1-4). Aware of Timothy's many impressive qualities, Paul recruited Timothy and together they travelled.

Timothy's youth served him well, though it did create difficulties for older Christians who did not take to the leadership of this young man easily, because of his lack of knowledge and experience in leadership. For Paul, it was important for Timothy to set an example in consistent faith, remaining above reproach - not least in the area of speech.

It is important that we often come before God and ask him to forgive us for using words that discourage people. Even the likes of Paul and Timothy must have had to ask God for forgiveness for misusing their tongue.

## Materials needed

- » Copies of Martin Luther King's 'I have a dream' speech from [www.archives.gov/files/press/exhibits/dream-speech.pdf](http://www.archives.gov/files/press/exhibits/dream-speech.pdf)
- » Paper and pens
- » List of female world leaders, eg from [www.jjmccullough.com/charts\\_rest\\_female-leaders.php](http://www.jjmccullough.com/charts_rest_female-leaders.php)
- » Post-It notes
- » Bibles
- » Copies of the handout for young people

## Introduction

Paul, keen for Timothy to be the best leader he can be, advises him to adopt exemplary speech. Healthy speech is very important and can be a sign of a disciplined leader. This is one of the reasons why Paul reinforces how important it is to control one's tongue. If we are able to control our tongues, our ability to teach will also be strengthened.

### Icebreaker (5 minutes)

Leader to highlight some or all of the following statements from Martin Luther King's *I have a dream* speech:

- » 'Justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream.'
- » 'I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the colour of their skin but by the content of their character.'
- » 'I have a dream today.'
- » 'From every mountainside let freedom ring.'

Ask one of the young people to mime one of the highlighted sentences. The group have to guess which one of the highlighted sentences is being mimed. Once guessed, discuss with the group why the mimed statement has stood the test of time.

## Prayer

### A prayer of thanks and confession

Lord we thank you for the gift of leadership. Thank you for giving this gift of leadership to a range of people, young and old, women and men, and of different ethnicities too. Forgive us, Lord, when we have not seen and respected the gift of leadership in people who are very different from us, and when we have not encouraged them to use their leadership skills to their full potential - to be the best they can be.

## Activity



Nelson Mandela was like Paul and Timothy. As a leader, he sought to 'be the best he could be.' He expressed this in many ways including his use of language. At his trial in April 1964, Mandela chose, instead

of testifying, to make a four hour speech from the dock ending with the words:

*"During my life time I have dedicated myself to this struggle of the African people. I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am willing to die."*

### Exercise: (up to 20 minutes)

The purpose of this activity is to help young people learn the importance of choosing words carefully when writing and speaking.

- » The leader to ask groups of two or three young people to take a short time out and prepare a speech which embodies the sentiment expressed by Nelson Mandela in his speech.
- » After roughly five minutes of preparation, the young people present their speech to the rest of the group.
- » Discuss with them the strengths of the words they have chosen, and the power of words they have used.
- » Reflect together on the importance of choosing words carefully.

## Prayer

Praying for those who regularly speak in public, such as those in influential positions, is very important.

### A prayer for others

Have a look together at a list of female world leaders. Gender inequality means that few people are aware of the growing number of female international leaders.

- » Use this list and prayers as an opportunity to highlight that some women have broken the 'glass ceiling'.
- » From the list, identify a couple of leaders to pray for, but note in particular the increasing numbers of women world leaders, despite the opposition many face.
- » Pray in particular that God will give them wisdom as they seek to turn their speeches, policies and manifestos into action, so they can better support the country they are leading.

*Feel free to use or adapt the following prayer.*

Dear God,  
Thank you for Jesus who was not just a talker. He was one who committed his speeches into action.

Help world leaders to have the courage of Jesus – to be so committed to their people and seeing justice done that they think little of putting others before themselves.

Because the role of world leaders includes giving regular speeches, we pray that their words will be sincere, full of integrity and truth, supportive of their people and committed in word and action to policies that will create countries that treat their neighbours with love.

Help these world leaders, who can so often come under intense pressure because they are women, to still find the courage to speak truth to power.

Amen

### Photos:

Martin Luther King - [www.pixabay.com](http://www.pixabay.com)

Nelson Mandela - [www.shutterstock.com](http://www.shutterstock.com)

## Open the Word

Encourage the young people to read these two Bible passages, and then explore them through the activities suggested below. (15 minutes each)

### Read: 2 Timothy 2: 14-25

- » Ask each young person to write down on a Post-It note the word(s) that 'shouts out' at them from this Bible passage.
- » Provide a board on which each young person can stick their words.
- » Look together at all the words that have been added to the board and encourage the young people to discuss the reasons why they chose the words they did, and what they think God might be saying to them.

### Read: John 8: 1-11

#### ***The Woman caught in the act of adultery***

- » Using modern-day street language, ask the teenagers to re-tell or re-write the story from the view point of the Pharisee.
- » Compare the two narratives and spend some time reflecting on the negative and positive power of words.
- » Highlight some of the words chosen by the teenagers.
- » This is the same narrative told in two different ways.
  - Which one is uplifting and why?
  - Why is it important to think before we speak?

## Close

When Paul said to Timothy, "don't let anyone look down on you because you are young", Paul was also referring to Timothy's speech, urging him to be a role model in the way he spoke to others.

Today, it is becoming normative to use speech that undermines others. We see this in programmes like *The X Factor* where the norm is to put people down not instinctively build people up.

Paul is urging Timothy to be an example in speech - to use affirmative, encouraging, Godly language.

### Final exercise to conclude:

- » The leader to briefly identify some of the spiritual gifts they have seen in each of the young people.
- » Then close in a prayer for them all.

# Be the best you can be: Speech

## Introduction



'I Have a Dream' was a speech delivered by Martin Luther King Jr on 28 August 1963, in which he called for an end to racism in the United States and called for civil and economic rights. Delivered to over 250,000 civil rights supporters from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington DC, the speech was a defining moment of the Civil Rights Movement.

Here are some highlights from the speech:

- » 'Justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream.'
- » 'I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the colour of their skin but by the content of their character.'
- » 'I have a dream today.'
- » 'From every mountainside let freedom ring.'

## Activity



At his trial in April 1964, Nelson Mandela chose, instead of testifying, to make a four hour speech from the dock ending with the words:

*"During my life time I have dedicated myself to this struggle of the African people. I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am willing to die."*

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## Introduction



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Nelson Mandela - [www.shutterstock.com](http://www.shutterstock.com)

Be the best you can be:

# Conduct

Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, **in conduct**, in love, in faith and in purity. *1 Timothy 4:12 (NIV)*

## Aim

To help young people reflect on how they can conduct themselves with focus and in a way that is honouring to God and to others.

## Lesson outcome

To help our 'wonderful youth' to 'be the best they can be', showing respect and behaving with dignity.

- » To realise the importance of playing life by the rules and doing the right thing.
- » To be very aware that racism and disadvantage mean that people of colour need to be 'twice as good' just to be level.
- » To encourage our young people to live lives of dignity and respect.
- » To learn about BME people who have gone before and whose conduct is an inspiration.
- » To gain a scriptural understanding of what constitutes good conduct.

## Materials needed

- » A card game, such as Uno or snap
- » Background information about prejudice, eg [www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/jul/15/black-people-win-respect-serena-williams](http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/jul/15/black-people-win-respect-serena-williams)
- » Background information about an athlete, eg [www.theguardian.com/sport/2017/feb/25/alberto-salazar-link-mo-farah-leaked-us-report-usada-russian-hackers](http://www.theguardian.com/sport/2017/feb/25/alberto-salazar-link-mo-farah-leaked-us-report-usada-russian-hackers)
- » Quotes or news stories from Barack Obama and Donald Trump
- » Examples of people from a Black or Minority Ethnic (BME) background who are positive role models
- » A BME person who has migrated to the UK to be invited to come and talk to the young people, and pre-prepared questions to ask them
- » *The Windrush Legacy - Faith in Migration* DVD (available from the London Baptist Association)
- » Pens and paper
- » Bibles

## Bible notes for leaders

Paul refers in 1 Timothy 4:12 to the conduct of Timothy. He recognises the importance of what our modern Christian cliché refers to as 'walking the talk'.

Paul expands this by using various metaphors to help Timothy and later readers, such as ourselves, to understand what he means.

So, in 2 Timothy 2:5 he uses the image of being an athlete but needing to play by the rules - not

cheating. Think about the pressures on young athletes, many of whom are young Black men and women, to enhance performance by using drugs.

In 2 Timothy 4:15-16 Paul uses the image of being a good worker. He wants Timothy and all of our young people to give of our very best.

Paul gave a great summing up of what it looks like to be a Christian in his letter to the Romans 12: 9-21.

## Introduction

Paul was keen to make sure that all those who said they were followers of Jesus actually behaved like they were followers of Jesus. This was especially important for Timothy, who was younger than many other believers, so that he could be taken seriously. If we say one thing and do another, our beliefs and what we say about them are discredited. So, how Timothy lived his life mattered to Paul. How we live our lives matters too!

### Introductory activity:

- 1 A card game which has a number of definite rules, eg Uno, snap with added rules.  
(10 minutes)
- 2 Act out a scenario with you and one of the other leaders in the group (or a 'safe' young person) in which you are 'disrespected' by the other person. How do you react?
  - » The first time, react with anger and aggression
  - » Repeat the scenario, but this time reacting with dignity and peace.
  - » Discuss the situations with the young people. Do they find either reaction believable?  
(5 minutes)

## Prayer

### A prayer for others

Loving God we pray for people in our lives and people all over the world who are showing strength and dignity in how they conduct themselves.

We pray especially for people having to deal with discrimination and prejudice because of their racial or ethnic background.

We pray for young people, including ourselves, in education having to prove something extra just to be regarded in the same light.

We pray for people of colour in the public eye who are judged differently from others.

We pray for family and friends who each day must be overcomers.

Give us the strength we need, help us to keep hold of dignity and to believe in ourselves and in others just as Paul believed in Timothy.

## Open the Word

### Read: 2 Timothy 2:5, 15-16

Paul was excited about the idea that Timothy is someone who can carry on the legacy of his teaching and his behaviour. People will look at Timothy and react positively to him. Timothy needed to conduct himself in a good way and needed to do so even more because of prejudice from older people.

Many people of colour face this kind of situation where they seem to need to try harder and overcome so much even to be held in the same regard as white people, eg Diane Abbott MP and Serena Williams.

In verse 5, Timothy is encouraged to play by the rules of life. Don't cheat!

Where are there places in the lives of the young people where living by the rules is not so easy?  
(5 minutes)

## Prayer

### A prayer of thanks and confession

We thank you for people who are an inspiration. We thank you for elders who have come before us and made the way we live to be possible.

Thank you for those in generations before us who have made sacrifices, who have 'fought the good fight': fought hard to make a life here in the UK; who have lived lives of dignity in the face of prejudice; who have overcome so that we can have a good life.

Forgive us, loving Lord, when we don't do things right, for the times when we have cheated or taken the easy route of dishonesty and disrespect. Help us to be good workers, help us to live by the rules.

## Activity

- 1 Look at an example of an athlete who maintains they don't use drugs to help them compete (eg use the background information about Mo Farah). Identify situations where we could cheat and then give reasons why we don't or should not cheat. (10 minutes)

Referring to 2 Timothy 2: 15-16, discuss what it means to be a good worker in life. Are there things where we are not proud of what we do? (Maybe not a good idea to get the group to share these out loud). What kind of conduct or behaviour might God approve of... at school, at home, at church, on social media?

Much of Paul's teaching is practical and based on the idea of him being a good role model.

- 2 Whose conduct is best? Barack Obama versus Donald Trump - it might be helpful to search for some quotes/news stories by both these US Presidents. (10 minutes)
- 3 Examples of people who are positive role models, whose conduct we look up to and are inspired by. Encourage the young people to identify people who are BME background. (5 minutes)
- 4 Ask a Black elder or a BME person who has migrated to the UK to come and talk with the group about their experiences of prejudice and how they dealt with this. It might be best to do this as an interview with pre-prepared questions. (10 minutes)
- 5 Use the Baptist Union DVD *The Windrush Legacy - Faith in Migration* to share stories told by pioneers in Baptist churches from the Windrush generation. (10 minutes)
- 6 Questions: Do we experience name calling and abuse? How do we react to abuse/name calling? (10 minutes)
- 7 Read Romans 12: 9-21. Without looking at the Bible again, see how many of the qualities of being a Christian of good conduct the young people can remember. Which ones do they think are most important? You could identify these on a flip chart and/or take a vote on which qualities matter most. (10 minutes)

## Prayer

Young people to close in prayer for each other regarding how we conduct ourselves.

or

Close in prayer using the words of Micah 6:8  
*'No, O people, the Lord has told you what is good, and this is what he requires of you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.'* (New Living Translation)

## Close

Our hope is that, through this session, the young people will be inspired by the Biblical texts and the example of individual lives. We want our young people to be people whose behaviour is admired and respected so that people react positively to them, just as Paul hoped that people would react to Timothy.

Be the best you can be:

Love

Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, **in love**, in faith and in purity. *1 Timothy 4:12 (NIV)*

## Aim

To help young people reflect on what it really means to be people of love and peace.

## Lesson outcome

If our 'wonderful youth' are to 'be the best they can be' it is desirable that they have an appreciation that love must be at the heart of what they do, how they do it and who they are.

- » To note how life and lives are all the poorer when love is neglected.
- » To be inspired by scripture and by the example of people of colour who can teach our young people about love and how to show Christian love.
- » To reflect on what constitutes being a person of love.
- » To explore ways of being active in our love.
- » To identify and follow through some practical ways of being people of love and peace.

## Bible notes for leaders

In 1 and 2 Timothy, Paul was writing to guide and encourage his protégé. There are lots of dos and don'ts that he provides, but the underpinning of all that Paul says here, and in all his writings, is the concept of love.

Throughout the New Testament this is the fundamental thing that holds everything together. Jesus encourages it again and again and identifies it as the most important commandment (Luke 10:25-37). John boils it down to defining the very nature of God (1 John 4:7-21). Paul says it binds everything together (Colossians 3:12-14) and is the quality which, if lacking, means everything else we do is worthless (1 Corinthians 13).

## Materials needed

- » A bowl of wrapped sweets, eg Starbursts
- » Dice
- » Computer with internet access to show videos from YouTube
- » Projector and screen (if you have a large group)
- » Copies of the article on Saffiyah Khan from [www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/apr/09/birmingham-woman-standing-in-defiance-of-edl-protester-goes-viral](http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/apr/09/birmingham-woman-standing-in-defiance-of-edl-protester-goes-viral)
- » Examples of love in action, eg:
  - from Tearfund  
[www.tearfund.org/~media/files/tilz/impact\\_and\\_evaluation/tearfund\\_impact\\_and\\_learning\\_report\\_2016\\_new.pdf](http://www.tearfund.org/~media/files/tilz/impact_and_evaluation/tearfund_impact_and_learning_report_2016_new.pdf)
  - from BMS World Mission  
[www.bmsworldmission.org/news-blogs/archive/post-war-farming-uganda](http://www.bmsworldmission.org/news-blogs/archive/post-war-farming-uganda)
- » Examples of community love, eg
  - <https://twitter.com/every1erdington>
  - <http://inews.co.uk/essentials/news/uk/video-notting-hill-pastor-says-government-response-grenfell-tower-concerns-late>
- » Photos from the Grenfell Tower fire, and/or other local or recent disaster
- » Flipchart and pens
- » Bibles including *The Message* version

## Introduction

We talk and sing and think about love a lot. But what does it mean to have it as part of our overall way of being, informing our lives. Paul, who wrote these two letters of advice to the young church worker Timothy, was 'big' on love. He knew that if love is not at the heart of what we do, it is worthless (see 1 Corinthians 13). And the kind of love that Paul is talking about is 'agape' love, not romantic love, but how we show respect, kindness, compassion, peace and understanding towards others. Jesus says we should love our neighbour as we love ourselves.

### Introductory activity:

- 1 Play a game that involves having to first of all compete against each other and then to benefit each other, such as *Get a Sweet, Take a Sweet, Give a Sweet*.
  - » Have a bowl of wrapped sweets, eg Starbursts, and a dice, and give each person two sweets.
  - » Rounds 1 and 2: take turns to roll the dice. If 2, 4 or 6 are rolled, take a sweet from the bowl.
  - » Rounds 3 and 4: if 2, 4 or 6 are rolled, take a sweet from another person.
  - » Rounds 5 and 6: if a 2, 4 or 6 are rolled, give a sweet to another person.

Use this game to show how much better it feels when we are kind to each other, when we are giving and forgiving. (15 minutes)

- 2 Watch the video: 'Where is the love?' by The Black Eyed Peas (5 minutes) available from [www.youtube.com/watch?v=WpYeekQkAdc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WpYeekQkAdc)
  - » What is the song saying about what life is like when we don't love?
  - » Ask the young people to identify ways in just the last 24 hours they have seen or experienced situations where love is not in evidence. (5 minutes)

We see the difference in the 'Get one, take one, give one' game.

## Prayer

### A prayer of thanks and confession

Loving God

You love us and you want us to love each other. Thank you for showing us how we can get along with each other. Thank you for the example we have in Jesus.

Forgive us for the times when we struggle to feel love for others. Sometimes it's hard, especially when people judge us and are against us simply because of our background or our skin colour. Help us to show love and to show others who they can love.

### A prayer for others

We pray for love to grow.

We pray that we would be able to focus on what we have in common, rather than what divides us.

We pray that we would be inspired by people who have been leaders of love and taken big risks, showing practical love for other people. We thank you for people like Saffiyah Khan, who stood up against the English Defence League. We thank you for leaders like Harriet Tubman, who helped enslaved people escape to freedom.

We pray that we would be leaders of love at school, college, at work, on the bus, on social media, at home, at church... in everything.

## Open the Word

### Read: 2 Timothy 1: 7; 2: 22; 2: 23-26

Look at these verses and see how Paul keeps mentioning love, almost in passing, but maybe also meaning that it is a basic 'given' of how we should live.

Ask the group to look for words in these verses that describe being people of love and peace. (10 minutes)

## Activity

### 1 People of love and peace (10 minutes)

Watch video: 'I love my mother' by Benjamin Zephaniah available from [www.youtube.com/watch?v=IU5IX\\_UKEjM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IU5IX_UKEjM)

See the article on Saffiyah Khan: [www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/apr/09/birmingham-woman-standing-in-defiance-of-edl-protester-goes-viral](http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/apr/09/birmingham-woman-standing-in-defiance-of-edl-protester-goes-viral)

- » What do these tell us about how we should love?
- » What do these tell us about how we can be people of love and peace?

### 2 Love in action (15 minutes)

How do we show this kind of love that we are talking about?

- » Look at the description of love found in 1 Corinthians 13:1-7 (*The Message* version) and then look for the kind of love action that Paul is talking about in 1 Corinthians 13 in the following examples:
  - In tackling climate change and responding to disasters, such as the earthquake in Nepal. (See Tearfund article)
  - The work of Ugandan farmers supported by BMS World Mission. How is this love in action? (See BMS World Mission article)
- » Look at examples of community love, people coming together from different backgrounds to do positive things, overcome hatred or difficulty and bring hope. For example:
  - Coming together against hate crime in Erdington
  - Read about or watch the video from a local pastor concerning the Grenfell Tower fire. What does it tell us about injustice?

### 3 Talk together about (10 minutes)

- » Ask the young people to share what they know about Dr Martin Luther King Jnr and then listen to this clip about love <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Fs8vSsJg-A> (in particular, the section from 1:38-5:08 minutes).
  - Discuss it with the young people.
  - Is it that easy to love people? Even those who are bad towards us?
- » Or discuss the following quote from Argentine revolutionary leader, Che Guevara.

*"At the risk of seeming ridiculous, let me say that the true revolutionary is guided by a great feeling of love. It is impossible to think of a genuine revolutionary lacking this quality."*

Ernesto Che Guevara
  - As people of faith, can this really be true?

### 4 Action (10 minutes)

As a group activity, get the young people to come up with ideas on a flip chart (a young person to write them down) of:

- 1 Things that are rubbish in our communities and in the wider world.
- 2 Who is doing something about these things to make them better?
- 3 Are there any actions the group/individual young people could take to make the situations better? (eg start a campaign, a sponsored activity, fundraiser of some sort, contact the MP/council, visit Parliament, start a project such as visiting/inviting older lonely people...)
- 4 Pray about it at the end of the session and then... do it!

## Close

The hope is that the young people will be enriched by the example of scripture and by individuals (especially people of colour) on how to have love at the heart of who they are and how they behave.

We hope that the young people will be inspired to show *agape* love in their relationships and in all areas of life. We hope that they would have a greater openness to *love* being part of everything and be challenged to be practical in doing this.

Be the best you can be:

# Faith

Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, **in faith** and in purity. *1 Timothy 4:12 (NIV)*

## Aim

To encourage our wonderful youth to believe in who they are in Christ and to nurture their God-given ability to be the best that they can be.

To explore how one's faith must be an example for others to follow.

## Lesson outcome

For our wonderful youth to recognise that God has created them with purpose and with individual abilities. For them to aim to be resolute; working within their faith to attain their goals as well as be a Christian example to their generation and others.

## Bible notes for leaders

The two books of 1 and 2 Timothy are letters written by the Apostle Paul to Timothy. At this point, Paul is an old man sitting in a Roman prison. This is a letter encouraging young Timothy to nurture his call to leadership; to stand firm in the authority given to him from Christ.

Paul calls him to stand tall and speak boldly in his faith. Paul tells Timothy his faith is worth sharing, yet he will come across opposition because of his youth. For all that, God will use him to be an example that both the young and old can follow.

## Introduction

Listen together to *I know who I am* by Sinach available from: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=frtZ4XfoXxM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=frtZ4XfoXxM) and encourage the young people to complete the missing words on the handout. (6:10 minutes)

## Materials needed

- » Computer with internet access to show videos from YouTube / Goalcast
- » Projector and screen (if you have a large group)
- » Copies of the 'I know who I am' handout
- » Small pieces of paper
- » Larger sheets of paper
- » Flip chart or whiteboard and markers
- » Copy of the *Bible names sheet*, copied onto card and cut into individual names
- » Copies of the *list of inventors*
- » Copies of 'Keep Moving' - Martin Luther King
- » Copies of the 'Be committed: be an example of faith' sheet
- » Pens and colouring pencils/pens
- » A large jar
- » Bibles

## Prayer

Father God, we pray that today you will allow us to see ourselves as you see us. You have placed us here to do awesome things for you and for others. Thank you for the gift of youth and all the opportunities that it brings. May we celebrate our lives in you every day. Amen

Dear Lord, you have said in your Word that we can do all things through the power of Christ who gives us strength. When we feel that things are impossible show us that, with you by our side, the impossible can become possible. You are the great 'I Am' who lives in us, therefore we can achieve. Amen

Dear God, sometimes it is hard to stand by what we believe. When peer pressure and questions of life challenge our faith, keep us faithful. May we be a positive voice in our time, to every generation, especially our own. Help us live a faith that glorifies you. Amen

# Open the Word

## Read 1 Timothy 4:12-13

Ask the young people to put the phrase 'Don't let anyone look down on you because of your youth' in their own words.

Paul is saying:

- » Don't let anyone disrespect your youth – don't be discouraged
- » Let your life and faith beautifully represent Christ
- » Be committed to God – learn, teach, grow

In other words, Paul is saying, 'Put your authority on Timothy. Walk proud in your youth, walk in the power of God. Be a mover and a shaker.'

Martin Luther King, said the same thing in different words.

- » Watch the video: **Keep Moving** by Dr Martin Luther King available from [www.goalcast.com/2017/02/28/the-most-important-time-of-your-life-martin-luther-king-jr](http://www.goalcast.com/2017/02/28/the-most-important-time-of-your-life-martin-luther-king-jr) (2:24 mins)

or read out this extract from it:

*Don't get discouraged*

*Don't allow anybody to make you feel that you are nobody.*

*Always feel that you count*

*Always feel that you have worth*

*And always feel that your life has ultimate significance.*

Martin Luther King, speaking to young people, is telling them to figure out and create a 'blueprint' of where they are going in life. King's proper, solid and sound 'blueprint' is the same as Paul's, 'put your authority on.'

- » Ask the young people what plans/desires these two men have for their youth?  
They are looking for the next generation of leaders; to write new chapters into the lives of others. They are looking for young men and women who have vision. Young people who have a deep sense of their own dignity, worth and somebodiness.
- » Give space for teenagers to say if they've ever had their ideas or dreams discouraged.

Both men are saying, "You can't afford to let anybody look down on you simply because you are young."

## Self-Criticism

There are many obstacles which could stand in the way of your progress. We often do a good job at criticising ourselves. We find fault in our looks, our ability, our worth. Don't downplay your importance, celebrate who you are and your personhood. Don't be intimidated because of your age or the way God has made you. God believes in you so believe in yourself.

## Negative voices

There will always be people who will seek to make you seem insignificant and small. Many people will try to ridicule you because of your youth. They may try to crush your hope, ability, talent, convictions and faith. They may even try to steal your voice, seeking to silence you completely, but you too have a story/message and a purpose.

**Black history** is full of stories of suppression and oppression. It is full of those who tried to stifle the human spirit of black folk. But equally, black history tells the story of a people who refused to be side-lined, cut down, disregarded, maligned and down-trodden. There is a rich heritage of fighters, of people blessed with dreams and singlemindedness. Out of their struggle for freedom and equality came the freedom fighters, emancipators, Civil Rights activists, pioneers, scientists, doctors, teachers, authors, lobbyists etc. These people wouldn't give up, they believed in themselves and for better things. They pressed through and rose victorious. They leave a trail that screams out, 'Whatever you say or do, you will never steal my resolve or vision.'

## Optional extra:

Watch video of **Overcome Obstacles: Standing Tall** by Joseph Solomon available from [www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZiH\\_ODRN8vs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZiH_ODRN8vs) in which he shares how he pushes past stereotypes in pursuit of finding what God sees him. (5:45mins)

## Activity

### Wonderful youth

Place cards on the table, each with a name from the list of young people from the Bible. Have a teenager take a name and in one sentence say what that particular character did in his/her time.

Go through all the characters.

- » **David:** Defied Goliath. (1 Samuel 17)
- » **Mary:** Mother of Jesus - surviving against the criticism of her pregnancy. (Matthew 1)
- » **Samuel:** 8 years old, responding to, and obeying, the voice of God. (1 Samuel 3)
- » **Josiah:** 8 year old King of Judah who brought the worship of the one true God back to Israel. (2 Kings 23:4-8; 24-25)
- » **Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego:** Thrown in the flames for refusing to bow before a golden image. They conducted their lives in a way that pleased God. God was with them in the fire and saved them from death. (Daniel 3)
- » **Daniel:** Thrown to lions for refusing to pray to King Darius, he continued to pray to God. (Daniel 6)
- » **Joseph:** Listening to God through dreams. God used him whilst in Egypt to save his people from famine. (Genesis 41; 47)
- » Ask what do these people have in common?  
- courage, prayer, faith, youth.

Explain that these are amazing yet very ordinary young people who stood tall for God under really difficult circumstances. They stood up for what they believed and achieved extraordinary things for God. They became the leaders, the movers and shakers of their day.

### So many firsts

People of colour have always been recognised for their talent, creativity and genius in the realms of music, dance, theatre, art, and literature. But less recognised is the contributions black people have made to inventions that have literally changed the world (see the *list of inventors* sheet).

In order to create, these inventors had to dream *big* and *never give up*. Often, people would try to steal their inventions. They had to fight hard to keep what they had created or even to get recognition for them. This is what a white patent lawyer named B J Nolan wrote about black inventors in 1913:

*"I never knew a Negro to even suggest an idea. Much less try to patent one. And I have dealt with them Negroes all my life."*

Never-the-less the inventions kept on coming and these, under-estimated black folk, showed their genius.

### What is your genius?

Could it be that there is a genius in you waiting to be awakened?

There was nothing extraordinary about Timothy, yet God had a specific thing for him to do.

- » What is that thing that is waiting for you to grab hold of it?
- » What is your genius?
- » Encourage teenagers to take a moment to think of something they would like to do or create. They could draw it if they choose.

Watch the video: **Keep Working** with Denzel Washington available from [www.youtube.com/watch?v=OSx2znXQscl](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OSx2znXQscl) (1:09 minutes)

### List of inventors

Organise the teenagers in groups of 2-3, with the handout, and ask them to produce a short sketch on 'Where would we be without these people.'

### Inventor research

If appropriate for your group, ask the teenagers to use their phone to find out the contribution of these inventors, and their significance for today:

- » **Henry E Baker** - documented over 400 inventions of African-American inventors
- » **Jan E Matzeliger** - over a 10 year period, created the first sewing machine for shoes
- » **George Crum** - a chef who invented crisps

## Prayer

### Achieve excellence

*"Determination will achieve excellence in the field of your choice"* Martin Luther King

- » Ask the teenagers to write down what they would like to become on the slip of paper provided. They should also write down the goals and dreams they have.
- » Place them in the jar.

**Prayer:** (with messages in the jar at the centre).

Dear Father, you know the dreams and aspirations I have for myself and the things I would like to accomplish. When you see more in me, allow me to see it too. Help me to stay focussed on the end goal so that the result will testify of your faithfulness and goodness towards me and give you glory.

## Open the Word

### Be committed and an example in faith

Don't just be proud young people but proud young people *with faith*.

The second part of verse 12 says: *'Set an example for the believers... in faith...'*

- » Ask teenagers to express what faith means to them.
- » What is faith?
- » Is it merely a belief system or is it a conscious life style?

After Paul has urged Timothy to celebrate his youth, he then encourages him to wear his faith on his sleeve for all to see. He advises him to cultivate a lifestyle and character that others would be drawn to and desire for themselves. Don't just be proud young people but proud young people with faith.

## Activity

### Struggles today

Watch the video **Show Jesus** from 'One Song at a Time' by Jamie Grace available from [www.youtube.com/watch?v=x4p9CdXCPWE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x4p9CdXCPWE) (3:45mins)

- » Give each teenager a pen and paper and ask them to draw a spider diagram. In the centre write: 'Things young people struggle with or are tempted by today'. Encourage them to add their struggles to the diagram.

Or

- » Have a big board ready with the words, 'Things young people struggle with'. Teenagers then write known struggles on cut out paper and stick them to the board.

Or

- » Encourage the teenagers to put together a dance sketch around the song 'Show Jesus'.

Explore with teenagers why having a faith and holding on to what they believe is sometimes so difficult.

Today it is extremely hard to represent all that is good and right. In a society which says 'all is permissible, do whatever makes you feel good and live for the moment', it is hard to stand against the tide. But you are called to do so.

**Be an example of faith** - optional extra video resources

- » **Civil Rights Movement: The Sit In** available from [www.youtube.com/watch?v=OT9gILdTaWo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OT9gILdTaWo) (the first section from 0-2:08 minutes)
- » **Black Violin – Stereotypes** available from [www.youtube.com/watch?v=WYerKidQGcc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WYerKidQGcc) (3:33 minutes)
- » **G.O.S.P.E.L – Propaganda** available from [www.youtube.com/watch?v=jyYFxp7apl4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jyYFxp7apl4) (5:13 minutes)

## Activity

### A shadow of doubt

Watch the first part of the video **A Shadow of Doubt** by Joseph Solomon available from [www.youtube.com/watch?v=QeY8lndPsdE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QeY8lndPsdE) (0-3:47 minutes)

*"I remember sitting in a college classroom and the only thing being tested is my faith in God; the only thing passing is my hope... I'm longing for the day when I can press my fingers in his nail pierced hands because, honestly, I've considered quitting but where would I go?"*

Joseph Solomon

Work through your faith. Stand firm on what you believe. This is important. There are many voices questioning, for example, the existence of God. There are many religious positions challenging the Word of God. It is important therefore, to study the Word and ask what you will.

### It is OK to question

Grapple with the huge claims made in the Bible about God, Jesus, salvation, life, death, evil, punishment, stewardship, forgiveness, etc.

Watch the remainder of the video **A Shadow of Doubt** by Joseph Solomon available from [www.youtube.com/watch?v=QeY8lndPsdE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QeY8lndPsdE) (3:48-7:05 minutes)

### God's answer

*"My child... when your faith is small enough to fit in the cracks of your palm, I've told you, faith the size of mustard seeds can rearrange whole landscapes... consider the birds that eat from my hands and do not fall from the sky without my consent. So how much more will I love the ones that I died for? Before you doubt me, doubt your doubts... and you will see they are just as empty as the tomb I walked from..."*

Stay in relationship with God. As you absorb the Word your relationship with God will deepen. Opportunities to speak and teach of the love of Christ will come out of your Christ-like character and the stand you take in your faith.

## Open the Word

### Keep moving

Read again 1 Timothy 4: 13

Be diligent. Devote yourself to whatever will perfect who you are and your purpose. Work hard, study hard, play well. Think things through. Be intentional. Be relevant in your work, to your friendships and to your generation. Be the leader who will speak out against injustice. Think outside the box. Explore, reach higher, dive deeper, invent and create.

Hand out copies of the following passage: 'Keep Moving' to the teenagers to read together and also keep:

*"You are going to be deciding as the days and the years unfold... what your life's work will be. Once you discover what it will be... do it well... If you can't be a highway, just be a trail, if you can't be the sun, be a star. For it isn't by size that you win or you fail, be the best of whatever you are... There must be a commitment to... beauty, love and justice. We must keep moving. If you can't fly, run. If you can't run, walk. If you can't walk, crawl but by all means, **keep moving.**"* Martin Luther King: *Keep Moving*

Watch the video **Jasmine Murray – Fearless** available from [www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yqtf71mLwY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yqtf71mLwY) (3:04 minutes)

## Close

Paul could see that Timothy had a door of opportunity set before him from God. His ability, his character and, more importantly, his faith could be perfected by working hard to achieve and by nurturing a solid relationship with God.

Paul would offer the same message to our wonderful youth. God simply wants young people who are available and ready to dream. He desires to have young people who walk by faith, open to his vision and to his divine plan for their lives.

Lead a time of prayer, or ask for volunteers

# Be the best you can be: Faith

## I Know who I Am

Listen to the song 'I know who I am' by Sinach and complete the missing words below:

What are you? \_\_\_\_\_

What are you called to do? \_\_\_\_\_

What has God given you? \_\_\_\_\_

I know who \_\_\_\_\_ says I am

Where he says I'm \_\_\_\_\_

I'm walking in \_\_\_\_\_ I'm working \_\_\_\_\_

I live a life of \_\_\_\_\_

I know \_\_\_\_\_

I am \_\_\_\_\_ ; I am \_\_\_\_\_ ; I am \_\_\_\_\_ ;

I am \_\_\_\_\_

Take a look at me I'm a \_\_\_\_\_ ;

Can you see his \_\_\_\_\_ ?

Every day declare it; say I know who I am.

Be the best you can be: Faith

## Bible names

Group leader to copy this sheet onto card and trim to give the individual names

David

Mary

Samuel

Josiah

Shadrach, Meshach,  
Abednego

Daniel

Joseph

## List of Inventors

### **Benjamin Banniker (1731 - 1806)**

- » As a poor, black youth, he borrowed books to educate himself. At 16 years of age he was already a self-taught astronomer.
- » He later crafted a clock made completely out of wood that kept on working for over 40 years. He built bigger and better ones. It is believed that Big Ben is named after him.
- » Benjamin went on to become celebrated for his mathematical and scientific genius.
- » A surveyor instrumental in planning the layout of Washington DC.

### **James Forten (1766 - 1842)**

- » He built a device that helped to control the sails on ships.

### **Elijah McCoy (1844 - 1929)**

- » The son of an escaped slave, he invented an oiling mechanism which lubricated the engines of steam trains. This was the single most important invention to the railways.
- » He created many other inventions and held 56 patents. His inventions were of such high quality everyone wanted them. It's from this man that we get the term, 'The Real McCoy'.

### **Lewis Latimer (1848 - 1928)**

- » Working for Thomas Edison and Alexander Graham Bell, Latimer created the first longer lasting carbon filaments light bulb. (Hmm!! Does anyone see what has happened here?)

### **Granville Woods (1856 - 1910)**

- » Many inventions, including inventing the Multiplex Telegraph system: Sending/receiving messages from moving trains. (1887)
- » Invented railway airbrakes. (1903)
- » Invented the Steam-boiler/radiator. (1884)

### **Daniel Hale Williams (1856 - 1931)**

- » The first doctor to perform successful open heart surgery.

### **Madam C J Walker (1867 - 1919)**

- Grew up 'dirt poor' but became the first self-made female millionaire in the USA by creating hair and beauty products for black people.

### **Garrett Morgan (1877 - 1963)**

- » Invented and patented the first workable traffic signal.
- » Invented the gas mask.

### **Frederick McKinley Jones (1893 - 1961)**

- » Many inventions, including the refrigeration system in transportation trucks in 1938.
- » Invented the refrigeration system in railway cars in 1945.

### **Dr Charles Richard Drew (1904 - 1950)**

- » He started the first blood bank in 1940 and established blood banks all over the world.
- » He discovered that plasma kept longer than blood.

### **Otis Boykin (1920 - 1982)**

- » Invented the Pacemaker.
- » Created and patented computer chips for IBM.

### **Dr Patricia E Bath (1942 - )**

- » Invented and patented the Laserphaco Probe - a device which removes cataracts from the eyes.
- » The first female doctor to receive a patent for a medical invention.

## Be the best you can be: Faith

### Keep Moving

*"You are going to be deciding as the days and the years unfold... what your life's work will be. Once you discover what it will be... do it well..."*

*If you can't be a highway, just be a trail, if you can't be the sun, be a star.*

*For it isn't by size that you win or you fail, be the best of whatever you are...*

*There must be a commitment to... beauty, love and justice.*

*We must keep moving. If you can't fly, run. If you can't run, walk. If you can't walk, crawl but by all means, **keep moving.**"*

Martin Luther King: From *Keep Moving*

## Be the best you can be: Faith

### Keep Moving

*"You are going to be deciding as the days and the years unfold... what your life's work will be. Once you discover what it will be... do it well..."*

*If you can't be a highway, just be a trail, if you can't be the sun, be a star.*

*For it isn't by size that you win or you fail, be the best of whatever you are...*

*There must be a commitment to... beauty, love and justice.*

*We must keep moving. If you can't fly, run. If you can't run, walk. If you can't walk, crawl but by all means, **keep moving.**"*

Martin Luther King: From *Keep Moving*

# Be the best you can be: Faith

## Be committed: be an example of faith

*Be intentional. Be relevant in your work, to your friendships and to your generation. Be the leader who will speak out against injustice. Think outside the box. Explore, reach higher, invent and create.*

### Examples of people who have accomplished this

#### Be intentional:

Like James Forten (1766), the Abolitionist leader who used more than half his vast fortune on abolitionist causes. His sail invention made him an enormous fortune which he used to purchase slaves' freedom. He opened his home as an underground railway depot for those escaping slavery. He helped to finance William Garrison's newspaper, *The Liberator*. He opened a school for black children.

#### Aim high - Don't let others limit you:

On 14 November, 1960, six year old Ruby Bridges sat an entrance exam to a 'whites only' school. The test was designed to make black children fail. 165 black children took the test; Ruby was one of the six children who passed. The school was hostile towards her, yet day after day she went to school until she completed her education. She aimed high and set her own limit.

#### Be a voice for the voiceless:

Like Martin Luther King.

#### Be radical:

Like the young black students who sat in seats designated to white people in the cafes. It became known as the 'Sit In Movement.' Within two months this small student movement had spread to 65 cities in America.

#### Speak out for justice:

Take the baton of those who have gone before. Dare to speak out against systems that separate, discriminate and tear down. Become a part of the reparation.

#### Be relevant:

Like the Gospel ministry of 'Propaganda.' Spread the Gospel in a way that attracts your generation. Be a young person who speaks to their peers through the mediums they identify with. Make a difference to those at school, at work, at play, in church and at home.

#### Think outside the box:

Like Jan E Matzelter who created the first shoe sewing machine. Never give up - it took him 10 years.

Be the best you can be:

# Purity

Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and **in purity**. *1 Timothy 4:12 (NIV)*

## Aim

To help young people reflect on their behaviour and thoughts in relation to purity.

## Lesson outcome

Learning how to practise purity in everyday life; understanding the obstacles they will encounter throughout life, and learning practical tips to overcome them.

- » To understand the importance of personal integrity with regards to purity in the daily decisions they will make.
- » To reflect on how different bible characters dealt with issues of purity and temptation.
- » To be realistic about the daily obstacles they will face and be proactive in facing them.
- » To see examples of people in the media, especially those from Black and Asian backgrounds who experience the same temptations and challenges.
- » To understand God's grace when we make decisions that go against his will.

## Bible notes for leaders

This session will explore 2 Timothy 2: 22.

Paul's second letter to Timothy, his friend and faithful mentee, was written to encourage and remind Timothy of the importance of remaining true to all aspects of what it means to be a follower of Christ Jesus; of the active stance he will have to take to remain in the faith. Written around AD 67 whilst imprisoned in Rome awaiting trial for which he was later executed, this is likely one of Paul's last letters, and focuses on the practicalities of living as a Christian in a non-believing world.

## Materials needed

- » A big bowl of Maltesers; a straw and small bowl for each young person. A bag of chocolates for the 'winner'.
- » Or, M&Ms or Skittles in a bowl
- » Images of an equal mix of male and female celebrities from magazines or online
- » Computer with internet access to show videos from YouTube
- » Projector and screen (if you have a large group)
- » Paper and pens
- » Large paper for posters
- » Bibles including *The Message* version

*It is very important* that you feel confident using the material in this session, and omit it if you are not comfortable facilitating it. Good relationships with the young people are key to getting the best from them during the session, and some discussions may be best facilitated in girl or boy only groups. We also advise you to have both male and female leaders facilitate the session together.

## Introduction

**Introductory activity:** (5-10 minutes)

### Option A

- » Put lots of Maltesers in a big bowl.
- » Give each person a smaller bowl and a straw.
- » Allow each person 30 seconds to use only the straw to get the Maltesers into their small bowl.
- » The one with the most Maltesers wins a bag of chocolates.

### Option B

- » Put lots of M&Ms or Skittles in a bowl.
- » Allow each person to take a handful of sweets.
- » The leader decides which colour each sweet represents - eg red = favourite film; blue = last song heard; yellow = holiday destination you want to visit.
- » Each person then gives their answer.

## Activity

### Purity

Encourage your group to brainstorm the word 'purity' (what does it mean? and give examples). Depending on numbers, break into small groups and then feed back their thoughts, or the leader may prefer to facilitate a group discussion.

Give your group a dictionary definition of 'purity' and discuss any similarities and differences from their brainstorm, eg

*'Purify/Purity - To make or become pure; to cleanse; to make ceremonially clean; to free from harmful matter... The state of being pure.'*

In essence, purity means living your life according to the standards set by God; to become more like Jesus Christ in our thoughts and behaviour. As controversial as this may sound, it requires us not to engage in sexual behaviour outside of marriage. Purity calls us to be careful of what we watch, read, and listen to as they all affect our ability to remain pure in mind and action; and being mindful of what we wear, and how we behave towards others as that can affect their ability to remain pure.

### Optional discussion points

- » What is acceptable in our clothing?
- » Show your group some images of male and female celebrities and ask the group their opinion on the outfits they are wearing.
- » How would you react if someone challenged your outfit?
- » Would you tell someone if you thought their clothing was inappropriate?

Watch one or more of these spoken word videos on purity and facilitate a discussion

- » **Bethany Uppal – Say No** available from [www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_BJDjte2kjc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_BJDjte2kjc) (2:38 minutes)
- » **Charlie Lapastora – Purity** available from [www.youtube.com/watch?v=2mWs4RV8WXI](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2mWs4RV8WXI) (3 minutes)

## Open the Word

### Active resistance

Break into small groups and read Genesis 39 on Joseph and Potiphar's wife and consider the behaviours on the characters. Bring the groups back together and encourage them to feed back their ideas to the whole group (5-10 minutes).

The Apostle Paul calls Timothy to 'flee' or 'shun' youthful passions. *The Message* version of the bible says:

*'Run away from infantile indulgence. Run after mature righteousness...'*

The point Paul is making is that remaining pure is a proactive decision; it won't just happen, you need to be active in your pursuit of purity. In this reading from Genesis, Joseph runs from Potiphar's wife to remain pure.

## Activity

### Drama: Resisting temptation (10 minutes)

Break the group into threes:

Person A contemplates doing one of the scenarios  
Person B tells them why they should  
Person C why they should not

Choose a scenario based on the ages in the group:

- » Watching a sexual scene in a film/watching pornography
- » Going to a party where they know there will be alcohol/drugs

Purity will often mean going against the standards and pressures of this world, fighting the 'desires of the flesh', and resisting the temptations of the devil. God desires his people to be holy and set apart, not conforming to the ways of the world. In practical terms, this might mean avoiding a party in which you might face temptation, turning off the TV/Radio to sexual explicit content.

### Optional discussion points:

- 1 Is it okay to watch a film which has sexual content?
- 2 Does it matter if you listen to music with sexual explicit lyrics, or innuendo? Might it have an effect on you?

## Activity

### Optional activity:

Find some images of happy, sad, angry and excited scenes from films (or, for a younger age, cartoon images of emotions) and ask each person how they felt after looking at the scene/image for a few minutes. Draw out from the group that what we view can affect our thoughts.

### Luke 12: 15-21

Listen to one of the versions of the song below on YouTube or Spotify and write down all the scripture references then look them up in a Bible. Encourage the young people to share their thoughts and create a poster related to the scripture. (10 - 15 minutes)

- » **Lecrae - 'Don't waste your life'** available from [www.youtube.com/watch?v=7RWEllqh5JO](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7RWEllqh5JO) (3:49 minutes)
- » Or the **version with lyrics** available from [www.youtube.com/watch?v=2QfYNyELufA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2QfYNyELufA) (4:10 minutes)

### Being a rebel

What does it mean to be a rebel in 2017? Ask the group to share their thoughts before and after listening to any of the following videos

- » **Guvna B - 'Unpopular culture'** available from [www.youtube.com/watch?v=igLk8mjbgi4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=igLk8mjbgi4) (1:53 minutes)
- » **Guvna B ft Becca Folkes - 'Show me the way'** available from [www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ldxhxcDtUw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ldxhxcDtUw) (4:21 minutes)
- » **Lecrae - 'Rebel'** available from [www.youtube.com/watch?v=uWnrUgzlHyQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uWnrUgzlHyQ) (3:09 minutes)
- » **Lecrae - 'Live free'** available from [www.youtube.com/watch?v=U1TH799N3Ms](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U1TH799N3Ms) (4:26 minutes)
- » **Lecrae - 'Wait'** available from [www.youtube.com/watch?v=kl1lrmMWwq0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kl1lrmMWwq0) (3:35 minutes)

Draw out from the video that even if we behave in a way we later regret, it's never too late to start again. Refer to Romans 8:1 and the book of Hosea about God's unfailing love. Suggest some practical tips and encourage the group to think about someone they trust who is a godly person they can turn to for advice and support if they are facing temptation. Take a moment for silent prayer and reflection.

## Prayer

### A prayer for ourselves

Lord God we thank you for sending your son Jesus and the Apostles to show us the way to you, and to show us how we should live for you.

We ask that you guard our hearts and minds from anything that would pull us away from living for you. We ask for wisdom in how we should live our lives and the strength to follow your advice, especially when people around us are going in the opposite way. Lord we thank you for hearing our prayer.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen

### A prayer for others

Lord God we thank you for godly men and women in the media who are not ashamed to follow you. We pray that they continue to keep to their convictions and resist the temptations that the world and the devil bring.

We ask that more men and women of faith would rise up and talk about their love for Jesus, and that this would encourage other Christians in the world remain true to you, and for non-believers to seek you.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen

## Close

We hope that, through engaging in a topic which can sometimes be awkward to discuss, our young people feel more comfortable talking about purity in all its forms, and to find emotional support and encouragement when they most need it.

We hope these conversations help them to understand that the Bible talks about life's struggles and has advice and examples on how to overcome them.



Wonderful  
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