

Pop-Culture Night – 10.09.19
What Are You Listening To?
Leader Discussion Guide

Our teens take in a variety of messages each day – from what they see on social media, to TV shows, advertisements, music, etc. How do we teach our students to be in the world and not of the world? We want students to be able to take what they are seeing and hearing around them and line it up with truth.

Why is this important? Christ-followers are called to be different from the world. Romans 12:2 says, “Do not be conformed to the patters of this world.” We are supposed to be representations of Christ to a lost world, and we can’t do that if we look like the world. The rest of that verse says, “but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.”

How do we renew our mind? By putting truth in our mind. We first need to evaluate what we’re putting into our mind to determine if it’s truth.

Tonight we will demonstrate how we analyze the things we ultimately allow to influence our thoughts (thoughts → feelings →actions →character). We will do this by looking at some song lyrics. In your small group time, use the questions below to analyze specific songs. Some song lyrics will be provided for you; however, you are free to use any song you feel best connects with your group.

What is your goal tonight? Your main goal is to get your students thinking about what they’re listening to and if it lines up with scripture at all. Please utilize the questions below. Some questions will not be applicable to every song, and that’s OK.

- 1. What is the main message of the song? What’s the writer’s purpose?
 - 2. What does this song say about men? Women?
 - 3. How is this song intended to make you feel?
 - 4. Does the song make any suggestions on how to think, talk, act, or live?
 - 5. What does it say about the way the world is?
 - 6. Is there a hero or a villain? What does the hero or villain stand for?
 - 7. What does it say about authority?
 - 8. How is God portrayed?
 - 9. How is beauty defined?
 - 10. What does it say about how to treat others? Are people “used,” or objectified?
 - 11. Does the song send any messages about what makes a person “successful” in life?
 - 12. Who or what is glorified?
 - 13. What character traits are portrayed as positive? Negative?
 - 14. What does it say about sexuality?
 - 15. What does it say about love?
 - 16. What is the WORLDVIEW that is being communicated?
- Now based on your answers, does the Bible speak to any of these specifically? Where? This is a great chance for your group to really dive into God’s Word and either confirm or negate what the song is saying.
- This is a REALLY important piece. **Please don’t skip this!**

For **deeper conversation**, consider asking some of these questions to your group...

1. **Are these lyrics causing me to doubt my faith or the reality of God's sovereignty (Hebrews 11:1)?** The Holy Spirit is always there to guide us in our choices—from music selections to life-altering decisions, and we can fully trust Him (John 14:26).
2. **Do the words of this song cause me to dwell upon things of the world that draw me away from God's will for my life (Philippians 4:8)?** If you're listening to music with bad themes, thinking it isn't affecting you, then WHAM! you realize it has. Then it's time to cut it out for a good chunk of time and realign with what God would have you dwell upon.
3. **Is this song inspiring negative thoughts or words to work their way into my life (1 John 2:1)?** If you're singing along to a song with profanity, will those words start working their way into your lexicon? If so, it's time to skip those words or skip the song entirely (Ephesians 4:29).
4. **Does listening to this music hurt me or other people (Ephesians 4:31-32)?** If you feel convicted against listening to a certain song or band, then you should obey the Holy Spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:19). To ignore godly conviction is a sin.

***We do not condone the lyrics of the following songs. They are only meant to encourage our students to evaluate the things they are listening to and line it up next to scripture.

NF – “Oh Lord”

When I die, put my ashes in the trash bag
I don't care where they go
Don't waste your money on my gravestone
I'm more concerned about my soul
Everybody's gon' die
Don't everybody live though
Sometimes I look up to the sky
And wonder do You see us down here?

Oh Lord, oh Lord, do You see us down here?
Oh Lord, oh Lord

Listen, yeah everybody wants change
Don't nobody wanna change though
Don't nobody wanna pray
Till they got something to pray for
Now everybody's gon' die
But don't everybody live though
Sometimes I look up to the sky
And wonder do you see us down here?

Oh Lord, oh Lord, do You see us down here?
Oh Lord, oh Lord

It's easy to blame God but harder to fix things
We look in the sky like, "why ain't You listening?"
Watching the news in our living rooms on the big screens
And talking 'bout "if God's really real, then where is He?"
You see the same God that you saying might not even exist
Becomes real to us, but only when we dying in bed
When ya healthy it's like, we don't really care for Him then
Leave me alone God, I'll call you when I need you again
Which is funny, everyone will sleep in the pews
Then blame God for our problems like He sleeping on you
We turn our backs on Him, what do you expect Him to do?
It's hard to answer prayers when nobody's praying to you
I look around at this world we walk on
It's a smack in the face, don't ever tell me there's no God
And if there isn't then what are we here for?
And what are y'all doing down there? I don't know Lord

Oh Lord, oh Lord, do You see us down here?
Oh Lord, oh Lord
Do You see us down here? Oh Lord
Can You see us down here? Oh Lord
Oh Lord, oh Lord
Can You see us? Can't You see us?

Post Malone – “Circles”

We couldn't turn around
'Til we were upside down
I'll be the bad guy now
But no, I ain't too proud
I couldn't be there
Even when I try
You don't believe it
We do this every time

Seasons change and our love went cold
Feed the flame 'cause we can't let go
Run away, but we're running in circles
Run away, run away
I dare you to do something
I'm waiting on you again
So I don't take the blame
Run away, but we're running in circles
Run away, run away, run away

Let go
I got a feeling that it's time to let go
I say so
I knew that this was doomed from the get-go
You thought that it was special, special
But it was just the sex though, the sex though
And I still hear the echoes (the echoes)
I got a feeling that it's time to let it go
Let it go

Seasons change and our love went cold
Feed the flame 'cause we can't let go
Run away, but we're running in circles
Run away, run away
I dare you to do something
I'm waiting on you again
So I don't take the blame
Run away, but we're running in circles
Run away, run away, run away

Maybe you don't understand what I'm going through
It's only me, what you got to lose?
Make up your mind, tell me, what are you gonna do?
It's only me, let it go

Seasons change and our love went cold
Feed the flame 'cause we can't let go
Run away, but we're running in circles
Run away, run away
I dare you to do something
I'm waiting on you again
So I don't take the blame

Run away, but we're running in circles
Run away, run away, run away

Taylor Swift – “Blank Space”

Nice to meet you, where you been?
I could show you incredible things
Magic, madness, heaven sin
Saw you there and I thought
Oh my God, look at that face
You look like my next mistake
Love's a game, want to play?
New money, suit and tie
I can read you like a magazine
Ain't it funny, rumors, lie
And I know you heard about me
So hey, let's be friends
I'm dying to see how this one ends
Grab your passport and my hand
I can make the bad guys good for a weekend

So it's gonna be forever
Or it's gonna go down in flames
You can tell me when it's over
If the high was worth the pain
Got a long list of ex-lovers
They'll tell you I'm insane
'Cause you know I love the players
And you love the game

'Cause we're young and we're reckless
We'll take this way too far
It'll leave you breathless
Or with a nasty scar
Got a long list of ex-lovers
They'll tell you I'm insane
But I've got a blank space baby
And I'll write your name

Cherry lips, crystal skies
I could show you incredible things
Stolen kisses, pretty lies
You're the king baby I'm your Queen
Find out what you want
Be that girl for a month
Wait the worst is yet to come, oh no
Screaming, crying, perfect storm
I can make all the tables turn
Rose gardens filled with thorns
Keep you second guessing like
"Oh my God, who is she?"
I get drunk on jealousy
But you'll come back each time you leave

'Cause darling I'm a nightmare dressed like a
daydream
So it's gonna be forever
Or it's gonna go down in flames
You can tell me when it's over
If the high was worth the pain
Got a long list of ex-lovers
They'll tell you I'm insane
'Cause you know I love the players
And you love the game

'Cause we're young and we're reckless
We'll take this way too far
It'll leave you breathless
Or with a nasty scar
Got a long list of ex-lovers
They'll tell you I'm insane (Insane)
But I've got a blank space baby
And I'll write your name

Boys only want love if it's torture
Don't say I didn't say I didn't warn ya
Boys only want love if it's torture
Don't say I didn't say I didn't warn ya

So it's gonna be forever
Or it's gonna go down in flames
You can tell me when it's over
If the high was worth the pain
Got a long list of ex-lovers
They'll tell you I'm insane
'Cause you know I love the players
And you love the game

'Cause we're young and we're reckless
We'll take this way too far
It'll leave you breathless
Or with a nasty scar
Got a long list of ex-lovers
They'll tell you I'm insane
But I've got a blank space baby
And I'll write your name