



Who doesn't want to be the 'cool kid'?

They're the ones that have the most friends, wear the name-brand clothes, and have the opinion that everyone wants to follow.

But, is that really what makes someone cool or popular?

Use this lesson to teach students that God's opinion of us is the only one that really matters.

-Nick Diliberto, Ministry to Youth

YOUTH GROUP LESSON ON POPULARITY

Written by Tiffany Hollums

Bible: Galatians 1:10

Bottom Line: God's opinion of us is the only one that really matters.

SUPPLIES

- Playlist of songs for the dance-off
- Funny dance off trophy
- Large mirror
- Dry-erase markers
- Small mirror for each student

OPENING GAME: THE POPULARITY GAME

This game is a simple 'dance-off,' but you can take it to the next level by encouraging the students to dress-up and think of the goofiest dance that they could do before the lesson.

Students can even join together to come up with funny dance moves and routines.

If you have time, give them a little time to work up their routines.

Announce that there will be a dance-off and that the winners will be determined at the end by the crowd applause.

Choose a student who might not want to dance, but could be the Applause Meter to judge who wins.

You can also [download](#) a free applause meter from the App Store.

Give a funny prize. (*Example - a pair of spray-painted shoes which could become a yearly dance off tradition for your group.*)

TEACH

Share a story from your teenage years along with a photo: Go for the one in which you embarrassed yourself or where you realized that popularity might be less than you expected.

If you don't have a story, ask some of the adults in the church to share... but, come on, we all have those stories.

Popularity.

It's that thing that so many people chase, but have you ever stopped to really think about what makes someone popular?

Who decides who is popular?

Ask the students to share their thoughts on what it means or looks like to be popular.

So, using this description we just gave of popularity, where do you find yourself on the 1 to 10 'popularity scale', with 1 being a slug and 10 being the Superstar of the World?

But, please don't say your number out loud!

Now, what are some of the things you've seen people be willing to do to be popular?

Write down these things on a card and hand it in.

I will read these and we can talk about them.

Give each youth a card and pen.

Why? Because if they are really honest, these could be some 'dicey' answers and best to filter.

Read the cards and ask the students to agree or disagree on whether teens seem to do these things to be popular.

Here is something to ask yourself from now on: Who am I? And what am I willing to do or not to do for others to like me?

Read Galatians 1: 10. (NKJV)

For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ.

Everyone will have an opinion about you.

But, the truth is, most people care more about what others think of them and really aren't as worried about you as you might think.

That's why it is really important that you decide beforehand who you are.

What do I mean by this?

Ask yourself if you are willing to compromise your character, who you really are, to become more popular.

Is popularity really worth making bad decisions, and more importantly, is that who you are?

Share a story from your life in which you faced this dilemma of who you are in Christ versus what others in the world want you to be.

See, the first thing that you have to think about is who you are in Christ.

So, tell me... who are you in Christ?

What words would Jesus use to describe who you are?

Write down what they say on a mirror with a dry erase marker.

Here are a few suggestions:

Beloved

Valuable enough to die for

Righteous

Bought with a price

You are loved by God and just think about the lengths that God has gone to show you His love.

Some of you see these words on the mirror and might think "That can't be true about me", but ... these are true for you in Christ.

Jesus doesn't expect you to be perfect, and in fact, he knows that you will probably fail, but that is why he offers us grace.

His strength and grace give us the ability to try again... and keep trying.

And His opinion of you is the only one that really matters because it is the only one that is truly correct.

I wish that I could tell you that living in God's grace will make you popular with the rest of the world, but you and I both know that this isn't always true.

Now don't get me wrong, when you really live for Jesus, you will find that others are drawn to the 'thing' that they see different in you: that's Jesus.

But just look at the life of Jesus: Was he popular?

Yes, for a week!

One week everyone was praising him and waving palm branches, which is basically the equivalent of a parade in his honor, but the next week, the same people are screaming "Crucify him".

His popularity was very quick and seemed to turn on a dime... which is a true picture of popularity.

Here one day and gone the next.

So, that's why it is so important for you to spend some time really searching your soul and asking yourself, "Who am I?" and "what am I willing to do to be popular?"

As you find yourself living day by day, ask yourself: "Do I really want to do this or do I want others to like me? "

And then ask yourself this question: "Am I living in a way that is God's best for me?"

Those are the real answers that matter because the opinion that God has of you won't change based on what you wear, who you hang out with, what you have... his opinion of you is based on his love for you.

His love that will never change.

As you leave, I am going to give you a mirror.

I want you to write a word on that mirror that can remind you of who you are in Christ.

Maybe you need to write that you are loved or beautiful or righteous... pray about what word to write and take this mirror with you to remind you about who you are in Christ.

Close in prayer.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What is your struggle with popularity? What to wear? Actions? Friends?
- What are the ways that you see others around you trying to be popular?
- Are you willing to do these things to be popular?
- How does it make you feel to think about Jesus and how opinions turned so fast on him?
- What word did you write on your mirror?
- How can we pray and be there for one another through the popularity struggles some of us face?