

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 *The Pause Lesson One Teacher Prep Video*, login to your account, navigate to your Small Group Lesson 1, 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 the Gospel of Mark?

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

Mark 1:35

As you begin to make the case that making time to spend praying and listening to God is crucial to your students' lives as Christ-followers, this verse stands out as foundational. Here we see Jesus, literally God's Son, making time to go spend in communion with the Father. The question for us is very simply, "If prayer and solitude with God are things Jesus needed to maintain His relationship with the Father, how much more so do we need them?" This verse will help encourage your students to take prayer and time in solitude seriously.

Mark 6:47

This verse reinforces a key idea you will be trying to drive home to your students, namely, the idea of seeking time alone with God. Your students' lives are so busy (but you already knew that). When they do have spare time, most do not even think to spend it in prayer and communion with God. But even if they do, culture is so invasive that they hardly have any time alone, in silence. Jesus knew the importance of solitude. Your students need to know it, as well.



THE TAKEAWAY

These verses may not hold a tremendous amount of deep theological truth, but they hold a treasure chest of practical application. We see Jesus doing the very thing you'll be trying to challenge your students with: hitting pause! If it's good enough for Jesus, it has to be good enough for us. Use these passages to challenge your students to a new and refreshed commitment to their relationship with God.



DIGGING IN (CONTINUED)

NEXT, ask for three volunteers to read the following passages:

- Psalm 5:3
- Daniel 6:10
- Acts 10:9

Have the first volunteer read Psalm 5:3. Then ask:

- **What do we know about the priority David put on hitting pause?**
 - *Answer:* Lead students to understand that David made time to seek God. He didn't wait to find time. It was a priority for him.
- **Describe what we know about David's attitude as he spent time with God.**
 - *Answer:* Lead students to see that David expected to encounter God! It wasn't a meaningless ritual for David. David believed he was actually going to spend time in relationship with God.

Have the second volunteer read Daniel 6:10. Then ask:

- **What can we tell about how important Daniel's relationship with God was?**
 - *Answer:* Lead students to see that Daniel was extremely committed to hitting pause! He prayed three times a day even though there was a rule against praying to anyone other than King Darius.

Have the third volunteer read Acts 10:9. Then ask:

- **What does Peter's habits and attitude toward hitting pause have in common with these other accounts?**
 - *Answer:* He went to a place where he could be away from everyone. When he got there, he prayed to God.

THEN, when you've looked at all the passages, lead your students in the following discussion. Ask:

- **If you compared your attitude toward making time to be with God with the other examples you just read, how do you stack up?**
 - *Answer:* Individual answers vary.
- **What is the most notable difference in how you approach "hitting pause" and how these individuals approached it?**
 - *Answer:* Individual answers vary.
- **In your mind, why is it important to make time for relationship with God in solitude and silence?**
 - *Answer:* Individual answers vary.
- **What is the purpose?**
 - *Answer:* Allow students to answer if they can or will. But use the following passage of Scripture to help flesh out the purpose of hitting pause.

FINALLY, explain to students that you are going to read Matthew 5:13-16 aloud. Instruct them to listen for how these verses speak to God's purpose for their lives. After you have finished reading, ask:

- **How do these verses speak to God's purpose for your lives?**
 - *Answer:* Explain that they are called to be difference-makers in this world. They are called to stand out as belonging to God. They can't do this unless they have an ongoing relationship with God. Remind them that hitting pause is the way you're leading them to think about growing this relationship.

Don't have students answer the final question. Simply leave it as something they should consider over the course of the next few lessons:

- **How does knowing how and when to hit pause help you fulfill your God-given purpose?**



The Pause SESSION 1 INTRO

What do you do with all your free time?

If you're like most teenagers, you're saying, "WHAT FREE TIME?"

Your generation is busier and more involved than any generation before you. School, work, clubs, sports, friends, band, church . . . you name it, you're involved in it.

And when you *do* have down time, you're watching YouTube™ on your phone, playing video games, texting your friends, hitting Facebook. . . all while watching some reality TV show.

Let's just be honest: You're not finding a lot of downtime to spend growing your relationship with God.

And when you *do* have time, there is so much "noise" from all the entertainment at your fingertips that you can't focus.

**THIS STUDY IS ABOUT SLOWING
DOWN AND FOCUSING.**

THIS STUDY IS ABOUT HITTING **PAUSE**.

YOU'RE ABOUT TO LEARN WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO MAKE TIME TO GROW YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD. AND YOU'RE ABOUT TO LEARN EXACTLY HOW TO DO THIS.

ARE YOU READY?

LET'S GET STARTED . . .

Large Group SESSION 1 NOTES

Session 1 Title: Hitting Pause

These two pages are designed for you to take notes during Large Group Sessions. The stuff you're learning tends to build on itself over the next few sessions. So, even if you're not much of a note taker, you might want to at least jot down what you think is important.

Try writing down:

- Any specific teaching points
- Quotes that make you think
- Verse references for Scripture passages
- Anything you have a question about

The *Pause Student Book* is equipped with space to take notes in Large Group Session.

These pages are intentionally left blank.

SESSION 1: GETTING STARTED

Work with your small group leader to respond to the following stats.

Are you busy? Overcommitted? Feel like you have a lot going on?

You're not alone. Research conducted on US teenagers paints an interesting picture of your life. You're busy. And you're stressed. Check out the stats below:

Seventy-eight percent of teenagers identify schoolwork as the number one source of stress in their lives. **NEARLY EIGHT MILLION TEENAGERS PLAY HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS.**

FORTY-ONE PERCENT OF TWELFTH GRADERS PARTICIPATE IN SOME FORM OF PERFORMING ARTS, SUCH AS DANCE, BAND, ART, OR THEATER. Fifty percent of all 16- to 19-year-olds have a job or are looking for work.

At least when you're not in school or at work or at practice, you have time to rest. Um . . . not so much.

Check out this quote from a major study on teenagers and media use: The average American teenager "spends practically every waking minute—except for the time in school—using a smart phone, computer, television or other electronic device."

Fifty percent of teenagers send 50 or more text messages a day. Thirty percent send more than 100 texts a day. **NEARLY SEVENTY-THREE PERCENT OF ALL TEENAGERS USE SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES.**

Seventy-six percent of all teenagers own an iPod or an MP3 player.

ON THE AVERAGE DAY, THE AVERAGE 18-YEAR-OLD SPENDS:
• 4.5 hours watching TV . . . • 2.5 hours listening to music or audio . . . • 1.5 hours on the computer . . . • A little over an hour playing video games . . . • Around half an hour reading and half an hour watching movies . . . • For a total of 10 hours and 45 minutes of media exposure a day.

SESSION 1: DIGGING IN

Ready to learn about hitting Pause? Follow your leader's instructions to work through these questions with your group.

Describe what happens when you "hit pause."

LET'S SEE WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM LOOKING AT JESUS' ATTITUDE TOWARD HITTING PAUSE.

Read Mark 1:32-38. Then answer the following questions:

- How does Mark describe the place that Jesus went?
- What did Jesus do when He was alone?

Read Mark 6:45-47. Then answer the following questions:

- Describe exactly what verses 45-47 show Jesus doing.
- So, let's summarize these verses. What general characteristics of hitting pause can we learn from looking at Jesus' example?

NOW LET'S SEE WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM OTHER PEOPLE IN THE BIBLE ABOUT SEEKING GOD BY HITTING PAUSE:

Read Psalm 5:3. Then answer the following questions:

- What do we know about the priority David put on hitting pause?
- Describe what we know about David's attitude as he spent time with God.

Read Daniel 6:10. Then answer the following question:

- What can we tell about how important Daniel's relationship with God was?

Read Acts 10:9. Then answer the following questions:

- What does Peter's habits and attitude toward hitting pause have in common with these other accounts?

FINALLY, LET'S BRING ALL OF THIS HOME . . .

- If you compared your attitude toward making time to be with God with the other examples you just read, how do you stack up?
- What is the most notable difference in how you approach "hitting pause," and how these individuals approached it?
- As we begin to really consider how to apply these concepts in our lives, we have to believe they are important.
 - In your mind, why is it important to make time for relationship with God in solitude and silence?
 - What is the purpose?

How do the following verses speak to God's purpose for our lives?

"You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men. You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven." (Matt. 5:13-16)

How does knowing how and when to "hit pause" help you fulfill your God-given purpose?



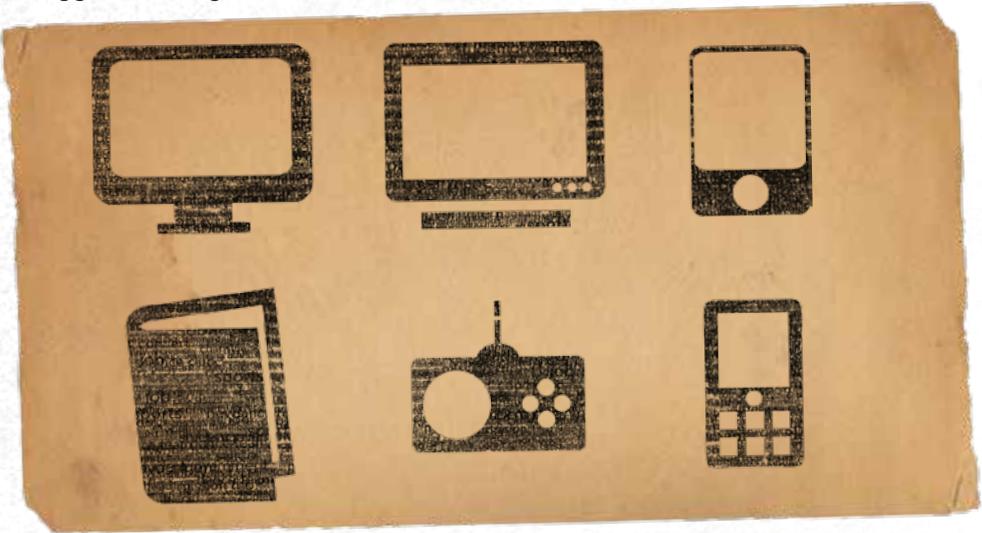
SESSION 1: WRAPPING UP

What's in your way? Read this quote with your group and consider the following questions.

Our religious activities should be ordered in such a way as to leave plenty of time for the cultivation of the fruits of solitude and silence. A.W. Tozer

- Does this describe your spiritual life? (Don't feel bad if it doesn't. You're not alone.)
- Describe your spiritual life in two words: _____
- Why is it so stinking hard to just slow down and make room to be still and quiet?
- Think about this: what if God has been speaking to you, but you haven't heard Him because you haven't been listening?

Think for a minute. . . . What are the "noisy" things in your life that get in the way of spending silent time alone with God? Circle the objects below that present the biggest challenge.



Here's a question: If you know that these things keep you from silent time with God, why don't you do something about it?

Try this: Make a commitment to take a 15- to 30-minute break from the two or three biggest noise makers in your life. Use the silence to study the Bible or talk with God in prayer. You'll be surprised at how rewarding it is.

The Pause: Learning To Seek God

"I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands. I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you."--Psalm 119:10-11

Generation Multitask. It's a fitting label for an overcommitted, over-entertained generation. School, sports, clubs, work, friends, family, church . . . Teenagers are more involved and committed than any group of teenagers before them. It's no wonder that teenagers find it so difficult finding time to cultivate a relationship with Christ. They have to make time.

Do your students know how to seek God?

The Pause will teach students to “hit pause” and spend time growing their relationship with God.

Small Group Outlines

Small Group Session 1

- **Session Title:** Hitting Pause
- **Session Purpose:** To help students understand the basics of what it means to hit pause, and to begin thinking about what's keeping them from doing so.
- **Main Scripture:** Mark 1:32-38, Mark 6:45-47
- **Supporting Scripture:** Psalm 5:3, Daniel 6:10, Acts 10:9

Small Group Session 2

- **Session Title:** Talk the Talk
- **Session Purpose:** To help students grasp the extreme importance of prayer in developing and maintaining a relationship with God, and to teach them Christ's model for praying to God.
- **Main Scripture:** Matthew 6:9-13

Small Group Session 3

- **Session Title:** Knowing the Bible
- **Session Purpose:** To help students go deeper in their knowledge of God by applying the Bible study techniques learned in this lesson.
- **Main Scripture:** Psalm 119:97-104
- **Supporting Scripture:** Romans 8:38-39, Ephesians 2:4-5

Small Group Session 4

- **Session Title:** Hitting Play
- **Session Purpose:** To lead students to embrace their mission of being God's messengers of the reconciliation that Christ offers to all people.
- **Main Scripture:** 2 Corinthians 5:17-20

Large Group Session Outlines

Large Group Session 1

- **Session Purpose:** To set the stage for the event, helping students understand the big picture view of why it's important to seek to know God. (Sets-up deeper look at the concept in Small Group Session 1.)
- **Main Scripture:** Genesis 1:26-30, Hebrews 5:11-14, Ephesians 5:1-2
- **Supplemental Scripture:** Genesis 17:7-8, John 14:6-7, 1 Corinthians 3:1-2, Isaiah 1:2-3, Philippians 3:10-14

Large Group Session 2

- **Session Purpose:** To teach students that prayer is more than habit or ritual. It's more than a formality. It is the language of our relationship with God. (Sets-up application in Small Group Session 2.)
- **Main Scripture:** Psalm 63:1-3, Psalm 6, Psalm 5:3
- **Supplemental Scripture:** Psalm 143:8, Psalm 86:8-10

Large Group Session 3

- **Session Purpose:** To both give students a big picture understanding of some of the primary roles the Bible plays in their lives. (Sets-up application in Small Group Session 3.)
- **Main Scripture:** Jeremiah 9:23-24, Psalm 119:9-11, Matthew 7:24-27
- **Supplemental Scripture:** John 5:39, Romans 11:33

Large Group Session 4

- **Session Purpose:** To help students understand that they are to be on mission for God and how hitting pause helps this. (Sets-up "challenge" in Small Group Session 4)
- **Main Scripture:** Matthew 28:16-20
- **Supplemental Scripture:** Acts 1:8, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, John 14:25-27

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