

Unavoidable. Pervasive. Inescapable. Secular pop music is everywhere. Even if you can get your young Christian friends to switch their listening habits from secular to sacred, they are still going to hear the top popular songs everywhere they go. In this section we provide you some

ideas to take advantage of some of the most popular secular songs. Use the opening questions, the thematic concepts and discussion ideas to spice up your Bible study, Sunday School lesson, camp/retreat meeting or outreach event message.

Artist:

5 Seconds of Summer

Song: Amnesia

Album: 5 Seconds of Summer

By: Sarah Taylor, First United Methodist Church
Cynthiana, Kentucky sarah_t@gmail.com

Theme

Relationships

Teaching Point

Our identity is not to be found in earthly relationships but in our relationship with God the Father.

Opening Questions

Have you ever experienced a bad break-up? Maybe a boyfriend/girlfriend broke up with you? Maybe a friend just left you hanging? How did you cope with the heartache?

Discussion

In their song "Amnesia," 5 Seconds of Summer describes what going through breakup can feel like. Maybe you're the one sitting on the sidelines watching your girlfriend/boyfriend move on. Maybe you're feeling depressed and lonely, like nothing is right in the world.

While these emotions are normal and can be expected, as Christians we must realize to whom our hearts truly belong. Maybe we feel as though we've given everything to this other person. But, as Christians we must realize that our everything – our identity – is found in God the Father!

Isaiah 43:1-3 says, "But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: 'Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior:'"

Conclusion

Maybe you feel worthless after a breakup; maybe you feel a bit like Bella from *Twilight* when Edward leaves – like your world has quit spinning. To put that much weight and self-worth into a relationship is never healthy. As a child of God, you are created specifically by God the Father for His purpose. Your worth is found in Him alone as He calls you by name for His purpose. To find your worth in Him will be enough to help you through any trial – through rushing rivers, through tongues of flame, and through a bad breakup.

Artist:

Ariana Grande

Song: Break Free (f/Zedd)

Album: My Everything

By: Doug Ranck, Free Methodist Church
Santa Barbara, California dranck@fmcscb.org

Theme

Confidence; In Christ

Teaching Point

Students will learn that their true assurance comes when it is rooted in a strong and growing relationship with Christ.

Opening Questions

Think about one skill or life action (i.e. piano playing or being kind) that you do well. How do you feel when you are doing this?

Discussion

The writer of this song says, *If you want it, take it... I wanna die alive... I'm stronger than I've been before. This is the part where I break free.* In these words she is displaying a confident and competent desire to move forward with life and not be a victim to circumstances. She is through with pretending the circumstances are acceptable. The time has come to claim freedom from her identity wrapped in one particular and seemingly unhealthy relationship.

One of the best feelings in life is when we are living out what we were made to do. There is a feeling of sincere confidence and security. Living with integrity, loving with compassion, displaying our talents, and striving for excellence causes us to "feel alive." We sense we were born for this time and these actions.

In seeking to live out this purposeful life we must not find our confidence in people or affirmation alone. Our true assurance comes when it is rooted in a strong and growing relationship with Christ.

Jeremiah 17:5-8 describes this confidence. As we trust the Lord and put our confidence in him our life will be nourished and though everything around us shifts and moves we will be firmly planted and free to be the person God has created us to be.

Conclusion

In all honesty, what circumstance or person may be dictating your life? What is one step you can take to "break free" and follow Christ, with faith and assurance?

Artist:

Carrie Underwood

Song: Something in the Water

Album: Something in the Water

By: Eric Gargus, Marie Baptist Church
Dublin, Georgia e4christ@aol.com

Theme

Grace

Teaching Point

Anyone can encounter grace for anything through Jesus.

Opening Questions

What are some bad decisions you see people making around you everyday—and every weekend? Does knowing Jesus change a person? If so, in what ways? Do the followers of Jesus that you know tend to offer more grace or more scorn when someone sins?

Discussion

Carrie Underwood as unashamedly proclaimed her faith in God through her newest hit, "Something in The Water." The song offers a message of hope through faith. Let's talk about some of the lyrics. She opens the song with a preacher preaching about *wasting a life that the good Lord gave me.*

- What are some of the biggest distractions and time commitments hindering your generation from living a life of purpose through Jesus?
- Where have you seen the opposite of wasting life? Where do you see your generation seizing the day by doing things that matter eternally?

In the second verse, Underwood sings about finally letting that preacher's message sink in. She prays, *God, if you're there, come and rescue me.*

- What kind of images do you imagine when you hear the word "rescue?"
- How do images of "rescue" and "grace" collide in your mind?

The chorus of the song declares, *And now I'm changed, and now I'm stronger, there must've been something in the water.*

- What does baptism symbolize?
- Knowing that "something in the water" is a figure of speech used in the song to paint a portrait of grace, think of a time you felt the peace of being forgiven and if you are willing, share the story with us.

Ezekiel 37: 26 offers a powerful picture of a changed heart and life. Read this verse a couple of times together.

Conclusion

Is there something you need to apologize to God about? Do you feel your life is lacking in meaning? Talk to God about it right now. And if you need to talk to me, please come see me after we're finished.