

TOBYMAC

Artist:

TOBYMAC
TOBYMAC.COM

Album Title & Record Company:

THE ELEMENTS
FOREFRONT RECORDS/
CAPITOL CHRISTIAN MUSIC GROUP

Video Title:

I JUST NEED U.

Study By:

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Playlist

This song is featured on "The Linc: God's Sufficiency" Spotify playlist – which is the perfect way to remind your students what you've taught them in this session. To share it with them, click the live link on the web version of this study.

Theme

God's Sufficiency, God's Protection

Objective

Students will recognize that God is all they need – on good days and even on bad ones.

Warm Up

Blob Tag – This game can be played in a large room, a gym, or outdoors on a playground field. Put everyone on one side and have a single person in the middle. That person is "IT." On your signal, IT attempts to tag players as they run. If a player is tagged, he or she joins hands with IT – and now the two of them attempt to tag players. Pretty soon, there are enough members of IT to be a "blob." The Blob must have all of its players connected at all times. If the Blob breaks contact with a player or players, it must immediately reform before continuing to tag players. Play until all players are a part of the Blob. You could then play a variation on this game: start with two IT players, a guy and a girl. IT can only tag its own gender. Guys and girls will soon figure out they can use the other Blob as a "shield" to avoid getting tagged.

Transition

Explain that the game we played should be a good introduction to this

session. We can sometimes feel as though we are being chased down and surrounded – by the expectations of parents, teachers, coaches, and friends; by the allure of what the world tells us will satisfy us; by the darkness of our spiritual enemy. Is there a way to avoid being surrounded and devoured? Where can we turn? Let's find out!

The Video

The "I Just Need U." music video is unlike most music videos today. It's a "conceptual" video that tells a story. And it uses some cutting-edge techniques to do it! Encourage your group to watch the video carefully, and to think about any symbolism they might discern from it. Show the video.

Transition

Talk through the impressions your group has of the song and video. Generate discussion around these kinds of questions:

- What part of the video surprised you?
- What do you make of the three guys in robes? Who are they? What might they represent?
- How about the wolves – what do you think they symbolize?
- What do you think was in the suitcase?

Bible Study

Hand out the Student Guides. Use this outline to teach about God's sufficiency and protection. The key Scriptures to use are **Psalm 17:6-14** and **Psalm 23**.

The World's Not Enough – Toby sings, "This world got a way of showing me. Some days it'll lift you up, some days it'll call your bluff. Man, most of my days I ain't got enough." When explaining how he wrote this song, Toby described how easily he can feel discontent – because he starts listening to the world. Even though some days the world can "lift you up", more often it'll "call your bluff." And what you thought would bring you satisfaction disappoints you. **Psalm 23:1** declares that "The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing."

Enemies Do Surround Us – Ask a volunteer to read **Psalm 17:6-14** aloud to the group. That passage sure does sound like the video, right? Toby quotes **Psalm 23:4-5** when he sings, "Yeah, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me. Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me when I'm beat down, broken – hold my heart when it's split right wide open." That dark valley isn't just when we encounter bad days, or have people want to do us harm. It's also referring to spiritual opposition – like

Paul wrote in **Ephesians 6:12**, "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms." The wolves depicted in the video are very real – even though we can't see them.

Stay Close to God – The bridge of the song repeats, "When you pull me closer, I come to life." **Psalm 23:6** concludes with this: "Surely Your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." The closer we get to Him, the more we have the kind of experience and satisfaction that only He can provide. As Toby sings at the end of the song, "On my darkest days, when I'm losing faith, I need You. Every single day, every breath I take, I need You."

Wrap Up

Ask, "So what do you think Toby was trying to communicate when he lit his luggage and car on fire?" Explain that we all have "baggage" that we lug around that keeps us from experiencing a close relationship with God – something that we hope will satisfy us, but never does. Encourage your students to prayerfully consider what "baggage" they have, and to fill in the "My Baggage" section of the Student Guide while you play the video again.