

ROOTED

A 52-Week Lesson Plan for Christian Youth Ministry

— **Sample Lesson** —

Dear Friend in Ministry,

Thank you for your interest in ROOTED! We are so grateful for your heart to serve the next generation, and we hope this sample lesson gives you a helpful, practical glimpse into the full 52-week curriculum.

Whether you are building a youth program from the ground up or looking for fresh, biblically grounded resources for your weekly gatherings, our prayer is that this material equips you to lead with confidence and joy.

A Prayer for Your Ministry

Heavenly Father,

We lift up this ministry leader to You today. Fill them with Your wisdom, patience, and unshakeable passion as they shepherd the young people in their care. Root their heart deeply in Your Word, and grant them clear vision and favor as they plan lessons, build relationships, and share the Gospel. Strengthen them in every season, and allow the seeds planted in their ministry to bear lasting fruit for Your Kingdom.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

If you have any questions as you review the sample or would like to explore the full scope and sequence, please feel free to reach out anytime. May God richly bless you and your team as you labor for Him!

Warmly,

The ROOTED Ministry Team

“Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him.”

— **Colossians 2:7**

JANUARY • WEEK 3

The Social Media Mirror

SCRIPTURE FOCUS Galatians 1:10

BOTTOM LINE *Stop chasing likes from people and start living for the One whose opinion actually lasts.*

Block 1: The Icebreaker & Game

15 Minutes • High Energy • Whole Group

Game Title: The Approval Rating

MATERIALS NEEDED

- ◆ 1 whiteboard or large poster board (or a projector/TV display)
- ◆ 1 dry-erase marker or thick marker
- ◆ Small sheets of paper or index cards — 1 per student
- ◆ Pens or pencils — 1 per student
- ◆ A countdown timer or stopwatch
- ◆ Optional: a bell or buzzer to signal rounds

HOW TO PLAY

Step 1: Before the game, prepare 5–7 scenarios to reveal one at a time on the board. Examples: “You post a selfie and get 3 likes.” / “You make the starting lineup and everyone shares your highlight video.” / “You trip in the cafeteria and someone records it.” / “You get 200 followers overnight.”

Step 2: Give each student a card. For each scenario, students privately write a number from 1–10 rating how much that would affect their mood and self-worth. 10 means it would totally make or ruin their day.

Step 3: After each scenario, ask 2–3 volunteers to share their number and why. No wrong answers — just honest ones.

Step 4: Tally a “room average” for each scenario on the board so students can visually see how much external validation moves the needle for the group.

THE TIE-IN

Say this to the group: *“Look at those numbers. The crazy thing is, none of those scenarios actually changed who you are — but they changed how you felt about yourself. That is the power of the approval trap. Today we are going to talk about why you were built to care way more about one person's opinion than the entire internet's.”*

Block 2: The Core Message

15 Minutes · Teacher-Led · Whole Group

THE HOOK

“Pull out your phone. Right now, somewhere in the world, someone is refreshing a post to see if it crossed 100 likes. Someone deleted a photo because it only got 12. Someone posted a fake version of their weekend so people would think their life was better than it actually is. We have built an entire economy around approval — and we are all paying into it. The question is: whose approval are you actually working for?”

SCRIPTURE READING

Have a student read Galatians 1:10 aloud:

“Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ.”

— **Galatians 1:10**

KEY POINTS TO DELIVER

1 The Mirror Lies. Social media is not a mirror — it is a highlight reel with a filter on it. You are comparing your behind-the-scenes to everyone else's best moment. Paul was writing to people who were getting pressured to perform for a crowd — religious leaders, cultural gatekeepers, social influencers of their day — and he says: I cannot do both. I cannot serve God and live for the crowd. Neither can you.

2 People-Pleasing Is Exhausting Because the Rules Never Stop Changing. What gets likes today gets ignored tomorrow. The standard shifts every season. But God's opinion of you? It does not have an algorithm. It does not update based on your performance. He decided what He thought about you before you ever posted a single thing. You are not a product waiting to be reviewed. You are a person He already loves.

3 Approval From God Looks Different Than Approval From People. When people approve of you, they usually want something back — conformity, performance, or entertainment. God's approval is not earned — it is given. In Christ, you are already fully known and fully loved. The goal is not to make God proud by posting the right things. It is to know Him so well that His opinion matters more than anyone else's.

Block 3: Small Group Discussion

20 Minutes · Break Into Groups of 4–8 · Led by a Small Group Leader

This week's topic is one where honesty from leaders makes a real difference. The last question especially — invite leaders to share their own story of chasing approval before inviting students to share theirs.

Q1 Be honest: what is the thing you post about or talk about most that you know is at least partly about looking good to others?

Q2 Paul says in Galatians 1:10 that you cannot be a people-pleaser and a servant of Christ at the same time. Do you think that's true? Why or why not?

Q3 Think about a time you made a decision based on what people would think instead of what you actually believed was right. What happened?

Q4 If God already fully knows you and fully loves you (Romans 8:38–39), what would it look like to actually live that way? What would you do differently?

Q5 Leaders: Share an example from your own life of a time you chased people's approval and it left you empty — and what slowly shifted for you.

Leader Note: This week connects directly back to Week 2. Students who still feel stuck in labels others gave them often turn to social media to try to overwrite those labels with external validation. Listen for students who seem especially wired to people-please — those students may need a follow-up conversation this week.



Block 4: Wrap-Up & Challenge

10 Minutes · Bring Everyone Back Together · Whole Group

MATERIALS FOR THE CHALLENGE

- ◆ Index cards or half-sheets of paper — 1 per student (can reuse game cards)
- ◆ Pens or pencils — 1 per student
- ◆ A designated “drop box” or basket at the front of the room — a shoebox or bowl works great
- ◆ Optional: a worship song playing softly in the background during the response moment

WEEKLY CHALLENGE

Give each student an index card. Ask them to write down two things: (1) The Approval They Chase — one specific place, person, or platform where they seek validation the most. (2) A Declaration — finishing this sentence in their own words: “Today I choose to care more about what God says than...” Invite students to fold their card and drop it in the box at the front as an act of surrender. Tell them: “You are not throwing that person or that platform away. You are just deciding it does not get to be your measuring stick anymore.”

“Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God?” — Galatians 1:10

CLOSING PRAYER

God, we confess that we spend a lot of energy trying to get people to see us a certain way. We refresh and we perform and we compare, and it never really works. Would you help us to believe — not just in our heads but in the way we actually live — that your opinion is the only one that will still matter in 100 years? Teach us to live for an audience of One. Amen.

PARENT CONNECT

This Week's Topic: The Social Media Mirror (Galatians 1:10). Tonight we talked about the approval trap — how social media trains students to find their worth in likes, comments, and follower counts — and how Paul's challenge in Galatians 1:10 cuts right through that.

Conversation Starter: *“If your phone disappeared for a week, what do you think you'd miss most — and what do you think that says about you?”*

Watch For: Students may have written something vulnerable on their card tonight. Give them space. Don't pry, but do let them know you noticed they seemed thoughtful.

This is one lesson from the complete 52-week ROOTED curriculum.