







## CREATING THE EXPERIENCE

We believe that the set, stage, music and everything in your room communicates a message—without you saying a word. That's why we put together a list of production ideas to help you set the stage for the session and the series. From the music you play when students come into the room to the worship set your band plays, we want to make sure that your room conveys “WE” in a multi-sensory way. There is a downloadable checklist available in your series downloads that will give you all the elements for this session (and the entire series).

### BACKGROUND PLAYLIST FOR WE SERIES:

- “To Remember” by Josh Kelley (from *To Remember-Single*)
- “Viva la Vida” by Coldplay (from *Viva la Vida*)
- “Tonight” by Jonas Brothers (from *A Little Bit Longer*)
- “Breakout” by Miley Cyrus (from *Breakout*)
- “Say” by John Mayer (from *Continuum: Special Edition*)
- “Put Your Records On” by Corinne Bailey Rae (from *Corinne Bailey Rae*)
- “We Shine” by Fee (from *We Shine*)
- “You're All I Have” by Snow Patrol (from *Eyes Open*)
- “Something's Missing” by John Mayer (from *Heavier Things*)
- “Real” by Goo Goo Dolls (from *Real-Single*)
- “The Puppy Song” by Harry Nilsson (from *Harry Nilsson: Greatest Hits*)

### WORSHIP PLAYLIST FOR WE SESSION 1:

- “Love Song” by Anberlin (from *Blueprints for the Black Market*)
- “Everything About You” by Sanctus Real (from *Fight the Tide*)
- “Made To Worship” by Chris Tomlin (from *See the Morning*)
- “Hosanna” by Starfield (from *I Will Go*)

### THE SET

For the WE series, we have a few different ideas for your set. You can choose to do one of them or incorporate all three.

- Go to your local home improvement store and purchase giant pieces of foam board or cardboard. Trace and cut out silhouettes of people and stand them on stage. (This mimics the series art.)
- Print out pictures of all your students either individually or in groups. If you choose to take individual pictures, make sure that you are able to get a picture of every student. You could take these pictures the week before the series starts, or simply pull pictures from past events or trips. Then purchase some MDF board (or other big pieces of material) from your local home improvement store and paste the pictures to the board(s). Place the board(s) on stage as the backdrop or import the pictures into a slide show that plays on your screen as students arrive and leave.
- Move your set to the middle of the room. Your band and communicator will speak from the center of the circle. Arrange the chairs around the stage so that the people are in a circle.

### SERIES ART

Art for PowerPoint backgrounds and for series promotional ads is available as a free download with every series. Visit the XP3 web site, log on to your account and download the images to use in your presentation, newsletters and web site.

### VIDEO

Both a video bumper and a session video are available for the WE series as video downloads from the reThink store. You can purchase the videos by logging into your XP3 account and clicking on the “XP3 videos” link. The bumper video was created to be used as an intro for all three sessions of the WE series. The session video was created to be shown during the third session.



## MIDDLE SCHOOL ADAPTATION

The following activities and illustrations are designed to help middle schoolers connect with the subject matter in ways that engage them physically, mentally, socially and sometimes emotionally.

### GAME: TWO VS. ONE

*(Play this game as an icebreaker to the session.)*

For this game, you'll need a few easy children's puzzles, some Legos® and a few balloons. Every youth group has that one student who likes to volunteer for the game every week. They're convinced that no matter what, they can beat anybody, anytime. Select that student to play today's game. Then select another student to compete against him or her. Tell them there are three stages to this challenge and the first person to finish all three stages will be the winner. Here are the stages:

Stage One: Put together an easy children's puzzle.

Stage Two: Build a Lego® tower over 12 inches high.

Stage Three: Blow up three balloons and then pop them by sitting on them.

It should be pretty easy to do, but in order to show that we work better as teams, let the second student you chose to play choose another person to be on his or her team. Now it is Two vs. One. Everyone will enjoy it, even the kid who swears he'll still win by himself. The team of two should easily win and it will help illustrate that God makes us better with the help of others.

### ILLUSTRATION: I AM LEGEND

*(Use this illustration during teaching point "D" in the INTRODUCTION section of the teaching script.)*

During the introduction to the lesson, play a clip from the movie *I Am Legend*. In the movie, the main character Robert Neville, played by Will Smith, finds himself to be the last remaining survivor in New York City. As the movie begins, you can quickly see that the loneliness is getting to him. His only companion is his dog, with whom he shares meals and conversations. There is a great scene starting at 19:05 when he is driving to the video store. In the scene, he goes in to "rent" a video and has a series of conversations with mannequins he has obviously set up. Play the clip to 21:17 after the line, "I'm gonna say hello tomorrow."

We might think time to ourselves is nice, but even something good can get old if time alone is all we have.



## TEACHING SCRIPT

The teaching script is divided into five sections.

**INTRODUCTION:** This introduction is intended to connect you, the communicator, to the audience usually through a personal story or observation. We've included our stories, but you may want to substitute your own story in this section.

**TENSION:** The tension moves the message from the “me” mentality of the introduction to a “we” mentality. For example, a transition statement might be, “At some point in our lives, we have all been jealous of someone over something.”

**TRUTH:** Once the tension builds, the next logical step is to uncover the truth of what the Bible says about the topic.

**APPLICATION:** At this point, the message moves to a “you” mentality in order to teach the application. The “you” is the student. Take God’s truth and unpack how it relates to each student so that he or she can apply it to everyday life.

**LANDING:** Here it is important to land the message on what each student needs to know and do with what they’ve heard. Just as the message began with a personal story or observation, the message also ends with a “me” mentality. For example, one possible landing statement might be, “I have a greater sense of purpose knowing that God created me in His image.” Leave the students with a clear sense of what all of you should do with what you’ve heard.



# WE(1):THE OTHERS

**BOTTOM LINE:** FOLLOWING CHRIST WAS NEVER MEANT TO BE DONE ALONE—WE NEED COMMUNITY.

## TEACHING OUTLINE

### INTRO:

Life seems a lot easier without people.

### TENSION:

Living without relationships never feels right for long.

We all long to belong.

### TRUTH:

*When the LORD God made the earth and the heavens—and no shrub of the field had yet appeared on the earth and no plant of the field had yet sprung up, for the LORD God had not sent rain on the earth and there was no man to work the ground, but streams came up from the earth and watered the whole surface of the ground—the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being (Genesis 2:4-7 NIV).*

*The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him." Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field. But for Adam no suitable helper was found. So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.*

*The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man" (Genesis 2:18-23 NIV).*

"It is not good."

### APPLICATION:

"An unshared happiness is not happiness . . . happiness is only real when shared."

Following Jesus Christ was never meant to be a completely personal, private relationship.

We were created with a need for people

### LANDING:

If you are lacking community, it isn't good.

God made us to need other people.







# WE(1): THE OTHERS

## TEACHING SCRIPT

### TRUTH (CONT'D)

F. No other creature could give Adam what he needed. After God had made each thing in the garden he repeated over and over, it is good, it is good, it is good. But when he saw Adam's loneliness, when he saw the emptiness next to the man, God said, "It is not good." This picture goes way beyond the purpose of marriage, although that certainly has something to do with it. God didn't say, "Adam needs a wife. Adam needs someone who knows how to cook. Adam needs someone who can iron a shirt." God doesn't even say Adam needs someone to flirt with. He says he needs a helper. Adam needs a friend, a partner, a somebody to relate to, communicate with, who "gets" him. According to Genesis 2, Adam needed something more.

### APPLICATION

A. I think if we're honest, there are times when we believe if we could just get away from everyone and everything, our lives would miraculously become better and easier. Think about it—no parents, no drama and no chores. We could just escape it all. But does it ever stay that way for long? For those few hours, those few days, maybe even those few weeks where it seems like there is less responsibility, less pressure and baggage to deal with in relationships, is that really what we want? Is that really what will make us happy and satisfied? Or did God get it right when he saw Adam alone declaring, "It is not good"?

B. In 1990, Christopher McCandless was just a recent graduate from Emory University. After leaving Atlanta following his college commencement, Chris set out on a quest for independence. He changed his name, cut off contact with his family, donated all his savings to charity and abandoned his car. Inspired by writers like Jack London and Henry David Thoreau, Chris thought that if he set out to live in the wilderness of Alaska alone, he would experience freedom, achieve the ultimate, complete independence from people and a pure union with nature. After hitchhiking and journeying south, west and north, he ended up at the culmination of his dream—in the wilds of Alaska, on the Stampede Trail. He brought ten pounds of rice, a .22 caliber rifle, a camera, several boxes of rifle rounds, some camping gear and a journal. He didn't take a map or a compass. In his mind, this was as authentic a trip as he could make to experience the ideals of the wilderness. And he thought the truest expression of this would be to do it alone.

C. Chris lasted 112 days in the Alaska wilderness. He was dead for two and a half weeks before his body was found in early September by a group of moose hunters, and even then the cause of death was uncertain. Apparently Chris either died of starvation or from eating a poisoned seed plant. His story is the literal picture of our inability to do life alone. In the bestselling book *Into the Wild* (1996) by Jon Krakauer, where Chris's story is told, the reader gets the impression that towards the end of his life, even Chris started to realize the need for people. Just days before dying, after having finished the reading and rereading of some of his favorite books, Chris writes, "An unshared happiness is not happiness . . . happiness is only real when shared" Just days earlier, Chris had made his first attempt to leave his campsite only to find himself trapped by a raging river moving too fast and being too cold to swim. He confessed in his journal to being scared . . . afraid . . . and lonely.

D. At one point, Christopher felt as though being alone was the best way to live. He felt that being in the wild completely alone was true freedom. He was convinced that by escaping the real world, government, society and people, he would be able to find answers and a better, easier life. But his journal, his books, his notes seem to suggest he didn't die thinking this way. They seem to hint at the fact that shortly after it was too late, he understood the need for people, the comfort of community. Christopher McCandless is remembered as a failed attempt to make it alone.







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## HIGH SCHOOL SMALL GROUP DIALOG

### WEEK 1: THE OTHERS

**Bottom Line:** Following Christ was never meant to be done alone—we need community.

**Scripture References:** Genesis 2:4-7, 18-23

In following Christ, there is one truth that most of us forget—we were never meant to do this alone. We need other people. Your goal this week is to help students begin talking about what community means to them. Spend time on question 5, or a conversation similar to it, in order to work through student's preconceived notions of community that may be shallow or interest-specific. Let them see that real community can be something more authentic.

**Warnings:** Many students struggle with loneliness. This series may be painful for them as we talk about a need that they know all too well. Be sensitive to these student's needs. You may want to look for some one-on-one time to help counsel them. Remember: the more we stay focused on how we can provide community to other people, the more likely we are to find that people are also there for us. In other words, when we stop focusing on our own loneliness and choose to focus on being a good friend to others (regardless of their social position), we will usually find the kind of genuine community we are after.

**Create meaningful conversation. Adjust questions as needed, and don't feel like you need to answer all of them.**

1. What did you think of the talk this week? What did you hear the speaker say?
2. Are you the kind of person who enjoys being alone and having quiet, down time (introverted), or do you always feel the need to be with people (extroverted)?
3. What did you think about the story of Christopher McCandless? Could you relate? What does his story have to tell us about our need for each other?
4. Christopher wrote in his journal that: "an unshared happiness is not happiness . . . happiness is only real when shared." What are some other things we share with people we are close to? (Think about your closest friends and family.)
5. The speaker mentioned that God created more than just friendships, He created community. What does "community" look like? Describe it.
6. How do you think community is different from a clique? (A clique usually includes people who are all similar. Community usually involves people who are different.)
7. What's the difference between having hundreds of friends on Facebook or sitting with a big group at lunch and really having community?
8. If you were God, why would you want people to live in community? What might be some benefits?
9. Do you have community in your life that looks like what we have been talking about? Who are the people that you would say are in that community? If not, what holds you back from having it?

### CLOSING CHALLENGE:

This is a perfect opportunity for you to re-evaluate the community of your small group. Take some time this week to send an e-mail or other confidential notes to your group asking them questions about their connectedness to the group. Can they trust others in the group? Do they feel safe to share? Is this a place where they love others and receive love in return? If not, what can be done to help take your group one step further toward genuine community? You will talk more about this as a group next week, but this will help set the stage by letting students think about what they want to say in advance. E-mail the WE devotional #1 to your students this week.

Take time this week to start planning what your group will do for The XP for this series.