

Be Real With God



BIG IDEA

God cares more about who we truly are than how perfect we appear.



LEADER GOAL

Help students understand that no one is perfect and that they do not need to pretend with God. Encourage them to be honest in prayer because God knows them fully, loves them deeply, and gives grace when they are weak.



BEFORE STUDENTS ARRIVE

- Review 2 Corinthians 12:9 and Psalm 62:8.
- Be ready to reinforce that students do not need to pretend with God.



WELCOME + CONNECT



LEADER SAYS

“Welcome back, everyone! Last week, your challenge was to try talking to God in prayer. Did anyone give that a try? What was it like? Did it feel easy, a little strange, peaceful, distracting, or something else?”

(Allow students to share without pressuring anyone.)

“Those are all okay answers. Prayer can feel different at different times, especially when we’re still learning what it means to talk with God. Today, we’re going to keep learning about prayer and discover that we don’t have to pretend with God.”

LIVE SPARK

YOU DON'T HAVE TO PRETEND

GRAB

A nice-looking picture frame with a visible crack on the back.

IDEA

We sometimes try to look fine on the outside even when something feels difficult inside. With God, we don't have to pretend.

SPARK

You do not have to pretend with God.

DO / SAY

[Hold up the front of the picture frame.]
 "Okay, everybody. Look at this. Pretty nice, right?"
[Inspect it proudly.]
 "Straight edges. Nice and shiny. Not a mark on it. I think we may have found... the perfect picture frame."
[Turn it around and notice the crack.]
 "Oh. Wait."
[Show students.]
 "It's cracked! But you couldn't see that from the front."
[Turn it front-to-back a couple of times.]
 "From here... perfect. From here... definitely not perfect."
[Pause.]
 "So what should I do? Should I hide the crack?"
[Hide the back against yourself.]
 "There. Perfect again! Except... did hiding it actually fix anything?"
[Let students respond.]
 "Nope. Sometimes people do that too."
 "We say: 'I'm fine!' even when we're worried... disappointed... confused... or having a hard day."
 "Sometimes we even think we have to look perfect before we talk to God."
[Hold up the frame.]
 "But God already knows what's underneath."
 "And the Bible says: 'Pour out your hearts to Him, for God is our refuge.'"
 "That doesn't sound like pretending. It sounds like being honest."
[Turn the cracked side toward yourself.]
 "You can tell God: 'I'm worried.' 'I don't understand.' 'I'm disappointed.' Or even: 'God, I don't know what to say.'"
[Brief pause.]
 "You don't have to tell everyone your private things. And you never have to share something before you're ready."
 "But with God... you don't have to hide the crack."
 "He already knows the real you... and He still invites you close."
[Hold the frame toward students.]
 "And that's our Spark: YOU DO NOT HAVE TO PRETEND WITH GOD."

THEN Move directly into Junior Week 7 Welcome + Connect / Small Group activity.



STORY CONNECTION

WHAT'S UP, DULOC? | GOD CARES MORE ABOUT WHO WE ARE THAN HOW PERFECT WE APPEAR

LEADER SAYS

"Today, our story takes us to Duloc. Everything looks clean, organized, and impressive. The people in the song even say: 'Duloc is a perfect place.' But is Duloc really perfect?"

(Allow students to respond.)

"No, it isn't. Duloc may look perfect from the outside, but people are being treated badly. Fairy-tale creatures are being pushed away and kicked out. A place can look beautiful and still have serious problems."

"Sometimes people do something similar. We know we aren't perfect, but we may try to make it look like we are. Maybe we act like we always know the answer, pretend we aren't nervous, hide a mistake, or say we're fine when we're actually hurt or disappointed."

"The truth is that none of us are perfect. Every person makes mistakes. Every person has weaknesses. Every person has moments when they need help. The good news is that God already knows this about us, and He still loves us."

"My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness."

2 Corinthians 12:9



STORY CONNECTION

“Grace means God gives us love, kindness, forgiveness, and help even though we haven’t earned it. God wasn’t telling Paul that weakness didn’t matter. He was telling Paul that he didn’t have to hide it or face it alone. God’s power could help Paul in the places where he felt weak.”

“That is true for us too. We don’t need to pretend that we have everything figured out. We can be honest about our mistakes, our worries, and the things we find difficult. God already knows the real us, and He meets us with grace.”



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

LEADER SAYS

“Let’s talk about it together.”

1

Why do you think the people of Duloc wanted everyone to believe their city was perfect?

2

Why do people sometimes try to make others think they are perfect?

3

Why do you think Paul was willing to talk honestly about his weakness when he knew God’s power was with him?

4

What does it look like to let God help us grow instead of pretending we are already perfect?



SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

PRAYER - KEEPING IT REAL

"We learned that prayer is talking with God. We can pray out loud or quietly, alone or with other people. We can thank God, ask for help, ask questions, say sorry, or tell Him what is happening in our lives. Today, we're learning something else that is very important: We can be honest with God."

"Sometimes people think prayer has to sound very serious or use special words. Sometimes we may feel like we have to act happy or tell God that everything is fine. But God does not want us to pretend."

"God made you. He knows your real thoughts, feelings, fears, hopes, struggles, and joys. Because God already knows us, we can speak honestly with Him."

"Trust God, my friends, and always tell him each of your concerns."

"God is our place of safety."

Psalm 62:8

"This verse tells us to pour out what is in our hearts to God. No problem is too big. No feeling is too small. Being honest with God means trusting Him enough to tell Him the truth. God is a safe place for us to be real."



STUDENT REFLECTION

PROMPT Why might someone pretend to be okay when they really aren't? How can we be our real selves with God?

Possible follow-up: Why can honesty feel scary? How might it help to remember that God already knows how we feel?



THIS WEEK - YOUR CHALLENGE!

"This week, your challenge is to keep it real with God. Choose one moment to tell God honestly how you are feeling."

You could say: "God, I'm worried about..." "God, I'm excited about..." "God, I'm upset because..." "God, I need help with..."

"You do not need fancy words. Just be yourself. God knows the real you, and He loves the real you."



CLOSING PRAYER

Dear God, thank You that we do not have to pretend with You. You know everything about us - our joys, our worries, our mistakes, and the things we find difficult - and You still love us.

Thank You for giving us grace and for helping us when we are weak. Please help us remember that we do not need to look perfect. Help us be honest with You in prayer and honest with people we can trust.

Help K2K be a place where every student feels safe, welcomed, and free to be themselves. Thank You for bringing us together today.

Amen.

Connection Activities



SUPPLIES

None



ACTIVITY 1 | SHREK'S STINKY FEET

Campers spread out. Everyone has woken up with Shrek-sized ogre feet! Move around the swamp without tripping. Change movements as the leader calls:

OGRE FEET!	Huge, heavy stomps.
STINKY FEET!	Stop, sniff a foot and react with dramatic disgust.
MUDDY FEET!	Every step gets stuck in swamp mud.
SNEAKY FEET!	Tiptoe with enormous ogre feet.
HOT FEET!	Keep switching which foot touches the ground.
SLEEPY FEET!	Feet are so heavy you can barely lift them.
DONKEY!	Quick little steps around the space.
SWAMP!	Freeze on one foot without falling.



ACTIVITY 2 | LINE UP CHALLENGE

Give students challenges to organize themselves in a line. Each round, only one student may talk; everyone else must communicate silently.

Example Challenges

- Line up in birthday order.
- Line up by height.
- Line up by last name in alphabetical order.

Optional Variations

- Time each round to see if they can beat their previous time.
- Allow two people to speak at once so they must work together.