



COMMUNICATOR GUIDE

Hello, My Name Is / Week 2

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME

BOTTOM LINE

Be kind to yourself.

GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

To help students understand that how they treat themselves changes how they see themselves, and to start being kind with their self-talk.

SCRIPTURE

Those who are kind benefit themselves, but the cruel bring ruin on themselves (Proverbs 11:17 NIV).

But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips (Colossians 3:8 NIV).

Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things (Colossians 3:2 NIV).

CONTEXT OF SCRIPTURE

In the *Proverbs* passage Solomon is basically saying that things go well for kind people, but not so much for cruel people. In the *Colossians* verses we're told to rid ourselves of bad virtues. While most of us get this and work to apply these verses to the way we treat others, we rarely consider these verses when we think about the way we treat ourselves.

TEACHING OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION

Wouldn't it be awesome if people were just honest about themselves the first day?

What if the mean guy at school was adopted by your parents and moved into your house?

TENSION

Well, I hate to be the bearer of bad news, but this is actually a reality for most of us.

Who do you spend more time around than anyone else? Who's there with you in every class, in between classes, and before and after school? The answer is you.

Most of us say things to ourselves that we would never say to anyone else.

It's a record that plays in our heads without us even trying.

What happens when we fill in that blank of "Hello, name is ____" with negative messages?



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TEACHING OUTLINE

TRUTH

Solomon basically says that things go well for kind people, but not so much for cruel people.

We've never considered that the cruel things we say about ourselves and think about ourselves have the potential to ruin us.

But when you get in the habit of being cruel to you, it can bring some ruin upon you.

On the flip side, Solomon says that being kind can benefit you.

Here's a simple way to remember it: be kind to yourself.

God, who created oceans and snowflakes and outer space—that same God is reflected IN YOU.

What you say about you reflects what you believe about God, & it impacts how you treat others.

APPLICATION

Even if you agree that you need to be kinder to yourself, it's not always easy to change how you think, is it?

Paul isn't referring to these things only in relation to how we treat others. This includes the way we talk to ourselves, too.

When you find yourself saying things to yourself that you'd never say to anyone else, you've probably crossed the line from kind to cruel.

How do you get rid of something? Well, one of the best ways is to replace it with something else.

According to Paul, you can choose to place your mind somewhere else.

You can't control when a thought pops up, but you can absolutely decide whether it's worth "setting your mind" on it all day.

LANDING

When you take your mind off of you and set it on truths about the One who made you, it will lead you to be kinder to yourself and others in the process.

As you head out today, I want you to think about the way you talk to yourself.

INTERACTIVE

The Interactive for this message happens during the Tension. Get a large, white dry erase board and write, "Hello, My Name Is _____," on it. At this point in the Tension, when you get to the bulleted list of words like *awkward*, *stupid*, *worthless*, *ugly*, write those words in the blank on your

white board. By slowing down this moment in the Tension, you're giving students a chance to feel the tension and identify with some of the words you write. Refer back to the board throughout the remainder of your message.



TEACHING SCRIPT

Hello, My Name Is / Week 2

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BOTTOM LINE

BE KIND TO YOURSELF.

INTRODUCTION

2 MINUTES

So. The first day of school. It's always kind of the same, isn't it? You go from class to class, and nearly every one of them makes you introduce yourself in some way. Actually, that was always my least favorite part of the day. Teachers would make us do some variation of exercises like this . . .

"Everyone say your name and a fruit that begins with the same letter."

Why do teachers make you do that? How is it helpful to know that the guy three rows away is Austin Apple or Austin Avocado?

And for the record, is an Avocado even a fruit? Actually, yes. Weird. Anyway.

You know what would really be awesome? If people ditched the fruit and were just honest about themselves the first day. Like, if someone said . . .

- "I'm Austin. Forget the fruit, I'm the guy you'll want to do group projects with because I'm smart and I like doing all the work."
- Or, "I'm Bailee. I'm the one who will talk a lot and get the teacher off-track so we don't have to work. You're welcome."
- Or, "Hey, I'm Max. I'm the mean guy. I'm going to make fun of whatever you do and make you feel terrible about yourself."

Wouldn't people be easier to remember that way? And wouldn't it be great to know who the mean person is in advance, so you can sit as far away from him as possible?

Speaking of the mean guy, imagine if he was in ALL of your classes. In fact, imagine if you had to walk next to him from class to class. And you had to ride in the car with him to and from school. And he was your partner in every group project. And he sat by you at lunch every day. And his locker was next to yours.

Stressed out yet? Okay, let's take it up a notch.

What if the mean guy at school who says awful things about you, makes fun of you, and tells you that you're stupid? And what if he was adopted by your parents and moved into your house?

TENSION

2 MINUTES

Sounds like a nightmare, right?

Well, I hate to be the bearer of bad news, but this is actually a reality for most of us.

Think about it: Who do you spend more time around than anyone else? Who's there with you in every class, in between classes, and before and after school?

You already know where I'm going with this:

The answer is you. YOU are with YOU 100% of the time.

And you may have never thought about this before, but no one on the planet is meaner to you than you.



INTERACTIVE

The Interactive for this message happens right here in the script. Check out the Communicator Guide that precedes this script to find out what to do here.

In fact, **most of us say things to ourselves that we would never say to anyone else.** Maybe some of these sound familiar:

- *You're awkward.*
- *You're stupid.*
- *You're worthless.*
- *You're ugly.*
- *No one likes you.*
- *I hate you.*
- *I wish you were smarter, prettier, funnier, or just normal.*

You may have your own variation of how you say things like this to yourself. But outside of rare exceptions, can you imagine talking like this to someone else? Of course not! But most of us are this tough on ourselves when it comes to our self-talk. **We're all super-critical of ourselves.**

It's not something we think about. We don't wake up and set a reminder in our phones that says, "Call yourself stupid today." It just happens. It's a record that plays in our heads without us even trying.

That's one of the reasons we're doing this series. In part one, we talked about how our identity is kind of like walking around with a nametag on that says, "Hello, my name is _____." How we fill in that blank is our identity. We're not talking about your actual name; we're referring to who you believe you are.

But what happens when we fill in that blank with negative messages? Particularly, negative messages that aren't even true?

TRUTH

4 MINUTES

Today we're going to look at the book of *Proverbs* from the Old Testament. *Proverbs* is a collection of wise sayings. So even if you don't necessarily believe in God, it's worth your time to check it out because it will give you all kinds of insights on how to be better at life. What we're looking at today will give you an example of what I mean. Check this out:

Those who are kind benefit themselves, but the cruel bring ruin on themselves (Proverbs 11:17 NIV).

Solomon basically says that things go well for kind people, but not so much for cruel people.

We get this. Most of us agree that people should treat others well, and that people who are kind to others benefit themselves.

But for some reason, we don't think of applying this to ourselves. **We've never considered that the cruel things we say about ourselves and think about ourselves have the potential to ruin us.**

Some of you do this so often that it's become a habit. You're cruel to yourself every time you . . .

- Finish a game.
- Look in a mirror.
- Turn in schoolwork.
- Hang out in a crowd.
- Try on clothes.
- Check out someone else's Instagram.

And you do this so often, you don't even notice it anymore. And you don't feel like it's a big deal, because you're not saying these things out loud. And it's not like you're hurting someone else.

But when you get in the habit of being cruel to you, it can bring some ruin upon you.

That sounds a bit extreme. But think about what happens when you do this on a regular basis. It can . . .

- **Stress you out.** When you keep telling yourself that something's wrong with you, you wear yourself out mentally and physically.
- **Lead you to make bad decisions.** When you're cruel to yourself, you're more likely to do things that aren't good for you. Some of you hurt yourselves or use vices or addictions to feel good about yourself. When you say cruel things to yourself, you're more likely to *do* cruel things to yourself.
- **Keep you self-consumed.** Even if you aren't making bad decisions, being cruel to yourself and saying bad things about yourself on a regular basis forces you to be focused on one person—you. The more you focus on what's wrong with you, the less you're able to pay attention to anyone else.

In other words, it holds you back.

On the flip side, Solomon says that being kind can benefit you.

- When you're kind to yourself, you have more confidence.
- You treat others better, because you're not constantly looking for a way to feel better about yourself.
- You seem more mature, and you make better decisions.

In other words, your life is better.

Here's a simple way to remember it:

Be kind to yourself.

And this is about more than just having a healthy self-esteem. It's about more than how you talk to yourself or what you think about yourself. It's an even bigger deal. Because you were made in the image of God, you aren't just *you*. **God, who created oceans and snowflakes and outer space—that same God is reflected IN YOU.** That's true for every human being.

So what you say about you reflects what you believe about God, and it impacts how you treat others. Your identity is connected to your faith, and it's also connected to your relationships.

So when you are cruel to you, you are criticizing the work of the Creator of the Universe. It's like you're saying, "God, you got it all wrong when you made me in Your image. You made a big mistake!"

By the way, God can handle that type of honesty. He's not insecure! But the problem is that it's a lie—there's no shred of truth in it! And not only will it affect your identity, it will impact your faith and your relationships with others.

In the same way, when you are kind and compassionate to yourself, you're recognizing that God doesn't make junk. When you're kind to yourself, it's like you're reinforcing the truth that God made you.

APPLICATION

4 MINUTES

Of course, there's an obvious problem, isn't there? Even if you agree that you need to be kinder to yourself, it's not always easy to change how you think, is it?

Maybe that's why thousands of years after Solomon wrote *Proverbs*, the apostle Paul gave us an idea of how to begin changing the way we think. In a letter to Jesus-followers in the city of Colossae, he wrote:

But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips (Colossians 3:8 NIV).

Like the verse from *Proverbs*, we naturally read these verses and only think about them in relation to other people. But Paul isn't referring to these things only in relation to how we treat others. This includes the way we talk to ourselves, too. **He's telling us to get rid of things like anger and rage toward ourselves as well.**

It's a normal thing to be aware of your flaws and shortcomings. Everybody knows things about their own physical appearance, talent, or behavior that they want to change. And in some ways, it's healthy to recognize things that need to improve. But when recognizing flaws in yourself leads to you having anger and rage toward yourself, that isn't how God made you to live.

Deciding to improve or get better is good. But being cruel to yourself isn't. **When you find yourself saying things to yourself that you'd never say to anyone else, you've probably crossed the line from kind to cruel.** And that, according to Paul, is something you need to get rid of.

One more thing about that—track with me for a moment. When you recognize that you've been being cruel to yourself, don't be cruel to yourself *because* you were cruel to yourself! Does that make sense? In that moment, just acknowledge a very simple fact: Your life will be better if you're kind to yourself. Your life will improve if you get rid of anger, rage, and cruelty toward you.

And how do you get rid of something? **Well, one of the best ways is to replace it with something else.** A few verses earlier, Paul gives us an idea of what that would look like . . .

Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things (Colossians 3:2 NIV).

Pay attention to the first word in that verse . . . "Set."

TEACHING SCRIPT

According to Paul, you can choose to place your mind somewhere else. Maybe you've never realized this before, but you have control over what you think about.

You can't control when a thought pops up, but you can absolutely decide whether it's worth "setting your mind" on it all day.

That may not seem like a big deal to you, but trust Solomon and Paul on this: IT IS! In that moment, know that being cruel to yourself can ruin you—it can hurt you and your future. The opposite will invite you to a better life.

But Paul isn't just saying, "Think happy thoughts and tell yourself you're awesome." This isn't about self-esteem. Paul is specific when he tells us to set our minds on "things above."

- Instead of being consumed with you, focus on the One who made you.
- If you don't feel great, remember that He is great.
- If you don't feel strong, smart, or capable, remember that He is.

When you feel like your life is worthless, remember that He sent Jesus *because* you're so valuable to Him.

LANDING

1 MINUTE

When you take your mind off of you and set it on truths about the One who made you, it will lead you to be kinder to yourself and others in the process. And according to Solomon, that will only make things better for you.

As you head out today, I want you to think about the way you talk to yourself. Imagine if you said those same things to a friend. Would they come across as kind or cruel? Would they be considered helpful or hateful? If they're negative, maybe it's time to set your mind on things above and begin replacing lies with truth. And the truth is, you are created in the image of a God who is crazy about you. And He wants you to **be kind to yourself!**



TRANSITION INTO SMALL GROUPS
