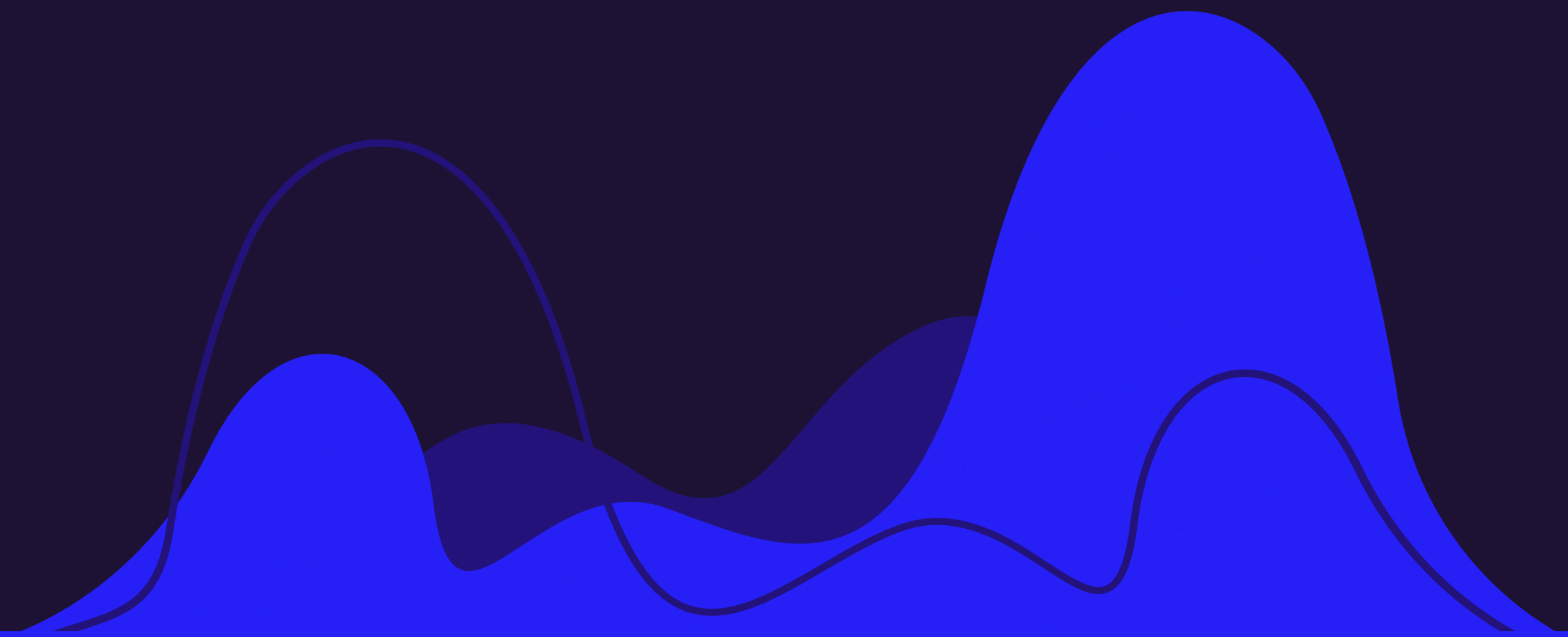


From The Ground Up

Discovering The Secret Of
Spiritual Growth



Week #3: The Distracted Heart



Contents

How To Lead Your YCI Club:

● **Play**

Play a game together.

● **Pray**

Spend time praising and thanking God in prayer.

● **Grow**

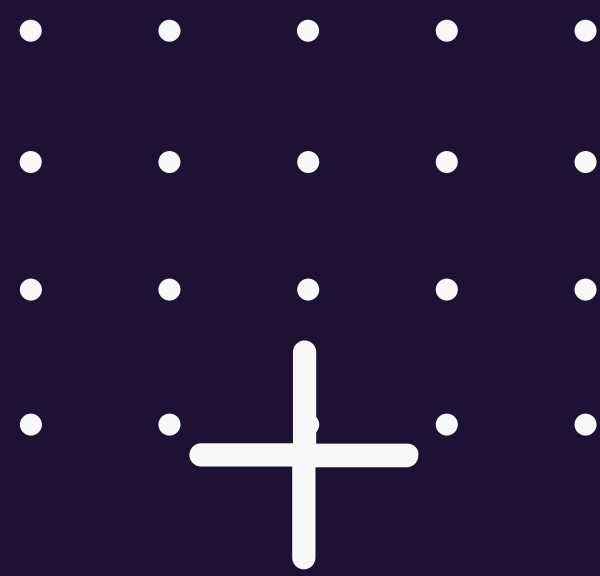
Learn from Scripture about who God says He is and how we should respond to Him.

● **Go**

Look for opportunities to share the Gospel, and serve others in your community with your YCI club members.



NOMIS SAYS



As the name suggests, the rules of "Simon Says" apply (but in reverse)! First, one person should be chosen to be "Nomis" (Simon backwards). Everyone else in the YCI club should find a space in the room where they are able to move around. Nomis is responsible to give commands for the rest of the room to follow, but they should only obey if the command is preceded by "Nomis says". To make it even more difficult, each participant should do *the opposite* of each command. For example, if the command is "Nomis says raise your hand", you should not raise your hand. If the command is "Nomis says don't raise your hand", you should raise your hand. If you make a mistake, you are out of the game. The last person standing is the winner!



Ask God For His Will To Be Done In These Areas:



Club Time

Pray that God will speak to everyone in the room through His Word.



Group Needs

Take time to discuss and pray over the personal needs and requests of those in attendance.



School Community

Ask God to move in situations that are unique to your school and community.

What Is The "Secret" Of Spiritual Growth?

In Mark 4:1-9, Jesus shares a simple parable that has profound implications. If the disciples don't understand this parable, they won't understand any of His teachings (Mark 4:13).

In His explanation in Mark 4:14-20, Jesus highlights three primary elements that are essential to our growth as Christians:

1) **The Sower:** God is the ultimate creator and sustainer of life, and He will forever be the "Sower". Jesus Himself is the fullness of the Godhead in bodily form (Col. 2:9).

Without surrendering to God, we have no hope of growing in Him.

2) **The Seed:** This is the Word of God (Jesus Himself revealed in the Bible) given by the Sower. God's Word will remain steadfast forever (Is. 40:8). It is the *only* source of absolute truth, and it holds the answers to the questions of our world.

3) **The Soil:** This represents the heart (mind, will and emotions) of the person that the Sower (God) sows the Seed (the Word) into. This is the *only* ingredient of spiritual growth that is within our power to develop.

In each installment of this curriculum, we will look at one of the four "heart" conditions (described using soil) to discover how we can better understand God's Word and walk in our purpose!



The Distracted Heart Mark 4:7 / 18-19 (ESV)

The Illustration

"7 Other seed fell among thorns,
and the thorns grew up and choked
it, and it yielded no grain."

(Mark 4:7 ESV)

The Explanation

"18 And others are the ones sown
among thorns. They are those who
hear the word, 19 but the cares of the
world and the deceitfulness of riches
and the desires for other things enter in
and choke the word, and it proves
unfruitful."

(Mark 4:18-19 ESV)



What Distracts Us From God's Word?



The Cares Of The World

Once we place our faith in Jesus, we become citizens of God's kingdom (Jn. 18:36). However, even though Heaven is now our eternal home, God has placed us on earth for a brief period of time so that we can encourage others to enter His kingdom. While we are here, it can be easy to allow the cares of this broken world (sickness, division, pain, etc.) to distract us from our calling. Our hope is in the fact that this is only our temporary home (2 Cor. 5:1)!



The Deceitfulness Of Riches

There is nothing wrong with *having nice things*. The problem arises when *nice things have us*. If we are not careful, we will begin to place our trust in riches (money and possessions) rather than the finished work of Jesus Christ. "Things" are temporary, but God's Word is eternal!



The Desire For Other Things

The enemy wants us to believe that there is always *something else* we need in order to be complete and happy. It is essential for us to remember that "Godliness with contentment is great gain" (1 Tim. 6:6). When we recognize that Jesus is all we need, we will be able to focus on His Word!



Let's Talk About This

Small Group Questions If Time Allows

Question 1



What is one thing that "jumped out" to you while reading these verses?

Question 2



Can you think of a "care of this world" that distracts you from God's Word?

Question 3



What are some practical things we can do to maintain a spirit of gratitude for what God has already given us?



Consider This Before You Leave

Big Idea

When our attention is consumed by the cares of the world, the deceitfulness of riches and the desire for other things, we lose sight of (and disobey) God's Word.

Sharing Truth

Who is someone in your life that needs to hear about what we discussed today? Pray for them, and find time this week to encourage them.

Meeting Needs

What is something your YCI club can do to show God's love this semester?



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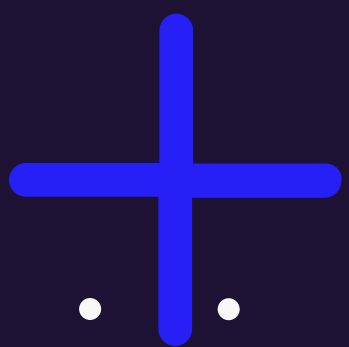
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