



COMMUNICATOR GUIDE

Vibes / Week 1

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME

BOTTOM LINE

Because of Jesus, emotions don't have to be the boss of you.

GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

To help students identify ways emotions can be good and bad and remind them that trusting Jesus to lead them is healthier than being controlled by their emotions.

SCRIPTURE

"Why don't your disciples live according to the tradition of the elders instead of eating their food with defiled hands?" (Mark 7:5 NIV).

"Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written: 'These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teaching are merely human rules'" (Mark 7:6b-7 NIV).

"You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to human traditions" (Mark 7:8 NIV).

"For it is from within, out of a person's heart, that evil thoughts come" (Mark 7:21a NIV).

"Come to me all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28 NIV).

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid" (John 14:27 NIV).

TEACHING OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION

- **What do you think of when you hear the word control?**
- Because we're all human, we hate the idea of being under someone's control or being told what to do.

TENSION

- As much as we resist the idea of being under control, in some way or another, we are all controlled by emotions.
- When our emotions take control, we don't always make the best decisions.

- What's the one emotion that—when you feel it—it almost always seems to take over?
- We've probably all learned—in some way or another—how to monitor this emotion.
- What if there was a solution that went beyond just monitoring?

TRUTH

- Jesus invites people to do something that goes way beyond monitoring emotions.
- *"Why don't your disciples live according to the tradition of the elders instead of eating their food with defiled hands?" (Mark 7:5 NIV).*
- The Pharisees were accusing Jesus of breaking the law of the elders, which was a law that was passed down by word of mouth.
- *"Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written: 'These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are merely human rules'" (Mark 7:6-7 NIV).*
- *"You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to human traditions" (Mark 7:8 NIV).*
- *"Listen to me, everyone, and understand this. Nothing outside of a person can defile them by going into them. Rather, it is what comes out of a person that defiles them" (Mark 7:14b-15 NIV).*
- The fact that the disciples didn't wash their hands doesn't make God mad at them.
- God gave people the law because He had their best interests in mind. He wasn't trying to keep Himself happy by controlling and manipulating their behavior.
- We are in conflict with God when what comes out of our mouths hurt the people God loves.
- *"For it is from within, out of a person's heart, that evil thoughts come" (Mark 7:21a NIV).*
- Everything begins with a thought.
- Emotions aren't bad, but when they control us, they aren't helpful anymore, and we have to rethink how we're handling them.

APPLICATION

- Because of Jesus, emotions don't have to be the boss of you.
- Jesus can give you the strength to stand up to that emotion that's trying to control you.
- Try this:
 1. Try to think of the top one or two emotions that you have the hardest time controlling.
 2. Start checking in with yourself.
- The feelings we hold onto overflow into the lives of others.
- Jesus was meant to be the boss of us. And He's a way better boss.
- *"Come to me all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest". (Matthew 11:28 NIV).*
- *"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid." (John 14:27 NIV).*

LANDING

- What if you were confident that the emotions and moods and vibes that control you are no longer your boss? **How different would your life be?**
- Be real when it comes to your emotions with someone.

INTERACTIVE

The Interactive happens in the Application section.



TEACHING SCRIPT

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BOTTOM LINE

Because of Jesus, emotions don't have to be the boss of you.

INTRODUCTION

1 MINUTE

When I say the word control, what comes to mind? Probably nothing good, right? Most of us don't have all the positive vibes when we think about that word. Why? Because who wants to be controlled? Nobody! Who wants to be told what to do? Again, nobody!

In fact, I bet you feel that more than anyone else. Between curfews and driving restrictions and attendance policies and athletics rules and that one teacher who literally wants to control when people go to the bathroom, I imagine it feels like everywhere you turn someone is trying to have control over you...and that is supremely annoying.

I think most of us would agree that we don't love the idea of being under someone's control or being told what to do. We all want to do what we want to do when we want to do it. It's part of being human.

TENSION

2 MINUTES

But here's the thing. As much as we resist the idea of being under control, all of us *are*—every single one of us. We would probably never say it this way, but all of us are controlled, in some way or another, by our emotions, our moods, our vibes.

If you've ever been around young kids, you know this is true. Take away their cookie or ask them to share their toy, and you'll feel the bad vibes quickly! But it's not just a child thing. This is a teenage thing and an adult thing, too. Think about it: how many times have you seen an adult let their emotions get the best of them? Probably more than a few times.

And, I'm guessing you can remember a situation where your own emotions got you in trouble. Maybe...

- You got into an argument with a parent, and you said or did something in the middle of that argument that led to you getting grounded. Your anger took over.

- You said some pretty terrible things about another person because jealousy took over. And you look back and think, “What was I doing? That doesn’t even sound like me!”

Sometimes our emotions take control. And when that happens, we don’t always make the best decisions.

In fact, before we go any further, I want you to take a minute and think of a negative emotion that has the most control over you. What’s the one emotion that—when you feel it—it almost always seems to take over? What’s the emotion that shows up the most often, sometimes without you even realizing it?

- Anger?
- Anxiety?
- Jealousy?
- Loneliness?
- Guilt?

This list could go on. We all have one.

But chances are, we’ve learned—in some way or another—how to monitor this emotion. We can cover it up when we need to. We may slam the door when we’re angry at home, but when a teacher makes us mad, we don’t slam the door. We may let jealousy control us when it comes to an ex, but we don’t do anything stalker-ish about it (or at least we shouldn’t).

So we can monitor our feelings and emotions to a certain degree. Sometimes it works. Sometimes it doesn’t. But is “monitoring” the solution? What if there was a better way? What if there was a solution that went beyond just monitoring?

TRUTH

8 MINUTES

The thing that I love about Jesus is that so much of what He teaches is helpful for everyone, whether you consider yourself a Christian or not. This topic is one of those areas.

And He invites people to do something that goes way beyond monitoring emotions. The cool thing is that if what He says is true, then it has the potential to make us free. And isn’t this what we all really want? **Freedom.** We don’t want to be controlled by anyone or anything, including our emotions. And it seems like Jesus is offering a solution to that.

So this passage begins with Jesus and His disciples—which were like His 12 closest friends. It’s found in the gospel of Mark. The Pharisees, who were known for being really religious, and the teachers of the law, who were also known for being religious, asked Jesus a question...

“Why don’t your disciples live according to the tradition of the elders instead of eating their food with defiled hands?” (Mark 7:5 NIV).

In other words, why don’t your disciples wash their hands before they eat?

Gross, right? But you have to understand that back then, there was very little water. And when you did have some, you weren’t thrilled at the idea of pouring it all over your hands. But it was bigger than hygiene. The Pharisees were bothered because of what it meant religiously. **They were accusing Jesus of breaking the law of the elders, which was a law that was passed down by word of mouth.** That’s important. Don’t forget that.

There was also the written law, which Moses received from God. It included the Ten Commandments, as well as 103 other commandments. And then there was the law that was passed down by word of mouth. And it was tricky because sometimes the oral law was in conflict with the written law.

The whole situation was confusing.

So Jesus answers in sort of a genius way. Instead of coming for them directly, He quotes the prophet, Isaiah...

"Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written: 'These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teaching are merely human rules'" (Mark 7:6-7 NIV).

And then, in case it wasn't totally clear what Jesus was getting at, He sums it up this way...

"You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to human traditions" (Mark 7:8 NIV).

In other words, Jesus is saying, "You're not trying to lead people closer to God. You're looking to make power plays that keep you in charge and keep other people under your control. And that's not the way God works."

But Jesus isn't done...

"Listen to me, everyone, and understand this. Nothing outside of a person can defile them by going into them. Rather, it is what comes out of a person that defiles them" (Mark 7:14b-15 NIV).

Meaning, the fact that the disciples didn't wash their hands doesn't make God mad at them. God is bigger and better than that.

Back in the day, God gave people the law because He had their best interests in mind. He wasn't trying to keep Himself happy by controlling and manipulating their behavior. And Jesus basically says, "Don't you see that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and then out of the body?" It's like a biology lesson: what goes in must come out.

But what comes OUT of a person's mouth? Those are the things that defile them—which basically just means things that put them in conflict with God. We aren't in conflict with God because we accidentally eat the wrong thing. We are in conflict with God when what comes out of our mouths hurts the people God loves. And spoiler alert: God loves everyone. That was the whole theme of Jesus' teaching—that God loves you, the person beside you, in front of you, behind you, the person next to you at school, beside you in the car, in your neighborhood, and on and on. God loves people.

In fact, you could say that everything Jesus taught really centered on that idea—how we love God by loving people. But we're not going to stop there. Because when Jesus talks about what puts us in conflict with God, He talks about how the source of our offensive words and deeds is inside of us. It's the emotions that we're trying to monitor and control.

This is what Jesus said...

"For it is from within, out of a person's heart, that evil thoughts come" (Mark 7:21a NIV).

Haven't you found this to be true? Everything begins with a thought. Jesus mentions murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, and folly. Every one of those things begins with a thought. And that last word he says—folly—that really sums it up. Folly is just bad judgment, and your greatest regrets with friends and family were the result of bad judgment. Anytime you look back and think, "How could I have been so stupid? Why would I do such a thing? Or say something like that?"

That's folly. And Jesus is saying, all that stuff starts in your thoughts and emotions. And He cares about what could happen as a result of it.

And here's how this is connected to what we're going to be talking about for the next couple of weeks. The negative emotion that we try to monitor...

- The anger that we don't seem to have control over.
- The FOMO that gets us in trouble and causes regret.
- The fear that we look at and wish we could just chill out a little bit

It comes from our internal environment—our emotions.

So for the next couple of weeks, we're going to start paying more attention to the world inside of ourselves. And we're going to try and form a habit of telling ourselves that it doesn't have to control us anymore. Maybe it controlled us in the past. We let it lead us toward making mistakes and hurting others. But not anymore. We're going to stop giving it that type of power.

Now, here's the reality: Emotions aren't always bad! Emotions are part of being human, and they help us figure out what's right and wrong around us. But, when they control us and make us do things we don't *want* to do when they keep us from living the full life Jesus intends for us, then our emotions aren't helpful anymore, and we have to rethink how we're handling them.

APPLICATION

5.5 MINUTES

To do that, I want us to remember one simple truth...

Because of Jesus, emotions don't have to be the boss of you.

Jesus is a way better boss than any negative emotions you feel. And He can give you the strength to stand up to that emotion that's trying to control you.



Say this:

Now, this may sound a little silly, but I want you to imagine saying this in your own mind. Ready. Here it goes.

- *"You're not the boss of me."*

Some of you guys just laughed in your mind. Ok, for real this time. Not out loud. Just in your head. Ready? One, two, three...

- *"You're not the boss of me."*
- *"Anger, you're not the boss of me. Even if I have a right to be angry, anger, you're not the boss of me."*
- *"Jealousy, you're not the boss of me. Even if she has the GPA I want, and he has the family I want, jealousy, you don't get to tell me how I treat her."*

- *“Fear, you aren’t the boss of me. Even if I’m nervous, what people think of me, nervous to show up, nervous about failing, nervous to try, fear, you don’t get to decide what I do next.”*

The truth is, this doesn’t come naturally. We live in a culture that doesn’t really help us see and talk about the emotions we have going on inside of us in a healthy way. We can be made to feel weak or overly-sensitive for talking about our emotions. But here’s the truth: It’s good for all of us to learn how to name what emotions we’re experiencing, and then learn how to keep them from controlling us. Because when our emotions control us, we end up doing or saying things that hurt ourselves or others.

Two things I’d love for you to try...

1. **Try to think of the top one or two emotions that you have the hardest time controlling.** These are the emotions that control you more than you’d like. Maybe it’s anger, fear, insecurity, jealousy, greed, anxiety, etc. What is the one emotion that no matter how hard you try, it keeps showing up?
2. **Start checking in with yourself.** This week, I want you to begin asking yourself at the end of each day, “How am I really doing?” As you look back on the day, I want you to pay attention to the emotions that were a big part of it. Were they positive or negative? If there were some negative ones, are you still holding on to them? What caused you to feel them? Was it a person or a situation? Pay attention to the emotions you are holding on to. Are you mad at someone? Did someone say or do something that hurt you?

As uncomfortable as this may feel to do, there’s a reason we start here. Because the feelings we hold onto overflow into the lives of others. And that’s a big deal. We need to figure out what caused them and how we can handle them. We weren’t made to ignore emotions, and we weren’t made to become numb to them. If we ignore them, they come back stronger than ever and control us. If we numb the negative emotions, we numb the positive ones as well.

God didn’t create us to not feel. Feeling is good—even the difficult stuff. We just have to figure out what to do next.

If you’re a Jesus follower, this is a big deal, because emotions aren’t meant to be the boss of us. Jesus was meant to be the boss of us. And He’s a way better boss. How do I know? In the gospel of Matthew, Jesus said,

“Come to me all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.” (Matthew 11:28 NIV).

Another time, Jesus said,

“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.” (John 14:27 NIV).

In other words, Jesus is a way better boss than any vibe or emotion we feel. He’s worth listening to when it comes to how we handle the emotions we have. And if you follow Him, you’ll find out for yourself. Remember, because of Jesus, emotions don’t have to be the boss of you.

LANDING

1 MINUTE

Imagine if this actually became a reality. What if you were confident that the emotions and moods and vibes that control you are no longer your boss? How different would your life be?

Or think about it this way: how different would your home look if the other people in your family didn't let their emotions control them? If your mom didn't let fear control her?
Or your dad didn't let anger control him?
Or your stepbrother didn't let jealousy control him?

How different would it be?

I'm guessing a lot. I'm also guessing it isn't easy. That's why I want to encourage you to talk to someone—your pastor, a parent, a friend who's a believer, a small group leader, or a trusted adult—to figure out how the real-life stuff we talk about can actually happen in our regular lives. So this week, I want you to be real when it comes to your emotions with someone. I think you'll be glad you did.



TRANSITION INTO SMALL GROUPS
