

The Pause: Learning To Seek God © 2010, 2011 by youthministry360

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## STEP ONE.

Every journey begins with a single step. And you're about to embark upon a journey, of sorts. This journey will lead you to look at your life and faith from perspectives you might not have ever considered before.

Like all journeys, it has the potential to be an awesome experience. But a lot of the value of this experience depends on you.

#### HAVE YOU PREPARED FOR THE JOURNEY?

Ask yourself: Am I in the right mindset? Is my heart prepared to hear God's voice? Am I willing to be changed? If you can't answer "yes" to these questions, this journey might not be nearly as spectacular as it could be. If you need to, take a moment and silently talk to God in prayer. Ask God to give you a heart that is open to His leading.

#### YOU'RE HOLDING YOUR MAP

This book you're holding is the roadmap for your journey. It will help guide your experiences. Hold on to it. Write your name and the date in the front. If this journey turns out to be as meaningful as it could potentially be, you'll want to look back and remember this time in your life.

#### MAKE AN IMPACT, BE IMPACTED

As you start your journey, keep your eyes and ears open for those valuable moments where God seems to speak to you. But don't miss the chance you have to impact your fellow travelers. And to be impacted by them. Your friends are with you in this experience. Be open to what God is doing in and through them, and how He might be using them to speak to you. And vice versa.

Your journey is beginning.

Be prepared to be changed . . .



## The Pause SESSION 1 INTRO

What do you do with all your free time?

If you're like most teenagers, you're saying, "WHAT FREE TIME?"

Your generation is busier and more involved than any generation before you. School, work, clubs, sports, friends, band, church . . . you name it, you're involved in it.

And when you do have down time, you're watching YouTube™ on your phone, playing video games, texting your friends, hitting Facebook. . . all while watching some reality TV show.

Let's just be honest: You're not finding a lot of downtime to spend growing your relationship with God.

And when you do have time, there is so much "noise" from all the entertainment at your fingertips that you can't focus.

# THIS STUDY IS ABOUT SLOWING DOWN AND FOCUSING.

THIS STUDY IS ABOUT HITTING PAUSE.

YOU'RE ABOUT TO LEARN WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO MAKE TIME TO GROW YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD. AND YOU'RE ABOUT TO LEARN EXACTLY HOW TO DO THIS.

ARE YOU READY?

LET'S GET STARTED . . .

## Large Group SESSION 1 NOTES

Session 1 Title: Hitting Pause

These two pages are designed for you to take notes during Large Group Sessions. The stuff you're learning tends to build on itself over the next few sessions. So, even if you're not much of a note taker, you might want to at least jot down what you think is important.

### Try writing down:

- Any specific teaching points
- Quotes that make you think
- Verse references for Scripture passages
- Anything you have a question about

The Pause Student Book is equipped with space to take notes in Large Group Session.

These pages are intentionally left blank.

## Small Group SESSION 1 INTRO

You've been introduced to this concept of hitting pause.

Hopefully, you have begun to catch a glimpse of how vital hitting pause is to your relationship with God.

Hopefully you have grasped that hitting pause and making time for God is vital to your faith life.

But here's the deal . . . Until you truly begin to understand and value just how important it is to hit pause on a regular basis, you will never change your behavior.

You have to believe something is important before you do something about it.

So, the question is . . . Right now . . . today . . . is growing closer to God important to you?

Before you answer, what do your actions say?

If you want to grow closer to God, you're in the right place. Get ready to be challenged. But get ready to be equipped, too.

What are you waiting on? Let's get started . . .



### **SESSION 1: GETTING STA**

Work with your small group leader to respond to the following stats.

Are you busy? Overcommitted? Feel like you have a lot going on?

You're not alone. Research conducted on US teenagers paints an interesting picture of your life. You're busy. And you're stressed. Check out the stats below: Seventy-eight percent of teenagers identify schoolwork as the number one source of stress in their lives. FORTY-ONE PERCENT OF TWELETH GRADERS PARTICIPATE IN SOME FORM OF PERFORMING ARTS, SUCH AS DANCE, BAND, ART, OR THEATER. for work.

Fifty percent of all 16- to 19-year-olds have a job or are looking

NEARLY EIGHT TEENAGERS SCHOOL

At least when you're not in school or at work or at practice, you have time to rest. Um . . . not so much.

Check out this quote from a major study on teenagers and media use: The average American teenager "spends practically every waking minute—except for the time in school—using a smart phone, computer, television or other electronic device."

Fifty percent of teenagers send 50 or more text messages a day. Thirty percent send more than 100 texts a day.

Seventy-six percent of all teenagers own an iPod or an MP3 player. ON THE AVERAGE DAY, THE AVERAGE 18-YEAR-OLD SPENDS: • 4.5 hours watching TV . . . • 2.5 hours listening to music or audio . . . • 1.5 hours on the computer . . . • A little over an hour playing video games . . . • Around half an hour reading and half an hour watching movies . . . • For a total of 10 hours and 45 minutes of media exposure a day.

### **SESSION 1: DIGGING IN**

**Ready to learn about hitting Pause?** Follow your leader's instructions to work through these questions with your group.

Describe what happens when you "hit pause."

## LET'S SEE WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM LOOKING AT JESUS' ATTITUDE TOWARD HITTING PAUSE.

Read Mark 1:32-38. Then answer the following questions:

- How does Mark describe the place that Jesus went?
- What did Jesus do when He was alone?

Read Mark 6:45-47. Then answer the following questions:

- Describe exactly what verses 45-47 show Jesus doing.
- So, let's summarize these verses. What general characteristics of hitting pause can we learn from looking at Jesus' example?

## NOW LET'S SEE WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM OTHER PEOPLE IN THE BIBLE ABOUT SEEKING GOD BY HITTING PAUSE:

Read Psalm 5:3. Then answer the following questions:

- What do we know about the priority David put on hitting pause?
- Describe what we know about David's attitude as he spent time with God.

Read Daniel 6:10. Then answer the following question:

 What can we tell about how important Daniel's relationship with God was? Read Acts 10:9. Then answer the following questions:

 What does Peter's habits and attitude toward hitting pause have in common with these other accounts?

#### FINALLY, LET'S BRING ALL OF THIS HOME . .

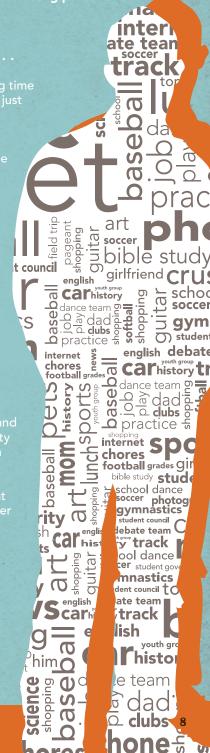
 If you compared your attitude toward making time to be with God with the other examples you just read, how do you stack up?

- What is the most notable difference in how you approach "hitting pause," and how these individuals approached it?
- As we begin to really consider how to apply these concepts in our lives, we have to believe they are important.
  - In your mind, why is it important to make time for relationship with God in solitude and silence?
  - o What is the purpose?

### How do the following verses speak to God's purpose for our lives?

"You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men. You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven." (Matt. 5:13-16)

How does knowing how and when to "hit pause" help you fulfill your God-given purpose?



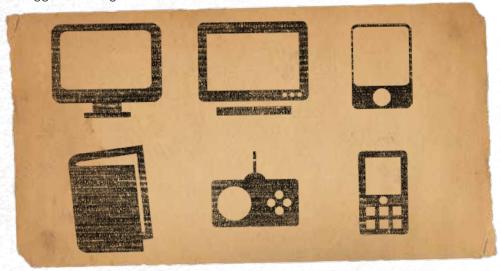
### **SESSION 1: WRAPPING UP**

What's in your way? Read this quote with your group and consider the following questions.

Our religious activities should be ordered in such a way as to leave plenty of time for the cultivation of the fruits of solitude and silence. A.W. Tozer

- Does this describe your spiritual life? (Don't feel bad if it doesn't. You're not alone.)
- Describe your spiritual life in two words:
- Why is it so stinking hard to just slow down and make room to be still and quiet?
- Think about this: what if God has been speaking to you, but you haven't heard Him because you haven't been listening?

Think for a minute. . . . What are the "noisy" things in your life that get in the way of spending silent time alone with God? Circle the objects below that present the biggest challenge.



Here's a question: If you know that these things keep you from silent time with God, why don't you do something about it?

Try this: Make a commitment to take a 15- to 30-minute break from the two or three biggest noise makers in your life. Use the silence to study the Bible or talk with God in prayer. You'll be surprised at how rewarding it is.