

Identity MS | REAL LIFE IS FOUND IN JESUS

The Originals

When God made you, He didn't mass-produce you. He formed you, fearfully and wonderfully, as His own masterpiece. The world will tell you that you've got to copy someone else to fit in — wear their armor, chase their standard, live their story. But God says you belong as you are, because He made you on purpose. And when you live as His original, you discover what His Word has always said: You are chosen, created, and never alone. Our prayer is that students will see it, feel it, and believe it—they are chosen, created, and never alone.

CORE THEOLOGICAL INSIGHTS

Identity, Purpose, Transformation

RESPONSE

Confidence, Truth

EMPHASIZED RELATIONSHIPS

God the Creator

MEMORY VERSE

"For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do" (Ephesians 2:10 NIV).



Bottom Line

REAL LIFE IS FOUND IN JESUS

Topic

Identity

Scripture

John 10:10 (NIV):

"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."

25 min

Teaching

5 min

Introduction (ME)

What You Need

No supplies needed

5 min

Tension (WE)

What You Need

No supplies needed

5 min

Truth (GOD)

What You Need

No supplies needed

5 min

Application (YOU)

What You Need

No supplies needed

Say: "Ever buy something online that looked amazing and showed up looking like a joke? Yeah. That's life without Jesus. Feeds are full of things that promise the real deal and deliver the knockoff. Jesus said: *'I came so they can have life, and have it to the full'* (John 10:10 NIV). In other words, a life that actually hits different. Not the cheap imitation.

Say: "Counterfeit isn't just shopping. It's filters on photos, music that flexes a life you don't have, cliques at school, try-hard energy in group chats, and talking tough in the game lobby. It's acting okay when you're not. We edit pictures and our personalities because we don't believe we're already living the real thing. That kind of curated life looks shiny on a screen and feels empty up close."

Read John 10:10(NIV): *"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."*

Say: "Jesus offers life that lasts. He isn't inviting you to fake it better; He's inviting you to bring the unedited version of you into His care. 'Life to the full' isn't hype or instant popularity. It's an honest, whole life with Him. Counterfeit living depends on hiding and performing. Lasting life grows when we tell the truth to Jesus and to safe people and trust Him to lead us into better."

Say: "Let's get specific. Write down one thing you've been faking lately and what it would look like to drop the act. Keep it concrete. Maybe it's telling a friend you're not okay instead of ghosting, admitting you need help on an assignment, apologizing for the snap you sent, or stopping the 'I don't care' routine when you actually care.

"Choose one next step and one safe person. Text them today with one sentence about what's real and what you're doing next. Whisper a simple prayer: 'Jesus, here's where I'm done pretending. Lead me.'

Say: "Being real isn't about saying everything that's wrong with you. It's about not pretending you've got nothing wrong. Jesus offers a life that

5 min

Landing (ME)

What You Need

No supplies needed

30 min

Groups

5 min

Think About This

What You Need

No supplies needed

15 min

Discussion Questions

What You Need

No supplies needed

actually hits different, and it starts when you stop performing and step into the truth with Him. Pick your one step and take it today. Each day, write one place you'll be real and one honest sentence you'll say to God about it. Keep it short, honest, and doable. Put it where you'll see it and do it.

"Let's Pray: Jesus, thank You for offering life that lasts. I'm tired of performing. Here's where I'm done pretending [pause]. Give me courage to take the next step with You and with a safe person. Lead me into honest, whole life with You. Amen."

The goal of this discussion is to help students move from curated, counterfeit living to honest, lasting life with Jesus. We want them to identify one thing they've been faking, imagine what dropping the act looks like, and take one specific step with a safe person.

Middle schoolers feel constant pressure to perform—filters on photos, lyrics that flex a life they don't have, group-chat performative jokes, game-lobby bravado, and school cliques. Remind them: Jesus offers a life that actually hits different—whole, honest, and with Him. Being real isn't saying everything that's wrong; it's refusing to pretend nothing's wrong.

1. Warm-up: Share one time something looked amazing online but was a letdown in real life (a viral gadget, a trendy snack, a game update, a "must-have" outfit).
(Leader note: Keep it light; one sentence each. Use this to set up counterfeit vs real.)
2. Where are you most tempted to fake it right now—your feed, the mirror, a group chat, a team, a friend group, or in the game lobby—and what does "faking it" look like for you?
(Leader note: Normalize pressure; avoid shaming; don't solicit risky specifics.)
3. Read John 10:10 together. Which phrase grabs you today—"life to the full," "life that lasts," "hits different"—and how does that challenge the way you've been living this week?
(Leader note: Tie "full" to honest life with Jesus, not popularity or ease.)
4. Real talk: What's one moment recently when you acted okay but weren't okay? If you could rewind, what honest sentence would you say instead?
(Leader note: Guard privacy; keep answers short; model safe language.)
5. Practice step (from teaching): Write down one thing you've been faking lately and what it would look like to drop the act. Share only if you want.

10 min

Try This

What You Need

No supplies needed

(Leader note: Give 60 quiet seconds. Offer examples: admit you need help, apologize, stop the "I don't care" routine, tell the truth about how you're doing.)

6. Plan the move: Who is a safe person to tell? What one sentence will you use? And when will you send or say it?

(Leader note: Help craft a short message; encourage a same-day step; offer to be the safe person if needed.)

7. Pop-culture lens: Where do you see counterfeit vs real in music, shows, games, or school cliques? How could you choose "lasting" over "curated" this week?

(Leader note: Keep it specific and doable. Celebrate plans without pressure.)

Challenge Statement: "Each day this week, write one place you'll be real and one honest sentence you'll say to God about it. Keep it short, honest, and doable. Put it where you'll see it—and do it."