

# Your Own Fire

For teens ages 12–14 · about 45–60 minutes · Moral Issues for Teens · theme **Borrowed or Yours?** · built on **1 Peter 2:9**

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Most students in your room grew up in church. They know the songs, the prayers, what a Christian is supposed to look like. That is a gift — and it hides a quiet danger: standing inside a family's faith without ever making God their own. When they leave home, lose the crowd, or face a crisis alone, borrowed light can run out. This session invites every student to stop living on secondhand faith and meet God for themselves.

## Before you teach anything, pray.

You are holding a door open, not performing a lesson. Some students are deeply sincere; some are along for the ride; some are skeptical and watching whether faith is real. Ask the Spirit to prepare every heart — including yours — for an honest encounter with God.

## The heart of the lesson

Is the light they've been standing in actually **theirs** — or does it belong to the people around them? God calls individuals by name. No one inherits a relationship with God the way you inherit eye color. Salvation is personal — by **grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone** (Ephesians 2:8–9). No baptism, church attendance, good behavior, or family name can save anyone. Each student must repent — turn from sin to God — and trust Jesus for themselves (Romans 10:9–10; John 1:12; Acts 3:19).

*God has no grandchildren — only sons and daughters.*

Being raised in the faith is a tremendous advantage, but proximity to Christian parents, youth group, or a good church is not the same as knowing Christ yourself. At some point borrowed light runs out — when friends walk away, when parents aren't in the room, when doubt hits at midnight. Only firsthand faith keeps burning. When a student surrenders to Jesus, the Lord **baptizes believers in the Holy Spirit** — regenerating, sealing, and indwelling them forever; afterward the Spirit desires to fill and empower them for witness (Matthew 3:11; Acts 2:38–39; Ephesians 1:13–14; 5:18). The promise stands: ask, and the Father gives the Spirit to His children (Luke 11:13).

*Borrowed light can't carry you forever — God wants a fire that is finally, truly yours.*

**1 PETER 2:9**

"...that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his **marvelous light**."

**LUKE 11:13**

"If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the **Holy Spirit** to those who ask him!"

## How the session flows

- 1 Start in the dark.** Hook and read 1 Peter 2:9. ~7 min
- 2 Borrowed light runs out.** Candle picture and teaching. ~12 min
- 3 Play the game.** "Borrowed or Yours?" on screen. ~12–15 min
- 4 Quiet honesty.** Reference card, private reflection. ~5 min
- 5 Worksheet.** In class or take-home reinforcement. ~15 min
- 6 Open the door.** Invitation, Spirit, prayer. ~8 min

Screen for the game, candles (or flashlight/baton relay), printed reference cards and worksheets, pens, soft worship for quiet time, and leaders ready to pray with students one-on-one afterward.

## Leading it, part by part

### Start in the dark

Dim lights if you can. Ask: have you ever been somewhere dark and used someone else's phone flashlight? It helped — but it wasn't yours. Read 1 Peter 2:9. God calls people *out of darkness into his marvelous light*. The question tonight: is that light yours, or are you still borrowing it?

### Borrowed light runs out

Light one candle — picture parents' faith, church's faith, a friend's enthusiasm. Hand a student an unlit candle and let them hold it near the flame without touching wick to wick. Standing near fire never lit them. Being raised around truth is a gift, but **borrowed light can't carry you forever**. Real faith produces obedience (1 John 2:3; James 2:17) — but obedience never earns salvation; it proves the grace we already received. Bible trivia and borrowed answers on a quiz are not a relationship with God.

Then light their candle from the first. Now they carry their own flame. Tie to Luke 11:13 — the Father gives the Holy Spirit to those who ask. This is not anti-family or anti-church; it is personal encounter with God.

### Play the game

Run "Borrowed or Yours?" — rounds sort secondhand vs. firsthand faith, Scripture stories of people who met God personally, and real scenarios (leaving home, friends walking away, doubt at night). Twelve to fifteen minutes. Bridge afterward: every round asked whether your faith would hold if the crowd disappeared.

### Quiet honesty

Hand out the reference card. Promise plainly that nobody is collecting it. Give five quiet minutes for students to answer honest questions about whether their faith is borrowed, in-between, or theirs. Honor the silence — some students will make decisions here.

### Worksheet

Reinforce with structured items — Scripture, reflection, one step for the week. The reference card was private heart-work; the worksheet is biblical practice they can do at home or in pairs.

### Open the door

Two doors, both biblical: repent and receive Christ for the first time — not just the family's faith (Ephesians 2:8–9; Romans 10:9–10) — and/or ask Jesus to baptize them in the Holy Spirit and fill them with His own fire (Matthew 3:11; Acts 2:38–39). Invite response without pressure or emotional manipulation. Pray simply. Offer leaders at the sides for students who want to talk. Read 1 John 5:13 — God wants you to *know* you have eternal life.

## Take it further

- What's the difference between knowing *about* God and knowing Him yourself? (John 17:3)
- Where would your borrowed light run out first — and what would you do when it did?
- What does Romans 10:9–10 teach about personal faith vs. family tradition?
- Why does God want you to *know* you have eternal life? (1 John 5:13)
- What is the role of the Holy Spirit in having "your own fire"? (Luke 11:13; Acts 2:38–39)
- How do James 2:17 and 1 John 2:3 connect real faith to real obedience?
- Read 2 Timothy 1:5 — how can faith be passed down *and* still become personal?
- What would change this week if your faith were truly yours, not borrowed?

## A final word

Honor parents and pastors who brought students into the room — then preach the personal gospel clearly. Somewhere between childhood and adulthood, every church kid faces the question: is Jesus mine, or only my family's? Give them Scripture, the candle picture, the game, the card, and a door held open. Trust the Spirit to light fires that stay lit when the crowd goes home.