

# More Than You Think

For teens ages 12–14 · about 45–60 minutes · Moral Issues for Teens · theme **Made for More** · game **Who Says So?** · built on **1 Peter 2:9**

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Teenagers carry labels — handed to them by parents, coaches, algorithms, bullies, or their own inner critic at 2 a.m. "Too quiet." "Too much." "Not enough." "You'll never..." Some labels stick because they were spoken once by someone who mattered. This session puts those labels next to four names God speaks in one verse and asks the question every student is already asking: who gets to say who I am?

## Before you teach anything, pray.

Some students believe they are only what others have said about them. Some are drowning in comparison. Some wear a tough label to hide a tender heart. Ask God to show them — and you — that identity in Christ is not performance. You are opening a door to hope, not running a self-esteem workshop.

## The heart of the lesson

Biblically, everyone is identified with one of two lines — Adam or Christ (1 Corinthians 15:22). In Adam, sin and death spread to all. In Christ, there is forgiveness, new life, and a transfer into God's family (2 Corinthians 5:17). That transfer is never earned: salvation is **by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone** (Ephesians 2:8–9). Your students are not defined primarily by grades, followers, mistakes, or what someone said in the hallway. In Christ they receive a new name they cannot earn — only receive by repenting and trusting Jesus.

*You answer to the One who named you — not to the labels.*

First Peter 2:9 hands God's people four names: **chosen, royal, holy, his**. The world's labels are loud; God's names are true whether a student feels them yet or not. The lie says value comes from being loved and accepted by the significant people in your life. The truth says God placed you in a new family where you are loved unconditionally — and is renewing your mind to see yourself the way He sees you (Ephesians 1:4–5; Romans 12:2).

# *Chosen. Royal. Holy. His — not because you performed, but because He spoke.*

## 1 PETER 2:9

"But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."

## 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a **new creation**. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come."

## How the session flows

- 1 Name the labels.** What words stick to you? ~7 min
- 2 Four names from God.** Teach 1 Peter 2:9; Adam vs. Christ. ~12 min
- 3 Play the game.** "Who Says So?" on screen. ~12–15 min
- 4 Quiet honesty.** Reference card, private reflection. ~5 min
- 5 Worksheet.** In class or take-home practice. ~15 min
- 6 Close with hope.** Prayer and invitation to receive God's name. ~8 min

Screen for the game, sticky notes or index cards for label exercise (optional), printed reference cards and worksheets, pens, and a leader sensitive to students who may disclose self-harm or abuse tied to harsh labels — know your follow-up plan.

## Leading it, part by part

### Name the labels

Ask: what words have been spoken over you — at school, at home, online, or in your own head? Let a few share if the room is safe; otherwise have them write privately. Land this: labels feel like identity because they were repeated, but a label is not the same as a name. Proverbs 27:19 — as water reflects a face, a heart reflects the person. The question tonight is whose reflection you are living by.

### Four names from God

Read 1 Peter 2:9 aloud. Unpack each name in plain language for twelve- to fourteen-year-olds.

**Chosen** — God picked you on purpose, not by accident (Ephesians 1:4). **Royal** — you represent a King; your life carries dignity (1 Peter 2:9). **Holy** — set apart for God, not for the world's mold (Romans 12:2). **His** — you belong; you are not orphaned to the labels (Romans 8:15–16). Contrast world's label vs. God's name on one example students will recognize (overlooked, troublemaker, not enough → chosen, royal, holy, his).

Teach the Adam/Christ line briefly: "in Adam all die; in Christ all are made alive" (1 Corinthians 15:22). Identity is not self-invented — it is received by faith. The old label may still echo; the new name is already spoken over anyone in Christ.

### Play the game

Run "Who Says So?" — rounds sort world's labels from God's names, match Scripture to truth, and work real scenarios (comparison, failure, what friends say vs. what God says). Keep energy up twelve to fifteen minutes, then bridge: every round was asking who gets the final word on who you are.

### Quiet honesty

Hand out the reference card. Promise plainly that nobody is collecting it. Give five quiet minutes for students to circle a label they may have believed for years and, for the first time, read God's name beside it. Protect that moment with silence.

### Worksheet

Structured practice — verse lookups, label-to-truth matching, one application step for this week. Good for classroom pairs or take-home. The reference card addressed the heart; the worksheet reinforces Scripture.

## Close with hope

Invite students who have been living under a label to receive God's name by faith — not as a mood boost, but as repentance and trust in Christ alone (Ephesians 2:8–9; John 1:12). Pray that the Spirit would regenerate, indwell, and renew their minds to believe what God has already spoken (Romans 12:2; Ephesians 1:13–14). Offer leaders for conversation afterward. Don't pressure disclosure; do make the invitation clear.

## Take it further

- What is the difference between a label and an identity in Christ? (1 Peter 2:9; 2 Corinthians 5:17)
- What does it mean to be in Adam's line vs. Christ's line? (1 Corinthians 15:22)
- Of the four names in 1 Peter 2:9 — chosen, royal, holy, his — which is hardest for you to believe? Why?
- Which label is hardest to put down — and what truth from Scripture answers it?
- How does Romans 12:2 connect "renewing the mind" to the labels we believe?
- What does Ephesians 1:4–5 teach about being chosen and adopted?
- Read Proverbs 20:11 — how do actions relate to identity without becoming the whole story?
- How would your week change if you answered to God's name instead of your worst label?

## A final word

Students will not shed every label in one night. They may walk out still hearing the old words — but they can walk out having heard God's name spoken over them in Scripture, in the game, on the card, and in your voice. Give them the truth without hype. Trust the Spirit to do the slow work of making "chosen, royal, holy, his" sound like home.