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Hey YxYA!

**Welcome to our second drop of Crew Notes for 2021!
We hope you're doing well, looking after yourself and enjoying everything that's been going on in YxYA across Crews & Sundays!**

We hope you enjoyed last month as we kicked off the year focussing on the G.O.A.T, that being Jesus! This month we're taking on a new chapter as we look at not only who we are, but whose we are. We're going to be looking at our own identity and our identity in Christ which we've called "Check Yourself"!

We hope this month is filled with great conversations and moments of awe and encouragement as we, as a YxYA community, focus in on who we are and who we're called to be! We really want you to dive into this theme and challenge the people in your crew as well as yourself as we check ourselves.

In the midst of everything happening in society, as crew coaches ourselves we're in a constant time of self-reflection and deconstruction of what's happening in our lives... it can easily become an activity which causes more harm than good. However, when we check ourselves against what the bible says we are and who we're called to be, we can truly encourage ourselves and live our lives from a place of being secure in our identity.

We hope this month is filled with encouraging, challenging & life-changing conversations for everyone across YxYA!

Thank you for all you do,

Dan & Jo Watson

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check yourself



WILDLIFE

WEEK ONE

Money talks

check yourself

INTRO

During the pandemic we have had a number of lockdowns that has resulted in a lot of ; working from home for most of your parents, family members or youth leaders. There's been some of them, being put on furloughed or in some cases losing their job. It highlights how much in this modern-day society we depend on money to come through.

During this pandemic we have also seen ourselves on social media more than probably we where before which probably has enhanced the temptation to compare our lives to others or our homes to others.

It is therefore not surprising that when we have more, as some people may say 'life gets easier'. But does fulfilment actually come from money? Or is our hope and trust in God, who "is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us" (Ephesians 3:20-21).

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SCRIPTURES

Luke 9:23-26 (NIV)

23 Then he said to them all: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. 24 For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it. 25 What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit their very self? 26 Whoever is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.

Matthew 6: 19-24

19 “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. **20** But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. **21** For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

22 “The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy,^[c] your whole body will be full of light. **23** But if your eyes are unhealthy,^[d] your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

24 “No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.

Luke 12:32-34 (NIV)

32 “Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom. 33 Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will never fail, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. 34 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Matthew 13:44-46 (NIV)

44 “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field.

45 “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. 46 When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it

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THOUGHT

Money is such an integral part to our world, our countries, our societies, our schools, our homes and even our personal lives. Having money can give you access to things which other are denied of. Money is a currency in which we interact with every single day. Money is the reward nearly every single adult works for every day of their lives. The bible acknowledged that money is important to our everyday lives and there nothing wrong with desiring it but it emphasises in (1 Timothy 6:10) that love for it is the root of all evil.

A few other principles and teaching we learn and see in the bible is that in this life is you didn't bring anything into this world, and you won't take anything with you when you die.

You might have been born into a family that has lots of financial resources, or alternatively been from a family found on opposite end of the financial scale where you found things to be tight at home or anywhere in between. These positions cannot determine on what we place our identity and who we become. What you do in your life and how you live it, whether it's the type of job you get, how successful you are, may change your initial starting position for better or for worse.

The question that is worth considering along this journey is, does it matter how you do this? Or who you use and how you use them to achieve this goal? In Luke 9 Jesus talks about people who want to gain the whole world and the cost they are prepared to give to get it - at the expense of forfeiting their own soul. We are only on earth for a short period of time, a life is like a vapour, here one minute and gone the next. However, our soul is eternal. So, what is the currency we are setting our hearts on? Is the currency one we can use here and not take with us to heaven, or a treasure we can create in heaven and use for the rest of eternity.

QUESTIONS

1

Is money important to how we live?

2

Do you think money plays a role in your identity?

Is money good or bad?

3

What does treasure mean to you?

WILDLIFE

WEEK TWO

***Relationships or
Attraction***

check yourself

INTRO

Attraction is defined as a quality or feature that evokes interest, liking, or desire for someone or something. A lot of people feel attraction towards another person for many different reasons. Throughout the years some of the reasons why people would find each other attractive has changed but at the same time it hasn't at all. Even in the bible we see examples of this. In Genesis 24, we see Isaac being attracted to Rebecca not by her outer beauty but by her inner beauty and an acts of service she performed by fetching water for his camel. On the other hand in Genesis 29:17, we see how Jacob Jacob was attracted to Rachel because of her "lovely figure and her beautiful". In our day and age we often see the same things happen in a similar way. We get attracted to people who may dress a certain way, speak a certain way, look a certain way, hang around with certain people, have certain amount of followers, have certain amount of money, have certain amount of fame and the list goes on. People's attractions varies all the time there's no right or wrong but what's important is to always see what God has planned for our lives and what he has to say.

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SCRIPTURES

1 Samuel 16:7 (NIV)

“But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

Romans 12: 1-2 (MSG)

12 ¹⁻² So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you.

Colosians 3:23 (NIV)

²³ Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters,

EXTRA READINGS

Story of Isaac and Rebekah Genesis 24

Story of Samson Judges 13-16

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THOUGHT

God is a God who loves and is love but doesn't want us to shape our identity around who we are dating or who people see us to be.

Attraction can sometimes feel automatic. Some would even describe it as natural, however in today's society a lot of us are or have defined ourselves based on who we are attracted to or who we want to attract. Which can end up allowing someone else to influence our music taste, the food we eat and even the career we choose or even the people we choose to hang around with. This is so dangerous because no human is perfect enough to base our entire identity on, we are fully humans but Jesus Christ, He is completely perfect, reliable and will never reject nor forsake us.

We can say that Samson was under the influence of society, and he went for what was attractive in his eyes. However Genesis 24 shows us what love looks like when God comes first. In this passage we see Isaac trusting his father (who had heard from God) to choose him a wife. In the chapter, we see Abraham prioritising God's desires before thinking about his own and even his sons (Genesis 24:7). Abraham completely trusted in the identity God had given him as father of many nations. Abraham was therefore committed to making a wise decision concerning Isaac's wife as he knew it was connected to his identity (the promise). When you know the promises of God concerning your life you will want to choose people that will help you step into those promises, not push you away from it.

God is the lord of our lives, God is involved in our lives and our love life is a part of our life. That person that you find who you are attracted to that you want a relationship with, will influence who you are and impact you and who you are. There's nothing wrong with the type of person you are attracted to but is it an iron sharpens iron relationship?

QUESTIONS

1

What attracts you to someone?

2

Is God involved in your love life?

3

**Do or would you let who you date influence
who you are?**

WILDLIFE

WEEK THREE

Who Are You?

check yourself

INTRO

School is hard, and what's even harder, is trying to separate ourselves from our grades. When we do well in school we are met with rewards and recognition, and when we don't do well in school, we are met with stern conversations and shame. We don't just see this in our education and grades but in our daily lives. These experiences make us feel like our worth is attached to our academic or personal successes but that is not the case. Right now, there are a lot of things we are all uncertain about; will there be exams? How will students be graded? will I get an internship? Is there going to be a new curriculum? will it affect my social life? Our society doesn't know the answer to all of these things, but God does.

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SCRIPTURES

1 Corinthians 1:20-25 (NIV)

20 Where is the wise person? Where is the teacher of the law? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? 21 For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe. 22 Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom, 23 but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, 24 but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. 25 For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.

Proverbs 29:11 (NIV)

11 Fools vent their anger,
but the wise quietly hold it back

Romans 8:28 (NIV)

²⁸And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose

James 1:5 (NIV)

If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV)

¹⁷Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!

Romans 5:8 (NIV)

But God demonstrates his own love for us in this; while we were still sinners, Christ died for us

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1 Timothy 4:8-16 (NIV)

8 For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come. 9 This is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance. 10 That is why we labor and strive, because we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all people, and especially of those who believe.

11 Command and teach these things. 12 Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity. 13 Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching. 14 Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through prophecy when the body of elders laid their hands on you.

15 Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. 16 Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.

John 3:16-18 (NIV)

16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. 18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.

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THOUGHT

Your school grades don't define who you are. God is who can determine who we are just like it says in 2 Corinthians 5:17 He tells us that we are a new creation in christ. Its all about who we run to, because there's always a way forward and it's who we run to that helps determine the outcome of it. God makes all things work together for our Good.

God appeared to Solomon in 2 Chronicles 1, he asked him a question "what do you want me to give you?" If that were you, what would you say?

Because he asked for knowledge and wisdom and not for wealth, possession or honour, God gave Solomon the things he didn't ask for and more, God first and foremost gave him wisdom but then all the other thing were given to him as well. We then also find out how Solomon was known to be the richest and wisest person in the world. What we can learn from his great life is that mistakes shouldn't determine who we are, but mistakes are often caused by lack of wisdom in certain situations. So lets not be afraid to ask and seek wisdom to become the person God has asked and called us to be.

We also see in the Bible, Paul a serial Christian killer had his life transformed and changed, He didn't let his past affect his future and he didn't let it affect who he was going to be because he knew it was God who was going to define who he was.

QUESTIONS

1

Have you ever based your identity on your grades?

2

Is the smartest person you know, the wisest person you know?

3

Does your past influence your future?

WILDLIFE

WEEK FOUR

***Let's Talk...
About Race!***

check yourself

INTRO

Twenty twenty was a historical year to say the least. Without a doubt, it forced both the world, and the church to stop, and talk about race. Our church is committed to making race an ongoing conversation, and with this month's theme being identity, we must talk about race. Last year, so many of us asked questions like, "Are we Christians first?" or "Are we our race first", and "Does race even matter to God?" Spoiler alert, race does matter to God and He isn't asking us to make a choice between our race and our faith. In this conversation we will explore how God has carefully woven race into our faith identity.

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SCRIPTURES

1 Corinthians 12:12-14

Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by[a] one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.

Luke 10:30-37

Jesus replied with a story: “A Jewish man was traveling from Jerusalem down to Jericho, and he was attacked by bandits. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him up, and left him half dead beside the road.

“By chance a priest came along. But when he saw the man lying there, he crossed to the other side of the road and passed him by. A Temple assistant walked over and looked at him lying there, but he also passed by on the other side. “Then a despised Samaritan came along, and when he saw the man, he felt compassion for him. Going over to him, the Samaritan soothed his wounds with olive oil and wine and bandaged them. Then he put the man on his own donkey and took him to an inn, where he took care of him. The next day he handed the innkeeper two silver coins, telling him, ‘Take care of this man. If his bill runs higher than this, I’ll pay you the next time I’m here.’ “Now which of these three would you say was a neighbour to the man who was attacked by bandits?” Jesus asked. The man replied, “The one who showed him mercy.” Then Jesus said, “Yes, now go and do the same.”

Joel 2:28

"And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions.

Acts 2:2-5

At that time there were devout Jews from every nation living in Jerusalem. When they heard the loud noise, everyone came running, and they were bewildered to hear their own languages being spoken by the believers. They were completely amazed. “How can this be?” they exclaimed. “These people are all from Galilee, and yet we hear them speaking in our own native languages!

1 Timothy 2:4

He (God) desires all men to be saved and come into the knowledge of the truth. This is good and pleasing in the sight of God our saviour.

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Psalm 96:3

Declare his glory among the nations, his marvellous works among all the peoples!

Galatians 3:28 (NIV)

²⁸There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Proverbs 21:3 (ESV)

To do righteousness and justice is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice

John 3:16 (NIV)

¹⁶For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Amos 5:24 (ESV)

²⁴But let justice roll down like waters,
and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream

John 4:7-26 (NIV)

When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, “Will you give me a drink?” ⁸(His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.)⁹The Samaritan woman said to him, “You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?” (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.)¹⁰ Jesus answered her, “If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.”¹¹ “Sir,” the woman said, “you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? ¹²Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?”¹³ Jesus answered, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”¹⁵ The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water so that I won’t get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water.”¹⁶ He told her, “Go, call your husband and come back.”¹⁷ “I have no husband,” she replied. Jesus said to her, “You are right when you say you have no husband. ¹⁸The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true.”¹⁹ “Sir,” the woman said, “I can see that you are a prophet. ²⁰Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.”²¹ “Woman,” Jesus replied, “believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. ²²You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews.²³ Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. ²⁴God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.”²⁵ The woman said, “I know that Messiah” (called Christ) “is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.”²⁶ Then Jesus declared, “I, the one speaking to you—I am he.”

THOUGHT

From the blood of Adam, we came, but from the blood of Jesus Christ (the perfect Adam) we are saved (1 Corinthians 15:45). We all have the same colour blood, but we don't all have the same colour skin. God knows this and He loves each one of our differences. Psalm 150:6 says, "Let everything that has breath praise the Lord!" This was written by King David, who was twice described in the bible as, "a man after God's heart." In his closeness to God, David realised God wanted to be worshipped by all people not just by one kind.

Colour and culture were never at the back burner of Christ's gospel but in fact it was used strategically to show the heart of God. Christ interacted with and told stories about the Samaritans who were people of mixed race, part Jew and part gentile (Luke 10:30-37 and John 4:7-36). Jesus was known to go against social norms, He didn't care about what people said, He wanted to bring about justice, reconciling and uniting all His people bringing them together as one. When it comes to race Peter said, "I really am learning that God doesn't show partiality to one group of people over another. Rather, in every nation, whoever worships him and does what is right is acceptable to him. (Acts 10:34-35). In the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-19) "Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." Through Jesus's words we can see that the heart of God is for all people to be saved (1 Timothy 2:4). When the church is diverse, we can continue to go back into our communities and preach the gospel. We can also speak into the lives of new believers with whom we have shared life experiences with. Additionally, different races also enrich the body of Christ, which is the church (1 Corinthians 12:12-14). Our many different cultures make the church dynamic i.e. dance and music.

QUESTIONS

1

Are you race first, or Christian first?

2

How do you see faith, is it faith verses race or can they co-exist?

3

What do you think justice is and how do we seek it?

4

What can I do to seek unity and reconciliation?

check yourself

crew notes

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WILDLIFE

