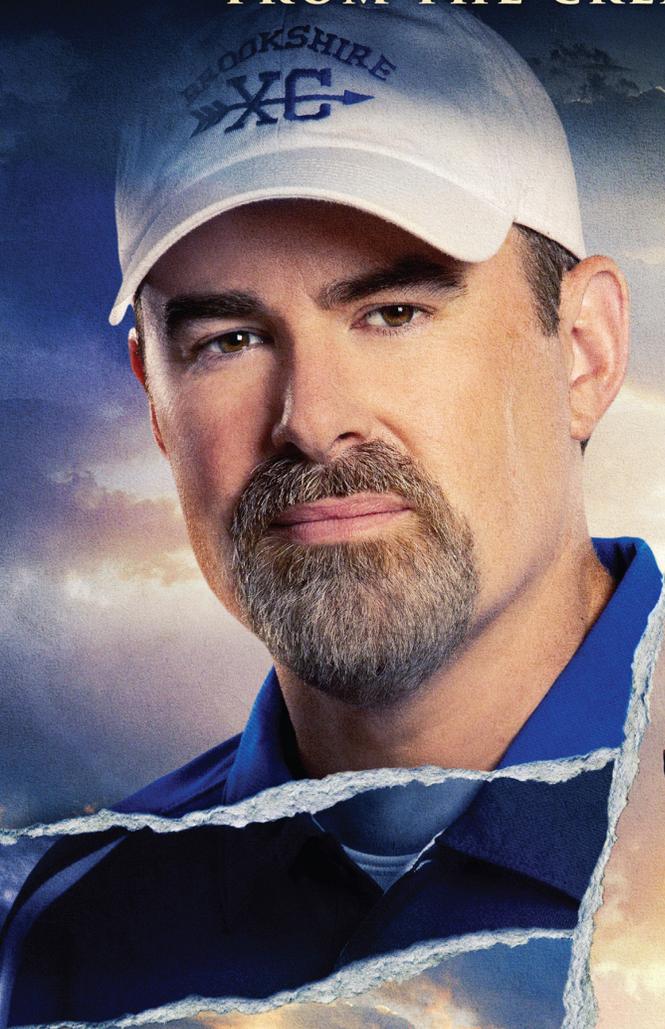


FROM THE CREATORS OF WAR ROOM



WHAT DO
YOU ALLOW
TO DEFINE
YOU?



ALEX
KENDRICK

PRISCILLA
SHIRER

AND INTRODUCING ARYN
WRIGHT-THOMPSON

OVERCOMER

**This guide contains spoilers,
and is intended to use after a group has seen the film.**

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OVERCOMER

TEAM GUIDE

INTRO

Thank you for using this resource to help frame a conversation with students around the themes in **OVERCOMER**. We've created this resource to help you engage, encourage, and equip students to understand and live out their true identity in Christ.

THE FILM

"Who are you really?" It's a fundamental question we all have to answer. Our first instinct may be to respond with a name, what we do, and maybe where we live or where we grew up. But is that enough?

Identity is what people believe to be most true about themselves. It's their source of value and worth. But what happens when the source we've based our identity on fails us or is taken away? It can be crushing.

Enter **OVERCOMER**. Filled with a powerful mix of faith, a twist of humor, and a ton of heart, the Kendrick brothers return to theaters on August 23rd with this most recent feature film. Filled with teachable moments that connect us with God's Word, **OVERCOMER** invites us to discover who God says we really are and asks the question: What do you allow to define you?

Regardless of your reason for walking students through this resource, the goal is a definitive answer to the basic question "Who are you?" As you and your students begin to discover who God is and what it means to be created in His image, you'll begin to discover all God has called you to be.

THIS TEAM GUIDE

This guide has been created as a tool to help coaches and small group leaders have a meaningful conversation with students based on the core theme from the film. Both the film and the Bible have much to say about how only God determines our identity. When used together, the film and the Team Guide can provide a great teaching opportunity.

OVERCOMER opens in theaters **Friday, August 23**. Set aside a time to see the film together, then use this resource to have an informal discussion about it afterwards.

What is most true about all of us is that we are made by a God who loves us, and the gospel can bring us into a relationship with Him.

We're excited about what God is going to do in the lives of your students!

OVERCOMER

Who Are You?

THEME

Identity in Christ

READY

I will praise you because I have been remarkably and wondrously made.

PSALM 139:14 (CSB)

But God, who is rich in mercy, because of his great love that he had for us, ⁵ made us alive with Christ even though we were dead in trespasses. You are saved by grace! ⁶ He also raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavens in Christ Jesus, ⁷ so that in the coming ages he might display the immeasurable riches of his grace through his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ For you are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God's gift — ⁹ not from works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time for us to do.

EPHESIANS 2:4-10 (CSB)

SET

Invite students to share their name and three things that describe who they are. These could include their role on the team, hobbies, offices they hold, jobs, character traits, or anything else that marks a personal interest. (For example: student, football player, point guard, musician, leader, class treasurer, etc.)

Why did you choose to share that particular information? (Was it unique? Something you share in common with a friend? Something you enjoy doing? Something you're proud of?)

Do your activities, sports, and hobbies influence how you think about yourself? How so?

Did you know that God has a far greater, far more fulfilling purpose for you than any sport or activity? Your personal worth and value are rooted in Someone much bigger than you Who loves you more than you can imagine—not in athleticism, popularity, or even Instagram followers.

When we meet John Harrison, who is he? (Hint: Think back to how he introduced himself to Thomas when he stumbled into his room at the hospital.)

What bad news did Coach Harrison get from the school principal?

How did the challenges he was suddenly faced with affect his identity?

Basketball coach John Harrison enters Principal Olivia Brooks' office and learns that the football program has been terminated. The main factory in town has closed its doors, eliminating more than five thousand jobs. This closure is shrinking the town and crushing high-school enrollment. Without enough players, athletic programs are being cut. Principal Brooks sees an opportunity to salvage the cross country team by having John take over. In his mind cross country isn't even a real sport. But John is given the responsibility, and it begins to unravel his identity.

How would you describe Hannah Scott when we first meet her?

At what point did Hannah begin to see herself the way God sees her? What was her reaction when she learned who she really was as a child of God?

How did Coach Harrison's and Hannah's identity begin to change as the film progressed?

Who you are starts with where you came from, includes where you've been, and indicates where you're going. If your identity is rooted in God and is consistent with His Word, you're living in the truth of who He made you to be. Discovering and living that identity, as defined by God, affects everything about life.

GO

Genesis 1:26 says that we are created in God's image. What does it mean to be created in the image of God?

It means the Creator, not the creation, gives us identity and purpose, determining who and what we are in the world.

What does it mean to bear God's likeness in the world (at school, on the field, out with friends)?

It means we live in a way that declares who Jesus is and what it means to experience the life and salvation He alone gives.

The world around us offers insane perversions of identity. People are choosing who they want to be by living out their own misguided notions of truth. God's Word offers a foundation that a meaningful identity can be built on: We're created by God, but we're sinners. We're offered salvation that starts with repentance and leads to a life that seeks and declares Jesus as the only way to truly know and live out who we are.

Is there a false identity that you are currently living under?

How could knowing that you are God's workmanship change the way you describe who you are?

Being chosen and defined by God changes everything. In the film, realizing that his true identity is rooted in Christ, gave Coach Harrison a purpose beyond who or what he thought he was. When the foundation on which he had built his identity was ripped away and replaced by something less than ideal, the truth entered and gave him more than he ever knew he wanted. Hearing the gospel and believing the good news her principal shared with her pulled Hannah out of the shadows and gave her a purpose far beyond her physical limitations. Only Jesus has the power to change a person's identity and to give purpose in life beyond all limitations and expectations.

PRAYER

Ask God to help students discover who God made them to be and embrace the mission He has set for them. Be sure and offer the opportunity for students to pray to accept Christ.

Lord Jesus,

I am a sinner and I need a Savior. I believe that you are that Savior. So today, I place faith alone, in Christ alone, to forgive my sins. Come live in me.

In Jesus' Name,

Amen.

WORKOUT

Keep the conversation going. Share the following devotions for students to read on their own this week. Be sure and follow up throughout the week and be available to answer any questions students have about what they read.

DAY 1: IN GOD'S IMAGE

Write a list of some of the physical attributes that make you unique (eye color, hair color, height, etc.).

Write a list of personality traits that make you unique from other people.

You are uniquely designed. No one has the exact same eyes or hair or fingerprints. And like these unique traits, God's Word remains the same, but each person hears and applies it in specific ways at different seasons in their lives. Your DNA, the shape of your ears, the pattern in the iris of your eyes, the combination of your physical features, and the stride of your walk, are all unique to you as an individual. You're skillfully and wonderfully made—one of a kind. But the common bond we all share as human beings is that we're created in the image of God.

Look at the natural world around you. God's fingerprints are all over it:

*The heavens declare the glory of God,
and the expanse proclaims the work of his hands.*

*²Day after day they pour out speech;
night after night they communicate knowledge.*

*³There is no speech; there are no words;
their voice is not heard.*

*⁴Their message has gone out to the whole earth,
and their words to the ends of the world.*

In the heavens he has pitched a tent for the sun.

*⁵It is like a bridegroom coming from his home;
it rejoices like an athlete running a course.*

PSALM 19:1-5 (CSB)

How does knowing and being reminded that you were created in God's image shape your identity?

DAY 2: BROKEN

Has someone ever told you to “follow your heart”? Maybe you’ve even said it. It sounds great. It almost sounds spiritual. Well-meaning Christians occasionally offer this advice. We all tend to believe it. But there’s a problem: your heart.

In the garden of Eden, Adam and Eve knew the truth. They knew the fruit of every other tree was beautiful, delicious, and free to enjoy. The problem wasn’t ignorance. It was selfishness. They had no reason to doubt God’s command. So they were tempted to doubt His character. They wondered whether God was unfairly keeping something desirable from them. They wanted what would literally kill them.

Sin has infected the hearts of every child born since that day. The entire human race has inherited this shared family trait. But before you claim it’s not your fault that you were born with a sinful heart, look at what God’s Word has to say.

No one undergoing a trial should say, “I am being tempted by God,” since God is not tempted by evil, and he himself doesn’t tempt anyone. ¹⁴ But each person is tempted when he is drawn away and enticed by his own evil desire. ¹⁵ Then after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and when sin is fully grown, it gives birth to death.

¹⁶ Don’t be deceived, my dear brothers and sisters. ¹⁷ Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.

JAMES 1:13-17 (CSB)

Every person has the same problem. Every person has the same choice. It’s your turn right now. Will you make excuses and pass the blame? Will you continue to let your heart be tempted by things you know aren’t good for you?

The reality is that you’re sinful by nature and by choice, but it’s also true that God is gracious and good. Unlike the fickle desires of your heart, He never changes.

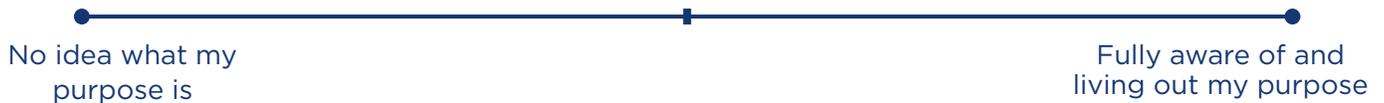
Conclude today’s study in prayer, being completely honest with God. Allow yourself to feel the foolishness of trusting your own desires rather than the wisdom of your Creator, the giver of “every good and perfect gift.”

DAY 3: IDENTITY AND PURPOSE

In the film **OVERCOMER** the gospel of Jesus gave John Harrison a purpose beyond who or what he thought he was. When everything he had built his identity on was ripped away and replaced by something less than ideal, the gospel entered and gave him more than he ever knew he wanted. The gospel pulled Hannah out of the shadows and gave her a purpose far beyond her physical limitations. The gospel of Jesus has the power to change a person's identity and to give purpose in life beyond all limitations and expectations.

How clearly do you understand God's purpose for your life?

Use the spectrum provided to pinpoint your current level of awareness and plot an X on that spot.



Your identity in Christ makes you God's child, enjoying all of the rights and blessings of sonship. Your purpose in life makes you God's servant, dedicating your life to following His will.

Read Paul's testimony in Acts 22:3-16. Where did Paul place his identity before meeting Christ?

"I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia but brought up in this city, educated at the feet of Gamaliel according to the law of our ancestors. I was zealous for God, just as all of you are today. ⁴ I persecuted this Way to the death, arresting and putting both men and women in jail, ⁵ as both the high priest and the whole council of elders can testify about me. After I received letters from them to the brothers, I traveled to Damascus to arrest those who were there and bring them to Jerusalem to be punished.

⁶ "As I was traveling and approaching Damascus, about noon an intense light from heaven suddenly flashed around me. ⁷ I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?'

⁸ "I answered, 'Who are you, Lord?'

"He said to me, 'I am Jesus of Nazareth, the one you are persecuting.'⁹ Now those who were with me saw the light, but they did not hear the voice of the one who was speaking to me.

¹⁰ "I said, 'What should I do, Lord?'

"The Lord told me, 'Get up and go into Damascus, and there you will be told everything that you have been assigned to do.'

¹¹ "Since I couldn't see because of the brightness of the light, I was led by the hand by those who were with me, and went into Damascus. ¹² Someone named Ananias, a devout man according to the law, who had a good reputation with all the Jews living there, ¹³ came and stood by me and said, 'Brother Saul, regain your sight.' And in that very hour I looked up and saw him. ¹⁴ And he said, 'The God of our ancestors has appointed you to know his will, to see the Righteous One, and to hear the words from his mouth, ¹⁵ since you will be a witness for him to all people of what you have seen and heard. ¹⁶ And now, why are you delaying? Get up and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on his name.' (CSB)

For some people, a life-changing experience will be exactly how God reaches them. For others, life before Christ wasn't as dramatically distant and didn't require that level of encounter. No matter what type of testimony you have, change is part of it. Paul himself wrote: "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, and see, the new has come!" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

What are some before-and-after changes the gospel has made and is continuing to make in your identity and your purpose?

Post and reread 2 Corinthians 5:17 several times throughout the week. Use it as a reminder of the power of the gospel to change your life. Pray that God will keep your newness in Christ fresh this week. Pray that God will plant this verse in your life and that He will shape your identity to reflect its truth.

WHAT DO
YOU ALLOW
TO DEFINE
YOU?



In
Theaters
August 23!



FROM THE CREATORS OF WAR ROOM

OVERCOMER

This five-session small group Bible study uses clips from the film *OVERCOMER* to examine how we determine our identity and how we can find our true identity in Christ.

Learn more about this Bible study at lifeway.com/overcomerbiblestudy and more about the *OVERCOMER* movie and products at lifeway.com/overcomer.

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