

MOVIE: “You’ve Got Mail”**Subtopic Theme:**

Belonging in the Cloud

Lesson Objective:

To highlight the positive ways to foster and maintain relationships online and long-distance by drawing attention to helpful methods and the boundaries a healthy relationship has. In order to bring resilience and truer relationships into teens lives, we want to create a dialogue about the strengths and weaknesses of secondary communication. It is important that all of this is framed through the perspective of God’s love and desire for us all to have healthy fulfilling relationships.

**Intro to the Movie:***You’ve Got Mail*

According to Fandango.com:

Sleepless in Seattle director Nora Ephron originally made a name for herself as the writer of romantic comedies such as *Heartburn* and *When Harry Met Sally*. She continues the genre with *You've Got Mail*, marking her second collaboration with actors Tom Hanks and Meg Ryan. The story brings romance and courtship into the electronic age of the World Wide Web via e-mail and chat rooms. Joe Fox (Hanks) and Kathleen Kelly (Ryan) live and work blocks from each other on New York City's Upper West Side. Their lives are practically intertwined. They both shop at the same place, frequent the same coffee shop, and even own competing bookstores on the same street. They also both have significant others of their own. Joe has the overly hyper book editor Patricia Eden (Parker Posey), while Kathleen lives with the scholarly newspaper columnist Frank Navasky (Greg Kinnear). Then they meet in a chat room. Though they keep their identities secret (they're known only by screen names "NY152" and "Shopgirl"), they tell each other everything about their lives, including their private feelings, which slowly turn into affection for each other. When Joe decides to open a new branch of his "Foxbooks" chain that risks putting Kathleen's "Shop Around the Corner" out of business, the tension between them escalates. Surely her boutique business will be lost to the conglomerate with a built-in newsstand and coffee bar. When Joe sees Kathleen waiting for him in the restaurant where they agreed to meet up, he puts two and two together, but cannot face her, given their agreement not to reveal each others' names and professions. How can he reveal himself to her now, knowing that he is the cause of her misery? Hopefully, love will conquer all.

To view the trailer: <http://www.imdb.com/video/imdb/vi3707699481/>

The 3D Lenses

Pay attention to the different ways people communicate or miscommunicate. Look for good methods and also mistakes that people make. As you watch, keep in mind the guidance we receive through scripture for friendship and look for things that fit into those guidelines.

Discussion Group Questions:

1. Which Character did you relate to the most in this story?
2. What was one way of communicating that seemed particularly powerful to you?
3. According to this movie, what are some positive things about secondary communication?

Group Input:

Leader-solicited responses from the large group on reactions to some of the questions.

Gathering of ideas and themes recognized in the discussion groups with a focus on guiding the audience toward the main objective:

*To highlight the positive ways to foster and maintain relationships online and long-distance by drawing attention to helpful **methods** and the **boundaries** a healthy relationship has. In order to bring **resilience** and **truer relationships** into teens lives, we want to create a dialogue about the strengths and weaknesses of secondary communication. It is important that all of this is framed through the perspective of **God's love** and desire for us all to have healthy fulfilling relationships.*

Bullet Objective:

Put this summary section in your own words, but here are some ideas you can use:

Well I hope you enjoyed that movie and saw lots of different examples of good and bad communication. It's interesting how who we present ourselves to be online is both very true and highly inaccurate. What do you think? Do your facebook and Myspace pages

totally describe you? Could you learn everything there is to know about your friend from their tweets? No. You can't. And you shouldn't be able to. Human beings were created as these intricate, evolving, multi-layered people and it is impossible to know all there is to know about someone from studying their online presence. And, personally, I think that's a wonderful thing.

It doesn't, however, make what we put out there unimportant, particularly for you younger generations who are having so much of your time and relationships happening online. We need to remember that Jesus Christ asks us to live as witnesses for him. We have a responsibility to represent the love of God through our lives, words, and actions.

The anonymity online is dangerous because we fool ourselves into thinking it's ok to speak a certain way because we are never going to meet those people. It goes the other way too, it's tempting to be one person online and a different one to those around us. Like we saw with Meg Ryan and Tom Hanks' characters, they lied to their significant others and hid parts of themselves that they showed to each other online. Be truthful and have integrity. Speak to someone as you would if they were in front of you, but more than that, bring Jesus into your interactions. Keep his guidelines and his love in your minds at all times and seek to be that light that shines out into the world.

One of the main things that drew the two main characters together was they were both attracted to the passion and light the other had for their life and career. They encouraged and supported one another. They celebrated the beauty of life together and challenged one another. With bouquets of sharpened pencils and letters about a dog, they saw, and we saw, who they truly were and it was beautiful to watch. Let that inspire you, be yourself and be a good friend. Be a light on a hill showing God to everyone who sees you.

As Jesus said in Matthew 5:14-16:

“You are like light for the whole world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one lights a lamp and puts it under a bowl; instead it is put on the lampstand, where it gives light for everyone in the house. In the same way your light must shine before people, so that they will see the good things you do and praise your Father in heaven.”

Challenge:

Communicating online is something nearly everyone does these days and we don't really think much about it anymore. We exist in this funny place where we don't think what we put out into “cyberspace” really counts and yet it makes up a big chunk of our communication (for the average teen, 68% of your communication happens through

technology rather than face to face) So during this next week, look through your pages and posts, consider what material you associate with your identity and use to represent yourself, look at the words you write or the sites you frequent, and challenge yourself to live for one week according to this challenge Paul gives the Philippians. We are called to live our entire lives according to this guideline, so committing to it for a whole week should give you some idea of how you are doing.

Philippians 4:5-9 [emphasis added]

5 Show a gentle attitude toward everyone. The Lord is coming soon. **6** Don't worry about anything, but in all your prayers ask God for what you need, always asking him with a thankful heart. **7** And God's peace, which is far beyond human understanding, will keep your hearts and minds safe in union with Christ Jesus.

8 In conclusion, my friends, fill your minds with those things that are good and that deserve praise: things that are **true, noble, right, pure, lovely, and honorable**. **9** Put into practice what you learned and received from me, both from my words and from my actions. And the God who gives us peace will be with you.

Pray for students to have the courage to speak with love and truth online. Pray that they have wisdom and discernment as they interact online. Ask God to bless their commitment to healthy communication by showing them the results of their actions, that he would encourage them by showing the difference they are making; and, if he chooses not to do that, for them to have faith and stand fast on their convictions. Remind them of the online personal journey at ReZilient Life for further involvement with this topic of Belonging in the Cloud