Introduction: *Engage your group by engaging their thinking.*

Raise the following questions with your group: “What makes a person a good leader? What makes someone a good follower?”

Allow time for a few group members share their thoughts.

**Point 1: Help group members understand the major theme.**

In our day, it is easy to count on the government, culture, or institutions to determine what is right and wrong and to depend on them to lead, just as the Israelites did often with their leaders or the surrounding Canaanites.

As Christians, the Word of God is our standard for determining right and wrong, and the Lord Himself is the One we ultimately should trust. Ask these questions to instill the point of the session more deeply: “What is the source of morality? How do we know what is right and wrong? Does this manifest itself in your daily decisions?”

**Point 2: Help your group members grasp the concept of warnings by reading an article.**

Enlist a group member to read the following article aloud:

Warning labels are everywhere today—from new appliances to toys. Even medications include pages of small print about all that could possibly go wrong.

God’s Word is filled with warning labels, alerting us to things that are harmful to our spiritual health. When we read, “These six things the Lord hates, yes, seven are an abomination to Him” (Prov. 6:16), it grabs our attention like a flashing warning signal. The list that follows (vv. 17-19) warns against destructive tendencies like pride and dishonesty—sins that damage earthly relationships and grieve our heavenly Father. The text further states that “reproofs of instruction are the way of life” (v. 23). In other words, God’s warnings aren’t meant to take the fun out of life, but rather to protect and preserve life.

I’ll always remember as a child standing with my friend Bobby outside after church and watching him suddenly run toward the busy street. I heard his
mother yell, “Stop!” It was a warning to protect him, not to hinder his freedom.

Too often we’ve ignored God’s warnings to stop running in the wrong direction and suffered the consequences. Let’s remember that there’s freedom in heeding His warnings. They’re for our good.

_Lord, thank You for the warnings in Your Word that are intended to protect and preserve my life. Help me to heed Your reproofs and instruction that I may live a life that is pleasing to You._


After reading article, emphasize the following statement: _God’s Word is full of loving warnings to protect and preserve us._ Then raise the following questions for discussion:

- Why do we ignore God’s repeated warnings?
- What does that say about our hearts?

**Point 3: Help group members understand the main idea with a New Testament passage.**

Enlist a volunteer from the group to read aloud Hebrews 13:5-6. Then give the group a few minutes to think about it in relationship to God’s promise of His presence and to our security.

Present the following questions to the group for discussion: “Why does God say He will never leave or forsake us? What are the implications for everyday living?” Allow 2-3 class members share their insights.

**Conclusion: Challenge group members to live the session.**

Read the following quote to your group:

“God proves Himself to be more generous to us than our highest hopes. The darkness of our doubt is burned away in the light of His presence.”
Let them think about the quote for a couple of minutes and offer a time of prayer as you conclude the session by encouraging them to thank God for His faithfulness to His people in spite of our unfaithfulness.

[Source: Jim Thomas, *Streetwise Spirituality* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2001), 156.]

**Teaching Tip of the Week**

One of the ways to help participants understand new material or challenging concepts is to provide them with one or more analogies or word pictures that help them make the connection between something they are familiar with to something with which they are not familiar.

Examine the following passages to get a glimpse of how the Master Teacher did it:
- Matthew 4:19
- Matthew 9:9-17
- John 10:1-10

In your approach to teaching, look for comparisons and examples from daily life to really help your group members “get” the material.