



SMALL GROUP LEADER GUIDE

Deep / Week 4

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME

LEADER PREP

CONVERSATION GUIDE

BOTTOM LINE

God can use tough times to grow our faith.

SCRIPTURE

John 11:21-22 NIV; John 11:45 NIV

GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

To point students toward looking for and inviting God into the tough times they face in life.

THINK ABOUT THIS

Middle schoolers' emotions are expanding and intensifying rapidly in this phase. They're experiencing so many new feelings all the time, making knowing how to name what they're feeling sometimes difficult. They tend to know they're feeling "something" very strongly and it comes out in a number of ways. Keep in mind that the conversation in and around your Small Group this week may be the first time they're putting words to some of the feelings and experiences they're dealing with right now.

This guide is a suggestion, not a formula. Adjust the questions and activities as needed, and don't feel like you need to do, or ask, everything you see here.

JUST FOR FUN

Talking about the tough times in our lives isn't easy. I'm so thankful we have a safe place like this Small Group to process it together.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Talking about the tough times in our lives isn't easy. I'm so thankful we have a safe place like this Small Group to process it together.

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, how comfortable do you feel talking about tough times in your life? (1– completely uncomfortable, 10–totally comfortable)
2. What's one example of a difficult circumstance or tough time that a middle schooler might experience?
3. What's one way a middle schooler might respond during tough times?
4. Why do you think it matters how we respond to tough times?
5. Where do you think God is during tough times?
6. Do you think it's okay to be angry or mad at God? Why or why not?
7. What do you think God would say to you during a tough time?
8. Is it hard to believe that God can use your tough times to grow your faith? Why or why not?
9. This week, what's one thing you can do to look for God in a tough time?

XP (EXPERIENCE)

Ask your few to use the provided journal page to process any difficult situations they may be facing in their lives. Give them time to quietly write so that they can really consider and name their feelings. End Small Group by giving each student a bracelet. Tell them to wear it when they need a reminder that God is with them during the tough times they may have written about. They may also choose to give it to someone they know who is currently going through a challenging experience.

TOUGH TIMES CAN GROW OUR FAITH

There's no pain or challenge too great that it keeps God from working in big ways in your life. Use the provided space to think about and process any difficult situations you may be facing right now. Trust God with your circumstances and choose to believe that no matter what the outcome is, God can use it to grow your faith.

One of the **TOUGH THINGS** going on in my life right now is . . .

The thing that **CONFUSES ME** the most about this situation is . . .

My **PRAYER** is . . .

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