



SMALL GROUP LEADER GUIDE

It's Personal / Week 1

So How Does This Work?

You've probably noticed the whole world has changed in different ways. And, your group time may be changing, too. This adaptation is a tool to help you integrate teaching time with small group time so that the message is broken up and discussed along the way.

IF YOU ARE USING A TEACHING VIDEO

The speaker will pause at key moments and questions will appear on screen. Remember, to pause the video and give your group time to discuss. Your church may give you a specific amount of time or leave it up to you. When the conversation is ready to transition, start up the video again.

After the video, be sure to wrap up with more discussion if needed or prayer time. And don't forget to check out the "Try This" section of your Small Group Leader Guide.

IF SOMEONE IS COMMUNICATING LIVE

The speaker will pause at key moments and give your groups time to discuss. Whether you're meeting digitally or in a small group in person, the communicator should give you an idea of how long you have to chat and which questions to discuss.

After the talk, be sure to wrap up with more discussion if needed or prayer time. And don't forget to check out the "Try This" section of your Small Group Leader Guide.

Don't Forget

Read Ahead

No matter where or how you lead your group, it's important to spend a few minutes preparing. Take time to read the THINK ABOUT THIS section which will set you up to meet your students right where they are. And don't forget the GOAL OF SMALL GROUP which will point your conversation in the right direction.

Make it Personal

Remember, nobody knows your group quite like you. Just because a question appears on a piece of paper or on screen doesn't mean you have to ask it or use the same words. Ultimately YOU are guiding the conversation for your group. So feel free to add, delete or adapt questions to meet their needs.

Let them know what is happening

Chances are your few are curious what group will look like if you're changing formats. At the beginning of group time, give them an idea how the format may have changed so they will know what to expect.

BEFORE GROUP

BOTTOM LINE

It's personal because Jesus knows your name.

SCRIPTURE

Jesus entered Jericho and made his way through the town. There was a man there named Zacchaeus. He was the chief tax collector in the region, and he had become very rich. He tried to get a look at Jesus, but he was too short to see over the crowd. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree beside the road, for Jesus was going to pass that way. When Jesus came by, he looked up at Zacchaeus and called him by name. "Zacchaeus!" he said. "Quick, come down! I must be a guest in your home today." Zacchaeus quickly climbed down and took Jesus to his house in great excitement and joy. But the people were displeased. "He has gone to be the guest of a notorious sinner," they grumbled. Meanwhile, Zacchaeus stood before the Lord and said, "I will give half my wealth to the poor, Lord, and if I have cheated people on their taxes, I will give them back four times as much!" Jesus responded, "Salvation has come to this home today, for this man has shown himself to be a true son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost." Luke 19:1-10 NLT.

GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

To help students understand that Jesus knows them personally, and because of Him, they should get to know others personally— beginning with their names.

THINK ABOUT THIS

As a leader, we are engaged in personal ministry— but it is difficult to be personal without knowing someone's name. You probably remember a time when you met someone over and over who didn't bother to learn your name or pronounce it correctly. For teenagers, this experience is common, and is an easy way to mentally separate "adults who care" and "adults who don't really care". That's why, as their leader, the absolute baseline of what we must do to earn credibility is to learn their names and pronounce them correctly.

Create meaningful conversations. Adjust the questions as needed, and don't feel like you need to answer all of them.

DURING GROUP

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

After the first break, discuss this question:

1. What's your middle name? Do you know what your last name means?

After the second break, discuss these questions:

2. Why do you think people care about people knowing their names? Why do we want people to know who we are?
3. How does it make you feel when someone clearly doesn't know your name? How does it make you feel when someone you thought didn't know your name, remembers it?

After the third break, discuss this question:

4. Is it easy for you to believe that God knows you personally? Why do you think that?

After the fourth break, discuss these questions:

5. How would you have felt if you were Zacchaeus? What would you have felt if you were someone in the crowd watching Jesus interact with Zacchaeus?
6. How can knowing that God knows you personally change how you see yourself? How you see God? How you see others?

After the fifth break, discuss these questions:

7. What can we learn from how Jesus treated Zacchaeus? How might it change someone's view of God by the way you, as someone who goes to church, treats them?

After the sixth break, discuss these questions:

8. Who are some people we easily overlook each week? Who is someone you have overlooked during quarantine?
 - a. Someone in your neighborhood who lives alone?
 - b. Someone younger than you that doesn't have an older sibling?
 - c. Someone in your class who might seem shy?
 - d. The cashier at the grocery store?
 - e. A family member who you have not talked to in a while?
9. Is there a way, this week, to learn the name of someone you've overlooked and make them feel noticed?

TRY THIS

Leaders, think about some people around our small group (a student, a students' parent, another Small Group Leader, etc.) and send them a text this week to let them know that they are known and noticed.
