

SMALL GROUP LEADER GUIDE

This or That / Week 1

BEFORE GROUP

BOTTOM LINE

God doesn't compare you to others.

SCRIPTURE

2 Corinthians 10:12 NLT; 2 Corinthians 10:18 NLT;
Proverbs 4:23 NLT

GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

To encourage students to shift their focus away from wanting to be like someone else, and instead focus on who God made them to be.

THINK ABOUT THIS

Identifying what they like about other people—things they wish they had in themselves—is probably going to

be easy for most middle schoolers. That's because they think a lot about that! The way they see themselves is influenced primarily by their peers in this phase, so it's easy for them to identify something they see in a friend or fellow student that they don't see in themselves. It's more difficult for middle schoolers to recognize things in themselves that they like or that make them unique. That's because most middle schoolers lack self-awareness, and that makes seeing themselves realistically a challenge. And if they do recognize those good things, they may be hesitant to say them for fear of being made fun of or sounding like they're bragging.

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.

DURING GROUP

ICE BREAKER

Let's start with a quick game of "This or That!" I'll give you two options, and you pick your favorite out of the two:

- Books or movies?
- Billie Eilish or Taylor Swift?
- Kanye or Chance the Rapper?
- PopTarts or Toaster Strudels?
- Pizza or ice cream?
- SnapChat or Instagram?
- YouTube or TikTok?

DISCUSS THIS

Transition: Great choices! When it comes to things like that, it's probably fun to choose this or that! But when we're comparing this in our lives to that in someone else's, it isn't as fun, is it?

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, how often do you think most middle schoolers wish they had what somebody else had?
2. What's one example of something (a talent, a quality, an ability, a possession, a personality trait, etc.) a middle schooler might wish they had that someone else had?
3. Why do you think we want what other people have sometimes?
4. What's one word you would use to describe how it feels to want what someone else has?
5. What's one word you would use to describe when somebody else wants what you have?
6. How does it feel to know God doesn't want you to be like anyone else?
7. This week, what's one thing you can do when you're tempted to focus on what you don't have or what you aren't?

DO THIS (EXPERIENCE)

Play a game of "hot potato" using a toss-able random item (like a stuffed animal, a shoe, a dog toy, or a random discount store item). When a student catches the item, they'll answer the question:

"What's something you often get complimented for...."

- In the way you treat others?
- At school?
- When it comes to something you are good at?
- When you aren't around?