

SMALL GROUP LEADER GUIDE

LOVE. / Week 1

BEFORE GROUP

BOTTOM LINE

How Jesus loved us shows us what love can do.

SCRIPTURE

1 John 4:8b-10 NIV

GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

To help students see the ways they view God and to encourage them to see that the Easter story shows us that God is love.

THINK ABOUT THIS

The focus of the conversation this week is two-fold. First, it's to help students recognize the ways they may be viewing God right now. After all, they can't change the way they see or experience God if they don't first recognize the patterns of thought they currently have toward God. Some may be fully aware that when they think about God, things like anger, disappointment, confusion, or even apathy may come up right away. But others may not fully recognize that they're harboring some frustrating or unclear thoughts about who God is to them. After they acknowledge how they're currently thinking, the hope is to help students recognize who God truly is to all of us, and that's love. The Easter story is the ultimate evidence of God's love for us, so be sure to frame this conversation through that lens.

This guide is a suggestion, not a formula. Adjust the content as needed, and don't feel like you need to complete everything listed.

DURING GROUP

DISCUSS THIS

1. How can God's love transform your life?
2. Tell us a little bit of what you know about the Easter story.
3. Why do you think what we celebrate at Easter is supposed to be "good news"?
4. What might make it hard for a high schooler to believe God is good?
5. *Upperclassmen Question:* Are there any specific life circumstances or situations that have caused you to question whether or not God is good?
6. What does Jesus' death and resurrection show us about who God is? What does it show us about how God feels about us?
7. What might change about your life if you believed God really is love?
8. This week, what's one step you can take to discover more about God's love for you?

TRY THIS

During this season, you may have several new or visiting faces in your group. This is a great opportunity for you to develop a strategy for welcoming in, getting to know, and following up with those students who come for the first time during the Easter season. Make sure to get their phone numbers, social media handles, or whatever form of communication they prefer. Then, be sure to connect with them this week and invite them back. A simple invitation can go a long way in making students feel comfortable and seen enough to return.