

SMALL  GROUP

SMALL GROUP LEADER GUIDE

How To See God / Week 2

BEFORE GROUP

BOTTOM LINE

Practice helps you progress.

SCRIPTURE

Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed. Simon and his companions went to look for him, and when they found him, they exclaimed: "Everyone is looking for you!" (Mark 1:35-37 NIV).

But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23a NLT).

GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

To show students the value of developing and practicing spiritual habits to connect with God in their everyday lives.

THINK ABOUT THIS

This week's conversation focuses on the value of putting in the work—the practice of our faith—to see more of God at work in our everyday lives. In short, you're encouraging your middle schoolers to see the value in developing regular spiritual habits. It's important to remember that this conversation isn't designed to encourage students toward a works-based faith. We don't want them to leave thinking that they're required to do anything in order to be loved by God. That's not true at all! Rather, we want them to understand that spiritual habits—things like reading the Bible, showing up to Small Group, listening to worship music, praying—can help them get to know and connect with God in new ways. It's not about doing anything to earn God's love or approval; it's simply about seeing God through these practices as part of their everyday faith.

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. Tell us about a time when you had to practice to get better at something.
2. What might keep a middle schooler from wanting to put in the work and practice something?
3. What might make a middle schooler not want to practice when it comes to their faith?

DO THIS (EXPERIENCE 1)

As you discuss question 4, use a whiteboard, posterboard, or sticky notes on a wall to list out ways your group sees Jesus developing spiritual habits like prayer, fasting, studying scripture, etc. Then, during question 5, have students list out ways a middle schooler can practice looking for or connecting with God!

4. In what ways have you seen or read about Jesus developing practices to help connect with God?
5. What are some ways a middle schooler might practice looking for or connecting with God?
6. How do you think putting in the practice with your faith can help your faith grow?

DO THIS (EXPERIENCE 2)

When talking through question 7, have your students identify the fruit of the Spirit they want to practice in their life. Then, ask them to write down or draw what that looks like in action using colored paper and markers.

7. Look back at Galatians 5:22-23. What's one fruit of the Spirit you want to see in your life?
 8. This week, what's one step you can take to put in the practice to help it grow?
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