

# STUMMIN

SMALL GROUP  
LEADER GUIDE

MIDDLE  
SCHOOL  
FOCUS

## AFTERLIFE APRIL 14, 2021

Week 2 of a 4-week series  
about Easter

### BOTTOM LINE

Because of the resurrection,  
Mary knew she mattered.

### SCRIPTURE

*Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: "I have seen the Lord!" And she told them that he had said these things to her.*

- John 20:17-18 NIV

### GOALS OF SMALL GROUP

To show students that they, and others, matter to Jesus.  
To encourage students to treat themselves and others accordingly.

### >> BEFORE GROUP

**THINK ABOUT THIS:** Keep in mind as you lead this week, you'll be guiding the conversation for students who are coming in with all kinds of viewpoints and understandings of Jesus, the resurrection, and what it means to them. While any kind of decision made to follow Jesus is important and worth celebrating as a win for your group, sometimes the win is simply that the students showed up. If they don't walk away fully sure of what they believe or think about Easter this week, that's okay. The goal is to simply make them feel seen and important so that they walk away wanting to come back and keep the conversation going!

### >> DURING GROUP

*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.*

#### DISCUSS THIS:

- In your opinion, who's the most important person in the world? Why did you choose this person? What, specifically, makes them important?

#### DO THIS:

Choose one group member to be "it." Then, go around the group and take turns saying one reason why this person is important. You can choose to say something about how they contribute positively to the group experience, why they are important on a team they are involved with, how a character trait they exhibit makes the world a better place, or any other reason group members want to share. Continue doing this activity until everybody has had a turn being "it."

#### DISCUSS THIS:

- How does knowing that others think you're important make you feel?
- Which comment given made you feel the most important? Why?
- What's one way the Easter story shows us that we're important to Jesus?
- Does the resurrection feel important to your life today? Why or why not?
- What's something about the Easter story you want to know more about?

#### DO THIS:

Close out your time together by saying the full name of each group member, followed by the phrase "you are important to Jesus." Treat this activity as a prayer time, leaving some quiet time and space to let the words take hold.

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**>> BEFORE GROUP**

**THINK ABOUT THIS:** When students think about "mattering," it may seem like a given. However, that doesn't always translate into how they treat themselves and others. Help them think critically about whether their actions show that they value themselves and others.

**>> DURING GROUP**

*Create meaningful conversations. Adjust the questions as needed and ask thoughtful follow-up questions as the conversation unfolds. Don't feel like you need to answer every question.*

**DISCUSS THIS:**

- What is the most amazing news someone has ever told you?
- Have you ever been the first person someone told their amazingly good news to? If so, how did it feel?
- How can you tell someone matters to someone else? For example, is it easy to guess when one of your friends has a crush on somebody? What are the signs?
- Do you think most high schoolers feel like they matter to God?
- Ask for a volunteer to read John 20:11-18 aloud. As it is being read, imagine you're Jesus' friend, Mary. Think about words/phrases that would describe what she might have been thinking/feeling at each moment. Share your ideas with the group.
- Jesus chose Mary to be the first one He appeared to after the resurrection, and trusted her to share the news with the other disciples. How do you think Mary felt to be trusted with this responsibility?
- Share about a time you were trusted with a big responsibility. How did it make you feel?
- The way we treat someone often influences how they think God feels about them. What's one thing you can do this week to treat others (or one specific person) like they matter to God?

**>> AFTER GROUP**

At two different times this week, try sending out a group text and facilitate the conversation as it unfolds by asking thoughtful follow-up questions.

Text 1: This week at StuMin, we talked about how much we matter to God.

- Do you believe that you matter?
- Do you treat yourself as if you matter?
- Do you allow other people to treat you as if you don't matter?

Text 2: Given that all people matter to God,

- Do you treat others as if they matter?
- Are there people you treat as though they matter more?
- Are there people you treat as if they don't matter at all?