

STUMIN

SMALL GROUP LEADER GUIDE

MIDDLE SCHOOL FOCUS

STEP BY STEP

NOVEMBER 30, 2022

Week 5 of a 5-week series
about transformation

BOTTOM LINE

Look for the Holy Spirit
in others and the world.

SCRIPTURE

*But the fruit of the Spirit is
love, joy, peace, [patience],
kindness, goodness,
faithfulness, gentleness
and self-control.*
- Galatians 5:22-23a NIV

*Those who are dominated
by the sinful nature think
about sinful things, but those
who are controlled by the
Holy Spirit think about things
that please the Spirit.*
- Romans 8:5 NLT

GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

To show students how the
Spirit can change the way
they see others and the
world around them

>> BEFORE GROUP

THINK ABOUT THIS: This week's message encourages students to begin looking for evidence of God at work through the Holy Spirit in the people and world around them. Depending on their natural wiring, this may be easier for some than others. Those students who tend to see the world with a "glass half full" approach may be quicker to see evidence of the fruit of the Spirit than those who may have a more "glass half empty" worldview. Remember, the goal here isn't to encourage any form of toxic positivity, meaning we don't want to force students to see good in situations or circumstances that are really difficult, challenging, or unfair before they're ready to. Instead, we simply want to nudge them toward knowing, believing, and eventually seeing God at work in the world around them in all seasons and circumstances.

>> 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:

- What's the best news you have heard/seen/read/watched/experienced lately? How do you see the Holy Spirit working in that good news situation?
- I think we can all agree that it is easier to see the Holy Spirit working in good news situations than in bad news situations. Without dwelling on the negative, name a few bad situations that you've seen in the news or experienced personally over the past few years. (The pandemic lockdown may be good place to start.) What evidence of the Holy Spirit working can you see in bad/challenging situations? (For example: maybe your family found ways to live together peacefully and/or became more patient with one another after the initial shock of so much forced togetherness.)
- Why do you think it's important to look for the Holy Spirit in others and the world? How might looking for the Holy Spirit at work in others and the world change us?
- What's one thing that makes it difficult to see how the Holy Spirit is working in others and the world?
- Who is one person that displays a quality of the Holy Spirit that you would like to see more of in your life? What quality is it? How, specifically, have you seen it in them? What have you learned by watching the Holy Spirit work in and through that person?
- Share about a time that somebody "called out the good in you" by complimenting you about something positive they saw in you.

DO THIS:

Challenge your group members to think about somebody they can encourage by pointing out the good they see in them. Make a group pact to follow through THIS WEEK and actually say something kind and encouraging to the people they identified.

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HIGH SCHOOL FOCUS

STEP BY STEP

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>> BEFORE GROUP

THINK ABOUT THIS: So many of us struggle to see God at work in our lives and circumstances on a daily basis. Be careful not to downplay the difficult experiences or challenging circumstances your students may be walking through. While those things can make it harder to see the Holy Spirit at work, we know that in reality, challenging circumstances can be opportunities to look for God's promise to be with us. Give your group space to process why they may be struggling to see the full live Jesus promises through the Spirit while still pointing them toward the truth that God is always working for their good.

>> 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's something you've learned or discovered that had an impact on how you see the world? (For example, you learned that a friend was allergic to gluten and became more aware of how many foods have gluten in them. Or you learned that the color black absorbs more heat so now you choose to wear light-colored clothing on hot days, etc.)
- The Holy Spirit helps us see the world differently. How does looking for the fruit of the Spirit daily change how you see the world?
- How does seeing the Holy Spirit in others and the world help you live differently?
- How might the world look different if more people saw the good in life by looking for the evidence or fruit of the Spirit? How might your school look different? How might your team look different? How might your home look different?
- What makes seeing the Holy Spirit in others and the world difficult at times? What can/do you do to change your mindset when you find yourself dwelling on negative things?
- In the message, we were asked to focus this week on seeing the qualities of the fruit of the Spirit in others. And when we see it, we were challenged to learn from it and call it out.
 - Who, specifically, would you like to learn from this week? What's one specific action step you can take to allow the Spirit to teach you something from their example?
 - Who, specifically, could you encourage by pointing out the good you see in them this week? What's one specific thing you could say?

TRY THIS:

Pick a day to randomly send a group text and ask everybody to reply with one way they see something about the Holy Spirit/fruit of the Spirit in the current moment. This exercise will help your group practice talking about how they see God at work in the world around them.