

STUMMIN

SMALL GROUP
LEADER GUIDE

MIDDLE
SCHOOL
FOCUS

FAMILY MATTERS OCTOBER 7, 2020

Week 1 of a 4-week series
about family

BOTTOM LINE

When it comes to your faith
and your family,
love matters most.

SCRIPTURE

*By this everyone will know
that you are my disciples,
if you love one another.
- John 13:35 (NIV).*

*Love is patient, love is kind.
It does not envy, it does not
boast, it is not proud. It does
not dishonor others, it is not
self-seeking, it is not easily
angered, it keeps no record of
wrongs. Love does not delight
in evil but rejoices with the
truth. It always protects,
always trusts, always
hopes, always perseveres.
- 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 NIV*

GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

To encourage students to
recognize and practice ways
they can love their families.

>> BEFORE GROUP

THINK ABOUT THIS: Leading discussions during this series may be challenging because each student comes from a different family dynamic. No two families look exactly the same! So, keep what you know about each student's family in mind as you're having this conversation. Do your best to include examples, scenarios, or thoughts that will speak to multiple family situations or dynamics.

>> 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 your favorite thing about your family?
- What's the weirdest, craziest, or most fun thing about your family?
- What's one thing you would change about your family if you could?
- In your own words, how would you explain what it looks like to love your family?
- What's one reason it might be hard to love your family at times?

DO THIS:

Ask your group to personalize the Scripture by writing their name in the blanks on the Activity Page. Read it out loud together and ask everybody to say their name when they come to the blanks.

- Does reading the Scripture passage this way change the way you think about it? Why or why not?

Now have your group underline the part of the Scripture they just personalized that's the most difficult for them to live out.

- Which of these characteristics of love is the hardest for you and why?
- How might showing love to your family impact your family in positive ways?
- How might showing love to your family impact you in positive ways?

Lastly, ask your group to circle the part of the Scripture they're going to focus on this week.

- This week, which characteristic of love will you focus on when it comes to interacting with your family?
- What is one specific thing you can do this week to show love to your family this way?

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>> BEFORE GROUP

THINK ABOUT THIS: Family dynamics can be one of the most complicated things for high school students to navigate. Students feel the weight of the things happening in their homes, and they know what it feels like to take on responsibility - both tangibly and emotionally - in their homes. That's why in this four-week series, Family Matters, we'll explore how to apply Biblical wisdom to anything and everything that your group members may be experiencing within their families.

>> 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:

- Show or tell about a meme that best describes your family. Why did you pick this meme?
- Come up with a list of questions about families (Does your family eat meals together? What is the most fun you have ever had with your family? etc.) and then take turns answering them.
- Fill in the blank: In my family I am the _____ one.
- Quarantine affected how all of us feel about our families. If you could rewrite that experience, what would you want to do differently? What went well?
- On a scale of easy to awkward, what is it like to talk about faith in your family? Do you find it easy or difficult to live out your faith in how you treat your family? Why?
- Sometimes unrealistic expectations of our family can cause stress in our lives. What should be we able to expect from our families? What expectations do you have that may be unrealistic?
- Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. Which one of these characteristics of love would benefit your family the most? How can you do better at showing love in this way?
- Share a story of a time you or someone in your family loved well according to the definition of love in 1 Corinthians 13. Now, share a story of a time you or someone in your family fell short of these ideals.
- How can this small group support you in loving your family better?

TRY THIS:

As a group, brainstorm some ideas for how you can show love to your families this week. Then, follow up with each other during the week, encouraging one another to keep loving your families when it gets really challenging.

>> AFTER GROUP

Be sure to remember to follow up with your group this week and encourage them in their efforts to love their families through whatever challenges they face.