

STUMMIN

SMALL GROUP
LEADER GUIDE

MIDDLE
SCHOOL
FOCUS

EXPLAINED

SEPTEMBER 23, 2020

Week 2 of a 3-week series
about the Bible

BOTTOM LINE

When it comes to the Bible,
we read it because God is
in it.

SCRIPTURE

*All Scripture is God-
breathed and is useful
for teaching, rebuking,
correcting and training
in righteousness.
(2 Timothy 3:16 NIV)*

*Then the Lord God formed
a man from the dust of
the ground and breathed
into his nostrils the breath
of life, and the man
became a living being.
(Genesis 2:7 NIV)*

GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

To help students understand
that the Bible is worth
reading because they can
find God there.

>> BEFORE GROUP

THINK ABOUT THIS: Understanding what it means to “see” God in something might be difficult for your middle schoolers to understand. For starters, it’s an abstract concept, and that’s challenging for them in this phase. On top of that, it requires some level of awareness of the fact that God is active and working in their world. Some of them may have experienced or felt this before, but others may have no idea this could even be possible. Examples are going to be very helpful for this conversation! Feel free to share some of the places, people, or ways in which you see God to give your group a better understanding of what this can look like in their lives as well.

>> 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:

- Name one thing you think that reading the Bible can do for you?

For the next question, your students can use their phones if they have them. As you ask the three parts of this question, have group members pick the GIF, meme, or emoji that best represents their answer and share it with the group. (NOTE: If your group doesn’t have access to their phones, you can ask them to act it out, use an exaggerated facial expression, or just describe their feelings with words.)

- How might a middle schooler feel when they read the Bible, but ...
 - ◇ They don’t find the answer they’re looking for?
 - ◇ Their circumstances don’t change?
 - ◇ They don’t feel any different?
- Share about a time you saw God in ...
 - ◇ Nature?
 - ◇ Your family or friends?
 - ◇ Your Small Group?
 - ◇ Music?
 - ◇ The Bible?
- How might believing God can be found in the Bible change the way you feel about reading it?

DO THIS:

Using the suggested prayer topics on the activity page, lead your group in prayer. Then, ask your group to create their Bible reading plan and encourage them, in the space provided, to journal about their time spent in God’s Word throughout the week.

STUMMIN

SMALL GROUP
LEADER GUIDE

HIGH
SCHOOL
FOCUS

EXPLAINED

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GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

To help students understand
how and why the Bible is
useful and applicable in
their lives.

>> BEFORE GROUP

THINK ABOUT THIS: At this phase, students have a variety of experiences and varying levels of interest in Scripture. Some may enjoy Scripture. Some may have tried it and not found any value at all, and some may have never read a single verse. Do not get discouraged if students aren't exactly excited about reading anything ... especially the Bible. And remember, as leaders, our goal isn't to cast judgement on anybody who isn't particularly interested or experienced with Scripture, but to encourage a healthy curiosity when it comes to the Bible and to celebrate any small steps students make to connect to God in a personal way.

>> 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:

- Who has been a coach or mentor in your life? What is the most important/helpful thing they ever told you?
- If you had one last opportunity to tell somebody something very important, who would you tell and what would you tell them?
- Who are the content creators you follow? Why do you follow them? How might this relate to the Bible and the content creator(s) of the Bible?
- Paul tells us Scripture is God-breathed, and Genesis tells us God breathed into Adam and gave him life. Where God breathes, life follows. Share about a time you felt most "alive." In what way, if any, did you sense God's presence during this time?
- Does reading the Bible make you feel "alive" and/or closer to God? If so, share about a time this happened for you.
- Read 2 Timothy 3:16. Has the Bible been useful for you in these ways? What are some other ways the Bible has been helpful in your life?
- Do you know anybody who reads the Bible regularly? How does it appear to impact their life?
- What is something that you didn't understand until you tried it (a popular TV series, the latest Starbucks drink craze, that new TikTok dance challenge). Sometimes the Bible is like that. It's hard to see that it's helpful until you try it. So, let's "try this" together this week. *(End your small group time by challenging your group with the TRY THIS below.)*

TRY THIS:

This week, encourage your group to read Psalm 139 on their own. Encourage them, as they read, to ask themselves the following questions.

- What is a word or phrase that stood out to you from the passage?
- Why might that word or phrase be important to you right now?
- What could God be saying to you through that word or phrase? How can you respond to God?

>> AFTER GROUP

During the week, follow up with group members via text, asking them to share what they are learning from Psalm 139.