

STUMIN

SMALL GROUP LEADER GUIDE

MIDDLE SCHOOL FOCUS

SIMPLIFY

JANUARY 24, 2024

Week 3 of a 4-week series
about what Jesus said
matters most

BOTTOM LINE

Let God determine your
view of you.

SCRIPTURE

Luke 15:1-7 NIV
(The Parable of the Lost Sheep)

*There will be more rejoicing
in heaven over one sinner
who repents than over
ninety-nine righteous
persons who do not need
to repent.*

-Luke 15:1-7b NIV

GOALS OF SMALL GROUP

To point students toward
finding their value in God
and to encourage them to
love themselves the way
God loves them

>> BEFORE GROUP

THINK ABOUT THIS: Middle schoolers look for their value in all kinds of places. In this phase, things like friends, grades, likes on social media, popularity, sports, and more are what they use to determine their value. Of course, we know that ultimately, their value really comes from God. That's what we want them to learn this week and to take with them the rest of their lives. However, be careful not to make the places they might be finding value in right now seem bad or wrong. Rather, focus on helping them recognize that the only unchanging, lasting place to find their value is in who God says they are.

>> 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:

- How do you know if something is valuable?
- What are some ways you take care of things that are valuable?
- Share a story about a time that you lost something valuable How did losing it make you feel? What did you do to try to find it? Were you successful?
- What's one thing that might make a middle schooler feel valued?
- How might finding our value in the things discussed above not be helpful at times?
- What is something you learned by hearing the Parable of the Lost Sheep?
- On a scale of 1-10, how much did you feel like God valued you before coming to StuMin tonight?
- Did hearing that God values you "off the charts" change anything for you? If so, what?
- What's one thing you remember from the message that God says about you in scripture?
- What's one way you can discover more about who God says you are?

DO THIS:

Select a Scripture passage and make a social media reel where each student says a word/phrase to create a mashup of the passage. We recommend the Message paraphrase of 1 Peter 2:9-10, Ephesians 1:4-5, Psalm 139:13-16, Ephesians 2:10, or any other passage that speaks to the way God sees or values us.

STUMIN

SMALL GROUP LEADER GUIDE

HIGH
SCHOOL
FOCUS

SIMPLIFY

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>> BEFORE GROUP

THINK ABOUT THIS: Your students will approach the conversation this week from a number of perspectives. Some may be struggling with pride or ego, finding their value in places that aren't always healthy. Others may experience little love from the people in their lives, making them feel incapable or unworthy of loving themselves. Still others may be dealing with debilitating self-loathing. For them, loving themselves feels impossible. Remember, you're in the unique position to not only remind your group members what is true about them—that they are loved and valued by God—but to also demonstrate that love by speaking life and truth into who they are.

>> 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:

- Using only one word, share one thing you love about yourself with the group.
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how much would you say you love who you are right now?
- What's one thing that makes loving (or even just liking!) ourselves difficult at times?
- Why do you think it can be easier to love God or love others than it is to love ourselves?
- Where do you tend to look to find your value?
- How is our ability to love others connected to the way we love ourselves?
- What's one thing you know to be true about how God values you?
- Does knowing the way God values you change anything about the way you value yourself? Why or why not?

>> AFTER GROUP

Leaders, this week is a great opportunity to spend time in prayer for your students. Finding their value in who God says they are isn't easy in high school (or at all!). So, support your students by praying that God will help them take even the smallest step in loving themselves with the love of God.