

STUMIN

SMALL GROUP LEADER GUIDE

MIDDLE SCHOOL FOCUS

THE BIG QUESTIONS

NOVEMBER 8, 2023

Week 2 of a 4-week series
about identity, belonging &
purpose

BOTTOM LINE

As a child of God,
you are enough.

SCRIPTURE

*"A youth here has five
barley loaves and two fish.
But what good is that for a
crowd like this?"*

- John 6:9 CEB

*For we are God's handiwork,
created in Christ Jesus
to do good works,
which God prepared
in advance for us to do.*

- Ephesians 2:10 NIV

GOALS OF SMALL GROUP

To show students that who
they are in Jesus is enough,
and to help them hold on to
that truth as the answer to
their big questions
about identity

>> BEFORE GROUP

THINK ABOUT THIS: Identity is a big concept for anyone to consider, but especially for middle schoolers. They may not even realize that they're asking big questions about who they are in this phase because their self-awareness is still developing. As they continue to grow and go through puberty, their brains will develop an ability to think abstractly about things like identity. With this brain development, they'll become more self-aware and be able to consider how they really see themselves. Though they may not phrase it as, "Who am I?" middle schoolers are asking some form of that identity-based question every day. In their heads it may be more phrased like this: "Am I enough?"

>> 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:

- Have you ever wanted to be like a TV/movie/gaming character? If so, which one and in what ways did you want to be like them?
- What are three words your friends might use to describe you?
- What's one thing that might make someone feel like they aren't enough?
- What's something someone might do to prove they are enough?
- Share about a time you felt like you had to prove you were enough.

DO THIS:

Scatter the provided scenario cards in the middle of your group. Using the Feelings Wheel, ask your group to talk through what feelings they might experience if they were in these situations. If they have ever been in similar situations, ask them to share about what they did and how they felt.

DISCUSS THIS:

- How does it make you feel to know that Jesus says you already are enough?
- Who are some people in your life who love and accept you as you are?
- Where are some places in your life where you feel accepted as you are?
- What can we do as a group to make our small group a place where everyone feels loved and accepted? What do we already do well? What do we need to work on?

STUMIN

SMALL GROUP LEADER GUIDE

HIGH SCHOOL FOCUS

THE BIG QUESTIONS

NOVEMBER 8, 2023

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about identity, belonging &
purpose

BOTTOM LINE

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their big questions
about identity



>> BEFORE GROUP

THINK ABOUT THIS: At this phase, students feel tremendous pressure to decide who they are, but they're still just beginning to discover themselves. Take some of the stress off by reminding them that defining who they are is not a destination they reach, but a lifelong process. Encourage them to know that no matter how their interests, talents, and life circumstances change, Jesus says they are enough.

>> 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:

- If your group members have their phones, go around and share what you have listed about yourself in a social media bio. If group members don't have a phone or a social media bio, challenge them to share how they would describe themselves to someone they are meeting for the first time.
- Take turns filling in the blank: "I wish I were more _____."

DO THIS:

As a group, brainstorm as many words as you can that people use to describe themselves (such as leader, creative, life of the party, successful, helpful, likeable, etc.). Write each word on a post-it note and set the notes where everyone can see them.

DISCUSS THIS:

- Which words best represent areas where people tend to think they are not enough?
- When you don't feel like you are enough, do you tend to respond by: Trying to hide who you are or how you feel? Covering it up by pretending you're something you're not? Changing something about yourself to appear more like who others want you to be? Something else? Give a real-life example that supports your answer.
- In what ways do you think we connect our identity to our image and performance? Give an example of this from your own life.
- Read Ephesians 2:10. What does this verse tell you about how Jesus sees you? What is one thing you'd do differently if you saw yourself the way Jesus sees you? What's one way that you can remind yourself of how Jesus sees you?
- How can our group support one another as we try to live into our true identity as children of God who are more than enough?