

LG CG Fall Week 5 10/7/18 3 Reasons Week 2 Leader Guide

Getting to Know You

- 1.) What experience have you had that was very intimidating or difficult to overcome, but now, as you look back, you realize it was worth the work or struggle? **This is a ice breaker and also just a way to remind us that though we do not always get to see the good at the end of hardship, sometimes we do.**
- 2.) Here is a question we often hear: “How can there be a good and loving God when there is so much evil and suffering in this world?” How would you answer that, including if it’s asked about suffering in your own life? **This is really the big question for the week and the one that Christians often get asked so we want to allow people to think through their answer.**
- 3.) If we are not supposed to expect an easy life with God, then what are we supposed to expect *from* Him as we journey through life *with* Him? What are appropriate expectations? **Really try to have people use verses to back up these statements; we want to avoid opinions that may not be supported. Also make sure we do not make it out to seem that God is not in love with us (John 1:14) nor want the best for us (1 Tim 2:3, Jer 29:11 etc).**
- 4.) Looking back at your notes from this week’s teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or that caught your attention, challenged you, or confused you?

Into the Bible

- 5.) Watch these videos on your own before group: “The Bible Project: the Book of Job” at <https://youtu.be/GswSg2ohqmA> and “Read Scripture: Job” at https://youtu.be/xQwnH8th_fs. The book is based on the suffering that Job endured. Discuss what we can learn from it about suffering? **The videos are long, so I do not recommend watching them in group. Job teaches us so much that we really just want to try to glean from the book and Job’s struggle. Main things to remember: Job was righteous, was not being punished for sin, questioned God but kept faith in Him, blessing was not a reward it was just a gift, he was very honest with God, and finally God never told Him why, He just displayed that He was far beyond what Job could comprehend.**
- 6.) Read Romans 8:18-30. This passage has a lot to teach us; share with your group what you have learned from it. How does hope tie in to suffering? How can we make sense of verse 28 that says, “in all things God works for the good of those who love him”--even in the midst of suffering? **We want to allow people to wrestle with the fact that this passage and others talk about things working out for our good, and yet we still struggle and go through things that seem no good at all. We want people to talk through how we make sense that both exist.**
- 7.) Read Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; Matthew 11:28-30; and Galatians 6:2. These verses clearly state we are not supposed to struggle alone or live our lives alone, for that matter. Instead, we are

supposed to rely on God and the support of others. Do you do that? If so, how? If not, how could you? Also, to whom do you go, or who is a good person to whom you think you might go? The big question here is whether or not we bottle things up and stuff them inside or if we release them and allow or even ask for the support of others and rely on God instead of ourselves. This is a very easy one to say yes to, but often not one we are good at. Ask for examples and maybe come up with some ways in which we might stuff or hide things that maybe we would not call hiding at first glance. Often these are the ones where we would say, "I just didn't want to bother someone," or "Yes, but they are so busy." or "I know, but other people just have it so much worse that I shouldn't complain."

Application

8.) What do you do when suffering hits in your life? Is your reaction healthy? Do you need to adjust it? If adjustments need to be made, what do you think they are? Ask for examples here because that may help people diagnose what their natural response is. If you want to take a turn for the deeper, ask people why they think they respond the way that they do.

9.) How well do we come alongside others who are suffering? What should we do and not do? Is there currently someone you feel God is calling you to come alongside? Here we just want to share wisdom of what has helped in the past and what can be off putting. One thing to remember is to let everyone know it is completely normal to feel like you don't know how to help, you don't know what to say, and you don't really think it will do any good or did any good. However, one important thing to remember is often people do not want an answer, or at least they do not expect you to have one; they just do not want to feel alone or that they have to go through it by themselves. So even if you just sit in silence, the power of presence matters.

Blurb

Hey, leaders, as we are off and rolling for this season, I want to give you all a big "thank you!" This season we added forty new people to groups, and we have grown across the board. On top of that, I was just talking to two women yesterday who told me their group was literally the reason they stayed at the Church and why they got connected and are now connected with others in the group who have become their closest friends. They also told me it is the thing that got their walk with God headed back in the right direction.

I share that with you to remind you that what you are doing deeply matters, and it is changing the lives of those around us, as well as, hopefully, your own. Please do not miss the connection to what you do with the fact that the church has added 40 new people to groups. A lot of you helped make food on the Sundays we were signing people up for groups, and you talked to people in the lobby. made them feel welcome, and did so many other things that led to people giving it a shot.

Lastly, people do not sign up for things that sound terrible, so thanks for giving groups a good reputation so that people want to be a part of them. I appreciate all of you.

Here are this weeks resources: