

SMALL  GROUP

SMALL GROUP LEADER GUIDE

Red Flags, Respect, & Relationships / Week 4

BEFORE GROUP

BOTTOM LINE

God cares about us demonstrating love before looking for love.

SCRIPTURE

1 Corinthians 13:4-7 NLT

GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

To point students toward becoming the kind of person they want to be and to encourage them to take steps toward developing those qualities in themselves.

THINK ABOUT THIS

In this phase, it's a lot easier for students to notice and talk about things they see in other people than it is to notice and talk about things in themselves. That's why it's important to first frame this conversation around what they hope to find in somebody else. Your students will be better able to identify those things outwardly before they can look inwardly at themselves. Do your best to help your students see the value in looking at themselves and considering what kind of person they want to be outside of just dating. Becoming that person won't magically equate to an easy, happy dating life. But what it will do is lead to better relationships all around, from friends, to family members, to teammates and, of course, to dating relationships. Finally, remember that you may have students who have experienced sexual abuse on some level. This conversation could lead them to share with you about that, so be prepared to follow up, support, and point them toward help if and when they do.

This guide is a suggestion, not a formula. Adjust the content as needed, and don't feel like you need to complete everything listed.

DURING GROUP

DISCUSS THIS

1. In your own words, how would you define dating?
2. What do you think influences a middle schooler's ideas about dating and relationships?

DO THIS (EXPERIENCE 1)

With your group, brainstorm what you think the perfect relationship should look like. List everything you come up with, and be ready to share your ideas!

DISCUSS THIS

3. When it comes to dating, why do you think it might be easier to focus on the other person than it is ourselves?
4. Of the characteristics Paul mentioned, which one is really important to you in a relationship?
5. How much of that characteristic would you honestly say you see in yourself?

DO THIS (EXPERIENCE 2)

Hand out the provided journal page to your students. As you discuss the next three questions, have them fill out the corresponding sections on their sheet.

6. Which two or three characteristics on Paul's list do you struggle with most in your own life?
 7. Which characteristic on Paul's list do you want to develop more of in yourself?
 8. What's one step you can take this week to work on developing the quality you picked?
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GOD CARES ABOUT US DEMONSTRATING LOVE BEFORE LOOKING FOR LOVE



LOVE IS PATIENT & KIND. LOVE IS NOT JEALOUS OR BOASTFUL OR PROUD OR RUDE. IT DOES NOT DEMAND ITS OWN WAY. IT IS NOT IRRITABLE, & IT KEEPS NO RECORD OF BEING WRONGED. IT DOES NOT REJOICE ABOUT INJUSTICE BUT REJOICES WHENEVER THE TRUTH WINS OUT. LOVE NEVER GIVES UP, NEVER LOSES FAITH, IS ALWAYS HOPEFUL, & ENDURES THROUGH EVERY CIRCUMSTANCE.
(1 CORINTHIANS 13:4-7 NLT)

Paul listed what God says love looks like in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. Use Paul's list and this sheet to identify red flags in where you struggle to show God's characteristics of love. Then, demonstrate respect for yourself and others by picking a characteristic of love to grow in yourself.

RED FLAGS

Relationships aren't perfect, and neither are you. That's okay! A great place to start becoming the person you hope to be is by identifying red flags in areas you need help.

THESE ARE TWO OR THREE CHARACTERISTICS OF LOVE ON PAUL'S LIST THAT I STRUGGLE WITH THE MOST:

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

RESPECT

Focusing on just one characteristic of love to grow in yourself is a great way to respect the person God wants to you to be.

THIS IS THE CHARACTERISTIC OF LOVE ON PAUL'S LIST I WANT TO DEVELOP MORE IN MYSELF: _____

RELATIONSHIPS

Who you're becoming affects who you are in your relationships. Focus on becoming more of who you want to be by practicing the characteristic of love you selected.

THIS IS ONE STEP I CAN TAKE THIS WEEK TO WORK ON DEVELOPING THE QUALITY I CHOSE: _____

