

LEADER: SUGGESTIONS & THOUGHTS AS YOU LEAD...!

5 thoughts on leading your group

1. PRAY for insight as you begin to prepare for leading your group. Ask for God's wisdom, that the Holy Spirit will be the teacher and that you will be God's instrument to lead the group to greater understanding and a willingness to commit to having a growing relationship with Jesus Christ. **Prayer should be your primary source of personal preparation for leading your group.**
2. PLAN where you want to take your group in the next 60-90 days. Is your group strong in some areas and weak in others? How can you challenge the members to live more balanced Christian lives? Challenge members to look for new ways for them to CONNECT and/or take NEXT STEPS toward growing in their relationship with Jesus Christ. Remember, your role will be most impactful if you focus on simply being an **ENCOURAGER**.
3. PONDER YOUR PROGRESS after each meeting and at the end of a semester. Reflect on what went well and what did not. Re-evaluation is key to your growth as a leader. Consider whether your plan is being effective in moving the group to greater understanding and commitment. How are you doing with leading the discussion: is it stimulating, challenging, and meaningful? Are you able to keep the group on track? Do you need to make some changes?
4. PREVIEW the weekly GG questions, understanding that they are simply a tool to aid you in meeting the needs of your group. As the GG leader, you should examine and evaluate the questions based on the needs of your group. Decide in advance what is most important to focus on, should time not allow for the entire lesson. Again, it is just a guide for you!
5. PROMOTE ACCOUNTABILITY: Your goal as the leader is to bring the group into a stimulating discussion that helps the members recognize their needs for personal life change. Ultimately, you want them to be willing to commit to change with accountability to the group. Accountability helps us to persevere in our commitments as we all grow in our relationships with Jesus Christ. Encourage each group member to be accountable to the group for personal progress at the next meeting.

Heaven | Part 5

May 31, 2020

QUESTIONS

- What is one idea from the message that really stood out to you?
 - Why did this idea grab your attention?
- Have you ever felt like there was more to experience on this earth?
 - Did those thoughts lead you to ponder on Heaven?
 - Why or why not?
- Describe a time when you or your family were away and couldn't wait to get back home.
 - Why do we prefer home so much?
- Heaven (our eternal home) will have the good things found in our homes today.
 - What are some of those things or feelings?
- During the message, there was an illustration of Heaven depicted by someone going to a party, leaving the party and then going to the real party. (see bottom of page)
 - How does that story speak to you about Heaven?
- Read Luke 6:21
 - What are these words of Jesus describing?
 - How does this make you feel?
- When was the last time you talked about Heaven to a friend, spouse, child, parent or family member?
 - Why don't we talk about Heaven more?
- Read Matthew 6:9-10
 - How many times do we see Jesus in this Lord's Prayer refer to Heaven?
 - Why do you believe He mentions a prayer modeled to be spoken daily, to have the word "Heaven" within it several times?
- Read Matthew 7:24-27
 - Why is it so important for Christ-followers to have a strong foundation in this world?
 - What are some of the metaphors found in this passage and what do they mean to you?
- Our ultimate confidence and joy cannot be found in this world, rather in our faith in Jesus Christ. Read Luke 6:22-23.
 - What do these verses teach us about joy?
 - Why is it difficult for Christ-followers to trust in God's Plan for our lives amidst the pain & struggles?

- o How can we begin to strengthen our confidence that God is in control?
- Read Romans 8:23-25
 - o What do we learn about our “hope in Christ” in this passage?
- Share with your group at least one or two things/issues/struggles that will NOT be present in Heaven.
 - o Why are you happy those struggles will not be present?
- Share with your group at least one or two aspects of Heaven you are looking forward to.
 - o Why are you so anxious and excited for this?

Remember each other, pray for each other...and as always...TAKE CARE OF EACH OTHER!

***Bonus Questions for Teens**

1. What was one idea that stood out to you in the message?
2. Have you ever felt FOMO? (Fear Of Missing Out)
 - a. Have you ever felt like there is more to your life than what you are living?
 - i. That is Heaven to our Earth!
3. What are some feelings or activities that you really enjoy on earth AND you want to be in heaven?
4. Read the story at the bottom of this page...
 - a. Have you ever had anything like this happen to you or someone you know?
 - b. How does this make you think of heaven?
5. What are some things that cause stress, anxiety, or negative feelings in your life today?
 - a. How does it make you feel to think about how they will never be in heaven?

****Story:**

Imagine someone takes you to a party!
 You see a few friends there, enjoy a couple of good conversations,
 a little laughter, and some decent appetizers.
 The party's all right,
 but you keep hoping it will get better
 Give it another hour, and maybe it will
 Suddenly, your friend says, “I need to take you home
 Now? You're disappointed—nobody wants to leave a party early—
 but you leave, and your friend drops you off at your house
 As you approach the door, you're feeling all alone and sorry for yourself
 As you open the door and reach for the light switch, you sense someone's there
 Your heart's in your throat
 You flip on the light. “Surprise!”
 Your house is full of smiling people, familiar faces

It's a party—for you
You smell your favorites—Sushi..and chicago style hotdogs...italian beef sandwiches
The tables are full... It's a feast
You recognize the guests, people you haven't seen for a long time
Then, one by one, the people you most enjoyed at the other party show up at your house,
grinning
This turns out to be the real party
You realize that if you'd stayed longer at the other party, as you'd wanted,
you wouldn't be at the real party—
you'd be away from it