



Wired

Week 3: Spreading God's love

What we want students to learn: We can love God by loving others.

What we want students to do with what they've learned: Understand that even though relationships can be messy, God still wants them to be involved in community.

Scripture Focus: Genesis 2:18 and Mathew 22:37-40

Supporting Scripture: Hebrews 12:14-15

The Main Point

This probably isn't breaking news to you, but in middle school, friends are a HUGE deal. They're constantly wondering, "Who do I like?" and "Who likes me?" This is because most middle schoolers are looking for a sense of community, belonging, and acceptance. But as we all know, relationships can get a little... messy, especially during this confusing time of students' lives. During small group today, some tough situations may come up, maybe some hurt feelings, and possibly some tension (maybe even some tension within your small group). Whatever comes up, remind your students that small group is a safe place for them to be open and honest.

Last week, you encouraged your students to read one encouraging verse a day. Take a few minutes to ask them how that went and what difference it made in their lives.

INTRODUCTION

To kick off small group for the night, ask the following question.

- **What is the silliest thing you have ever fought with someone about?**

This may have been over a toy when they were younger or maybe a seat on the bus. Feel free to share a story about a silly argument you were in, too.

PRAY as you begin your group time tonight that your students will grasp the importance of community with believers tonight.

LESSON

Keep in mind that as you go over your questions tonight, the phrase "community" or "live in community" is talking about the friends they spend the most time with. Have someone in the group read Genesis 2:18.

Genesis 2:18 (NIV) - The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

- **Why is it good to live in community (have friends) and to be closely connected with people?**

- *Sometimes community helps us stay focused on God and our goals. We like to have people around us that we trust and can go through life with.*
- **Why is it sometimes difficult to live in community?**
 - *All kinds of things can get in the way of friendships. For example, maybe we don't agree with something a friend is doing or we don't think a relationship they're in is good for them. Additionally, maybe some jealousy or insecurity creep in.*
- **Talk about a time you resolved a misunderstanding or an argument with someone because that friendship was important to you.**

Have someone read **Mathew 22:37-40**. We have read this verse already during this series, but it applies to this topic as well too.

Matthew 22:37-40 - Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' 38 This is the first and greatest commandment. 39 And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' 40 All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

- **Why should we pursue relationships with other people, even when they can get tough or messy?**
 - *Jesus pursued relationships with people and we are called to be more like Him.*
- **With this verse in mind, what are some ways you can show acceptance and love to others?**
 - *Being their friend, inviting them to church, spending time with them, praying for them, etc.*
- **What are some potential obstacles that might keep you from showing that kind of acceptance to someone?**
 - *One example may be disagreeing with what someone thinks or says. But, all throughout the Bible we see Jesus accepting people without even worrying about the obstacles. These were people like tax collectors, prostitutes and the sick. During Jesus' time, these people were often not accepted. But He accepted them! His love is that strong.*

LIFE APPLICATION

- **What is one thing you can do this week to love the people around you?**
 - *Example answers may include: spending time with them, praying for them, just telling them you love them, etc.*

CLOSING ACTIVITY

Have your students think of the people they've talked to within the past week. Ask the students to share one person on the list and why they're important to them. Then ask if there is someone that isn't on that list that should be. Challenge your students to reach out to that person this week (and to invite them to students!)

TAKE IT OUT

Close small group out with prayer requests. Pray specifically that your group would grow in their friendships with one another as they continue their 6th grade year.

After prayer, be sure to remind them of any upcoming group serving activities or student events and **THE WEEKEND!**