

Group and Simply Youth Ministry
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CelebrateRecovery® for Students

Distinctively Christian | Uncompromisingly Biblical
Designed Especially for Celebrate Recovery® Churches

the Landing

WEEKS 42-52

"The Landing™ provides a safe place for students to share about their hurts, hang-ups, and habits and learn to apply the principles of Celebrate Recovery® to help them break the cycle of dysfunction in their families." —Johnny Baker

Here's What You'll Find:

- | | |
|-----------|-----------------|
| LESSON 42 | DAILY INVENTORY |
| LESSON 43 | DAILY INVENTORY |
| LESSON 44 | REPLAPSE |
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| LESSON 51 | YES |
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A CELEBRATE RECOVERY® RESOURCE

JOHN BAKER
JOHNNY BAKER
WITH RICK LAWRENCE

the Landing

CelebrateRecovery® for Students

LEADER GUIDE 4



Group

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simply youth ministry
simplyyouthministry.com

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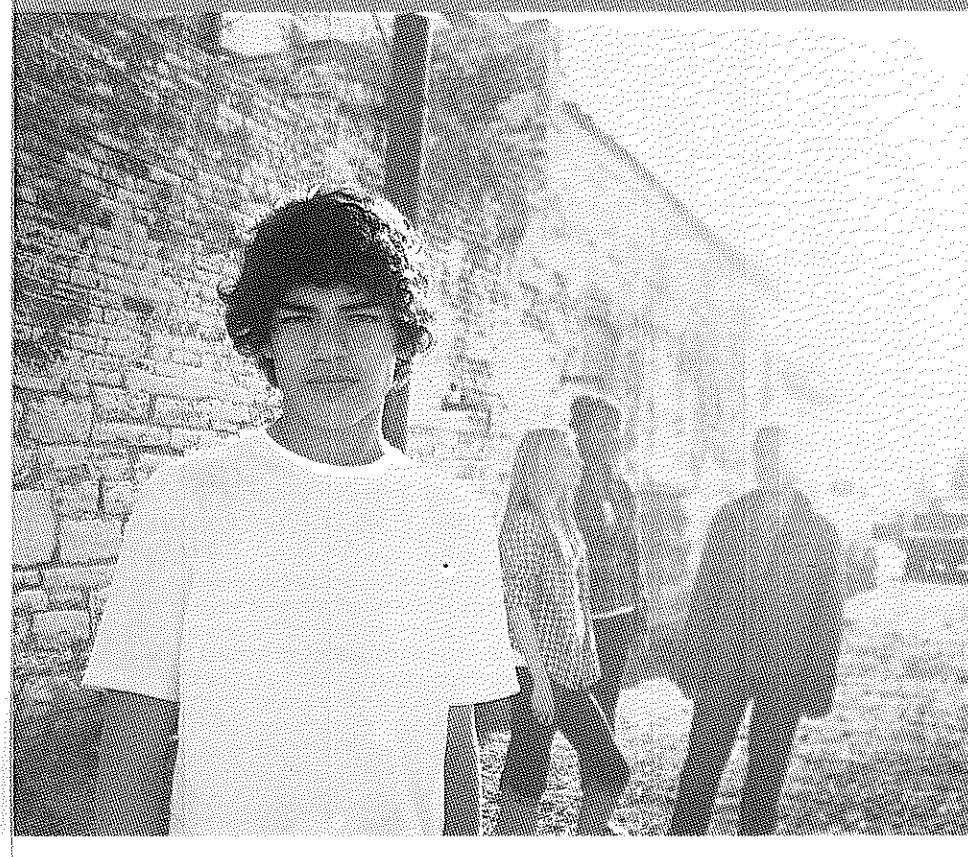
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LEADER GUIDE



Pastor John Baker is the founder of Celebrate Recovery®, a ministry born out of the heart of Saddleback Church in 1991. Since then more than 11,000 individuals have gone through this Christ-centered recovery program at Saddleback. The Celebrate Recovery® program is now used in thousands of churches worldwide. Over 700,000 people have completed the program.

John is a nationally known speaker and trainer who helps churches start Celebrate Recovery® ministries. In addition to writing the *Celebrate Recovery Curriculum*, he's the general editor of the *Celebrate Recovery Bible*. John's most recent book is *Life's Healing Choices*. Since the beginning of Celebrate Recovery®, Pastor John has attempted to reach out to children in hurting homes. He's the co-author of *Celebration Station™*, Celebrate Recovery®'s program for children, and now the co-author of *The Landing™*. He's very excited about teenagers having a curriculum of their own.

John and his wife, Cheryl, have been married four decades and have served together in Celebrate Recovery® since 1991. They have two adult children, Laura and Johnny. Laura and Brian were recently married, and Johnny and his wife, Jeni, are the proud parents of John and Cheryl's three grandchildren, Maggie, Chloe, and Jimmy.

Johnny Baker has been on staff at Celebrate Recovery® since 2004 and has been the director of Celebrate Recovery® at Saddleback Church since 2007. As an adult child of an alcoholic who chose to become an alcoholic himself, Johnny is passionate about breaking the cycle of dysfunction in his family and helping other families find the tools that lead to healing and openness. Not only has he seen Celebrate Recovery® work in the lives of his parents and countless others, he has seen it work in his own life as well. He knows that because of Jesus Christ, and by continuing to stay active in Celebrate Recovery®, his children—Maggie, Chloe, and Jimmy—will never see him drink. Johnny is a nationally recognized speaker and teacher of Celebrate Recovery®, a co-author of *Celebration Station*, and an associate editor of the *Celebrate Recovery Bible*.

Rick Lawrence has been editor of GROUP Magazine for over 20 years. GROUP is the world's most widely read resource for Christian youth leaders. In his role as "Youth Ministry Champion" at Group Publishing, he leads the organization's expeditionary efforts to challenge, encourage, and equip youth pastors.

Rick has authored hundreds of magazine articles and is the author, co-author, or editor of 31 books including *Youth Ministry in the 21st Century*, *Jesus-Centered Youth Ministry*, *In Pursuit of Jesus*, and *Ten Tough Things*—all published by Group Publishing. He's a consultant to national research organizations and a frequent conference and workshop speaker.

He's married to Beverly Rose and has a 12-year-old daughter named Lucy Rose and a 7-year-old daughter named Emma Grace.

I'd like to dedicate The Landing to my wife Cheryl—without her dedication and perseverance, this project would never have happened. And to the thousands and thousands of kids who hope to find the answer to their hurts before they become hang-ups and habits.

- John Baker

I would like to dedicate The Landing to my wife Jeni, and our three kids, Maggie, Chloe, and Jimmy. I'd also like to thank Eddie, Doug, Ted, Habib, and many others who were there for me as youth workers. Your investments of time, love, and listening were instrumental in giving me a strong base of faith. Thanks for teaching me about Jesus both in your example and by your words.

- Johnny Baker

To my dear, dear daughters Lucy Rose and Emma Grace—I already see the healing love of Jesus "covering the multitude of sins" that you've had to bear in your lives, and your passion for giving grace to others inspires and challenges me.

- Rick Lawrence

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A CELEBRATE RECOVERY® RESOURCE

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to a grand adventure—an exciting and surprising and life-changing journey, in partnership with God. The Landing is a unique experience in at least a couple of ways.

First, it's structured as an ongoing 52-week program—based on the beatitudes where Jesus laid out principles for happiness in the sermon on the mount—for teenagers who are struggling to live their lives in a healthy, God-honoring way. Maybe they come from a dysfunctional home or have faced crises in their life. Maybe they simply need help developing patterns of wise choices, or they wrestle with an addiction of some kind. Whatever their life story, they know they need something more than a typical Sunday school class or youth group meeting. Or maybe they don't know this, but the people who love them do. The Landing is a safe, healing place where teenagers can live a freer, healthier, and more God-centered life.

Second, The Landing is not a lecture-style resource. It's designed to get teenagers talking about and exploring new ways of thinking and doing. They won't just be listening to someone speak—instead, they'll be talking to each other and to your leaders in a fully engaging environment that includes simple experiences that will help them "own" what they're learning. In most classes or small group studies, the leader controls pretty much

everything about the direction of the lesson, and the teenagers just follow along. With The Landing, the leader provides strong leadership and overarching direction, and encourages the students to participate and engage in the discussion. This style of teaching helps everyone feel the satisfaction of playing a key role in the journey.

We believe that true transformation comes when you get closer to Jesus. We feel so strongly about this, we're going to write that sentence again:

We believe that true transformation comes when you get closer to Jesus.

The aim of The Landing is to help hurting teenagers get closer to Jesus as they learn key principles during a journey toward a better life—to move their focus on Jesus from the fringes of daily life to the bull's-eye of everyday life.

Finally, we want to remind you that you're about to partner with God to change the life trajectory of the people who participate in The Landing. This really will happen. People will get closer to Jesus, and they will learn about their hurts, hang-ups, and habits that have derailed them. And many of them will be changed by this experience forever. Thanks for having the courage and the determination to be a part of the nuclear moments that are about to take place. Along with the participants in the study, you'll not only end up worshiping Jesus at a deeper level, you'll also give people a pathway to freedom in their lives.

BOOT CAMP FOR LEADING THE LANDING

This yearlong experience probably differs from most studies you've led. Even if that's not the case, we've learned some vital insights over the years for leading study times that involve a lot of interactions, debriefing, and feedback. Instead of a lecture or fill-in-the-blank style—strategies that have questionable long-term impact on teenagers—we use music, video, high-octane discussions, and experiences to get at the core truths we're learning. This is a really fun, amazing way to lead people into deeper learning.

Let's explore what makes this series different and what you can expect as the leader.

THE LEADER'S ROLE

In a typical small group or youth group study, a leader talks almost the entire time. Sometimes, a couple of discussion questions get tossed out, but they're often a side dish to the real meat of the study.

In The Landing, the leader talks, but the participants talk, too. A lot. If you're leading this series, you'll feel more like a ringmaster than a lecturer. You'll offer strong leadership in a context where many people participate and add to the content of the study.

Allow us to explain why that's such a great thing. First, research shows that teenagers learn best by doing. In fact, the people who learn the most in any class are

the teachers—because they first need to ingest what they're teaching before they teach it. So what happens when teenagers get immersed in experiences and talk to each other (and you) about what they're learning while they're learning it? Well, real learning takes place.

If you're a curious person who likes good conversation and who knows how to ask follow-up questions, you'll thrive in this learning environment. If you don't think you have any of these qualities, don't worry. We've crafted instructions for these sessions in a way that allows anyone to lead them. You simply need to see your role as a strong leader who has a lot to offer, but who wants to hear the experiences and opinions of others as well.

Of course, the most important aspect of leading this study is to let it transform you first. If you've experienced Celebrate Recovery® firsthand—this content is based on that dynamic resource—you know the life-changing power that this material has. If you haven't been through Celebrate Recovery®, allow this material to transform you as you prepare to teach it to students. As you prepare to lead, you need to pursue the questions and insights first. In essence, that's what being a leader means—going first. Preparation, prayer, and planning are essential. In these lessons, the leader provides important insights. Right now, these insights are all in our voice. You could say them verbatim, just as we've written them for you. But of course, you can filter everything through who you are. You do want to make sure to understand and own these insights—by the time you lead each lesson, you'll

have explored it for yourself first and let it impact you. Throughout the lessons, we've placed the words you need to say in bold preceded by the words SAY or ASK. This allows them to stand out, and you can easily scan for what you need to say.

One more important role for you, the leader, is to help teenagers celebrate and enjoy the changes God is making in their lives as they progress through this material. The subject matter can feel heavy at times so you'll need to create an environment that allows students to feel safe, and at the same time celebrate the better choices they will be making and the victory they are finding in Jesus.

There are a few key things you can do to make the group safe for everyone. As you prepare for your lessons, ask God to point out anything you can share from your experience. Students will gain so much from your willingness to be open and honest. In fact, you may find that in order to get the discussion started you may want to share first. We've included some guidelines, which will be discussed later in the section titled Group Guidelines, that will help you and your students in answering the small group questions.

Next, as this is an ongoing 52-week program that does not close or require sign-ups, you may have some students that begin attending after you've already completed several of the lessons. It is important that these students feel safe and included here in The

Landing as well. You may want to designate some leaders or more mature students to come alongside the newcomers to help them along. In addition, you may decide to modify some of the questions to suit a younger audience, such as junior high students.

THE STUDENT JOURNAL

Each student in your class will need a Student Journal. These Student Journals are an integral part of the experience for your teenagers. The journals have material in them that complements the lessons they're going through without duplicating content. It's reading that will really help teenagers consider, process, and deepen what they're learning. Each Student Journal segment ends with a series of questions that are tied to the questions they discussed in their small groups. The journals also serve as a notebook for each participant. We've included lots of room for taking notes; keeping meaningful reminders, quotes, or Scripture references from the lessons; writing personal insights; and answering questions. Encourage participants to use the journals regularly.

These journals are intended for your students' eyes only. They should be encouraged to keep these journals in a safe place. Knowing that neither you, nor anyone else, will be reading these journals will allow the students to freely express themselves and write things they may not yet feel comfortable sharing in a group setting. Working through a journal yourself will help you better understand what your teenagers may be feeling throughout this journey.

MILESTONE MARKERS

We have provided key tags as a way to celebrate each teenager's journey through this program. These key tags are designed to celebrate significant milestones in your teenagers' participation in The Landing—Day 1, Week 2, Month 1, Month 2, Month 3, Month 6, Month 9, and Year 1. All of these tags are available at group.com or simplyyouthministry.com.

These key tags are a great visual reminder for your students to celebrate the journey and to keep focused on the changes they are making. After Closing Time, right before Connect Time, while they are still gathered together, distribute the key chains by asking the students, "Who is here for the first time?" Then proceed through the rest of the marker lengths.

WORSHIP TIME

Nearly every lesson features a Worship Time near the start of your gathering. Usually there's an activity or a conversation that precedes a time of singing some favorite worship songs or listening to songs on a CD or from your MP3 player. If you have a worship band comprised of teenagers this can be an opportunity for them to participate and lead. Or you may have a leader who plays an instrument who could lead during this time.

Sometimes we suggest playing soft and unobtrusive instrumental music as a background during discussion or experience times as well.

VIDEOS

Included in your kit are 4 DVDs (corresponding with each Leader Guide) with video clips for one of the two lessons under every topic. The instructions are easy to follow, and the video clip always precedes your small group time, which features discussion of the clip.

Be sure to preview, cue up the clips, set the volume, and test your electronics before people arrive for the session. If you're fiddling with equipment while people arrive, you basically greet them with your backside. At best, this means you're distracted as you talk with them.

EXPERIENCES

Many of the sessions in this series include experiences that participants will do and you'll then "debrief." By "experiences," we mean activities that encourage everyone to participate. These might be fun, meditative, or mildly uncomfortable. But the goal is to lead people into activities where they feel fully engaged.

"Debriefing" is just another way of saying that you will artfully engage participants with good initial questions about the experience, followed by good follow-up questions. You help the people in your group build bridges from unforgettable experiences to unforgettable truths. When you succeed, you can truly say two things: You've "taught," and the participants have "learned."

These experiences aren't just fringe illustrations or funky gimmicks. Research shows that students learn

more deeply through direct experiences than any other teaching approach. You might be tempted to think lightly of these experiences, or diminish them, or cut them out if you're pressed for time. **But resist that temptation!** We know not just from research but from personal experience teaching this way, that good experiences—debriefed well by a leader—hold unmatched power to capture and change people.

We urge you to pay close attention to the details of these experiences so you can easily give instructions to participants. Preparation and planning are essential. We provide clear and specific direction on how to set up, lead, and debrief these experiences. A leader can ruin a great experience by leaving out a crucial principle, giving fuzzy directions, or not grasping the makeup of the experience itself. Even more, you'll torpedo a powerful experience if you "hedge your bets" by apologizing for or diminishing an experience in your setup for it. If you doubt that people will get much out of the experience, suspend your disbelief and just decide to believe people will do what you ask them to do. We can tell you, they will. And they'll remember the experiences years from now. However, do not be discouraged if a student chooses to not participate at first in these experiences. Your confidence that a student will eventually participate in a safe environment is crucial.

We'll talk a little more about what to cut and not cut from each session if, for some reason, time is tight. But our general rule of thumb is never cut an experience.

Instead, cut down on what you say. As much as we want to just tell people what we think they should know, a good experience will teach people a lesson they'll never forget. Keep in mind that the experiences in this journey aren't just "illustrations" or "object lessons"—they're the very meat of the study. So, more than any other aspect of this series, make sure you understand and are ready to lead the experiences.

SUPPLIES

Because the lessons contain hands-on, interactive experiences, you'll need to gather supplies before each week's meeting. Don't wait until the last minute to look at the list of items you'll need—preparation and planning are essential. We've done our best to recommend items that can be found in a typical youth room or church facility. Encourage other leaders to pitch in and help bring or acquire supplies, especially if you don't have a budget for these supplies. Whenever possible, don't buy—just bring or borrow. If you have a particularly large group of teenagers going through The Landing, you may want to pick and choose which experiences you do with everyone and perhaps leave a couple of experiences as demonstrations with a few volunteers.

In some cases, we've offered suggestions on alternative supplies for activities. These recommendations can help you save money or time in gathering supplies. Throughout this curriculum, you're welcome to substitute supplies that reduce expenses or time but continue to give teenagers a hands-on, interactive learning experience.

Here are a few notes on frequently needed supplies:

- » **Paper:** Keep a lot of this handy. We ask students to write their thoughts or answer questions a lot. Teenagers can use their copies of the Student Journal, but for the ones who don't have or forget to bring their copies, keep a healthy supply of paper.
- » **3X5 cards:** You'll use these a LOT! We encourage you to purchase them in large quantities before starting The Landing.
- » **Pens and pencils:** Your teenagers will do a lot of writing, and we generally assume that most young people don't carry pens and pencils with them to church or small group gatherings. Keep this supply well stocked.
- » **TV/DVD player:** As mentioned earlier, this kit includes a DVD with a video clip for one of the two lessons under every topic. If you have a projector system in your meeting room, go ahead and use it—don't feel constrained to use a TV.
- » **Bibles:** In many of the lessons you'll be asking for students to read verses from the Bible. While some of your students may bring their own Bibles with them, and you may want to encourage them to do so, it's a good idea to have a few extra Bibles on hand. You don't have to buy any special Bible for this, just bring any Bibles you have and ask the other adult leaders to do the same. We've used a variety of Bible translations in this curriculum, but you'll see that the New International Version is most prevalent. If your youth ministry or congregation has a preferred translation, you're welcome to use it throughout your lessons.

- » We've included a CD-ROM in this kit. It's full of handouts that you can use in The Landing, including small group questions, handouts for students, and **AN IMPORTANT NOTE FOR ALL LEADERS TO READ AND UNDERSTAND**. Look through the CD-ROM's contents as you're preparing for the first lesson to gain a sense of all the tools you'll find there.

DISCUSSIONS

At the heart of this series, you'll need to make a commitment to spark great discussions. As with any great discussion, you won't always be sure which way a conversation will go. You might be tempted to impose your will or your agenda on every discussion, but (for the most part) it's good to resist that temptation. Your goal should be to get every person contributing to the life and content of the sessions.

Sometimes teenagers want to follow rabbit trails—directions that stray from your plan and threaten to hijack the carefully crafted teaching thread. Often, it's OK to follow rabbit trails—as long as the trail leads toward the overarching goal of the lesson. Occasionally, a participant might take over and force the study in a different, and potentially unsafe, direction. When you sense you're getting bogged down in an unhelpful rabbit trail, stop walking down it and return to the main path.

Sometimes a student will give an answer that is confusing or irrelevant. You'll want to try hard not to place value judgments on how people answer.

The goal behind all this strategy is to make your group a safe and inviting place for people to add their voice to the conversation. Throughout The Landing, you'll switch between many kinds of interactions: partners, trios, small group, and whole-group discussions. If you believe a partner- or trio-focused discussion topic would work better for your teenagers in a larger group, then use it in that setting. The primary purpose for the variety of group sizes is to encourage everyone to participate and speak. Not all teenagers will engage as actively in the larger groups, but they'll be more willing to answer and share their views with just one or two peers.

Each lesson's small group time includes an opportunity for you to bring other safe, mature adult leaders into the journey with your teenagers. We've labeled these individuals as "conversation leaders," and their role is to facilitate that part of the lesson. We encourage you to provide these leaders with their questions in advance. If you find that you don't have enough adult leaders to serve in this role, empower your teenagers to ask the questions.

WHAT TO CUT...AND NOT

Because of the learning approach we use in this series, you might need to cut part of a session because of time. That's OK, because coverage isn't the goal of these studies. Instead, focus on deeper learning and transformation. You can feel OK about occasionally letting a conversation go on a little longer if needed. We've designed these lessons to last two hours from start to finish.

A few general guidelines about cutting stuff: Aim to cut from the middle of the session if you're tight on time, rather than the beginning or the end. Never cut an experience in favor of leader-talk. If you must choose between participants discovering a truth in discussion with others and you simply telling them the truth, opt for option A. Let others own what they're learning. You might be tempted to cut discussions short for the sake of time. If you do, you'll have a lot of frustrated people on your hands—people who simply don't have enough time to talk about the great question you asked them to pursue. These frustrated people then have a hurdle to overcome if they're going to return to the study the next week. So, cut and condense what you have to say in favor of retaining what others have to say. Don't worry, you'll still have many opportunities to guide, influence, and frame the discussions.

SMALL GROUP DYNAMICS

One of the most important parts of The Landing is the small group time. It is imperative that these groups are safe! Students will be opening up about their lives and answering questions that require personal and thoughtful answers. For this reason, there are two main factors to keep in mind when splitting your large group into small groups. First, all of the small groups in The Landing must be gender based. Boys with boys and a male leader, and girls with girls and a female leader. No exceptions. Also, as The Landing is a place for junior high as well as senior high students, you may have a wide range of ages each week. If possible, try to have the small groups be as close in age as possible, keeping in mind to always

keep them gender specific. As we mentioned earlier, at different points of the lessons your students will be in groups of either pairs or trios. During these times allow students to partner with whomever they feel most comfortable.

SMALL GROUP GUIDELINES

To make sure The Landing is a safe place for students—where they can share their hurts, hang-ups, and habits—we've included five important guidelines (pp. 17-18). These guidelines are simple and straight forward, but we know they may be new to you. These guidelines are a part of every Celebrate Recovery® resource, including Celebration Station and now, here, with The Landing. By following and modeling these guidelines, and ensuring that the students in your discussion groups do as well, you'll be making The Landing a place where they can share honestly and openly. These five guidelines are integral to the success of these kinds of discussion groups.

Students need a place where they can share and not feel judged. We've done our best to make sure there aren't any questions that have "right" and "wrong" answers. The questions are designed to get students thinking and sharing. As a conversation leader you may feel from time to time the urge to shape a student's answer. Resist that temptation! Remember that these guidelines aren't just for the students, but they're for you too.

For example, Guideline 2 states, "Please avoid all cross talk." Here are some examples of cross talk:

- » Two people having a discussion that excludes the rest of the group
- » Agreeing or disagreeing with someone's sharing
- » Asking a question about something shared

Cross talk makes a group unsafe. Students may be opening up about events and emotions for the first time ever. If they are told they should not feel a certain way, the group is no longer safe for them. If they are challenged or questioned, even just to clarify, the group may no longer feel safe for them.

As the leader you will have to model and even enforce these guidelines. When students see that each discussion will be held with these guidelines in mind, and that you follow them, too, their sharing will be deeper because they feel safe.

SMALL GROUP GUIDELINES

1. FOCUS ON YOUR OWN THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS WHEN SHARING WITH THE GROUP.

We want to be sure everyone has time to share, so please limit your sharing to three to five minutes. If you focus on your own thoughts and feelings, you're less likely to "wander" and discuss unrelated topics. As the group leader, I may let you know when you've shared for too long, but if you focus on what matters most, you'll likely stay within the time boundaries.

2. PLEASE AVOID ALL CROSS TALK.

We want each person to be free to express feelings and thoughts without interruptions. Here are some examples of "cross talk." Two individuals engage in conversation while excluding everyone else. A group member interrupts or inappropriately laughs when another person shares. Or a group member says, "I can relate to you because..." or "I can't relate to you because...." Please be respectful toward the other members of our group, because I know you want everyone to be respectful when it's your turn to share.

3. WE ARE HERE TO SUPPORT ONE ANOTHER.

Sometimes in our group settings, we hear about other people's challenges, and we want to offer

solutions to fix their problems. We may have the right intention, and we may want to share the wisdom we're gaining from being in this awesome program. But the other person may not be ready or want to hear or understand. You will protect each other by simply supporting one another and not trying to "fix" one another.

4. VALUE AND PROTECT ANONYMITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY.

It hurts to discover that information someone has shared here is being discussed outside of the small group time. Some of us struggle with trust issues because we've been hurt by other people. We all need to know that this is a safe place to share. What is shared in our group stays in our group. The only exception is if someone threatens to injure himself/herself or others.

5. AVOID OFFENSIVE LANGUAGE; IT HAS NO PLACE IN A CHRIST-CENTERED GROUP.

I'd encourage everyone in this group to follow this biblical thought, found in Ephesians 4:29—*Don't use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them.*

Landing

DAILY INVENTORY

Lesson forty-two

DAILY INVENTORY

lesson forty-two

PRINCIPLE 7:

Reserve a daily time with God for self-examination, Bible reading, and prayer in order to know God and his will for my life and to gain the power to follow his will.

SCRIPTURAL TRUTHS:

"So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!" (1 Corinthians 10:12 NIV).

SCHEDULE

•• CONNECT TIME (15 minutes)

♪ WORSHIP (15 minutes)

BOOK TEACHING TIME (40 minutes)

一群人 SMALL GROUPS (30 minutes)

❷ CLOSING (5 minutes)

•• CONNECT TIME (15 minutes)

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- » CD player (optional)
- » CD with worship music (optional)
- » Pens or pencils
- » Paper
- » Word search game (available on the CD-ROM)

PREPARATION

- » Pray for your teenagers and your meeting
- » Review this lesson
- » Make copies of the word search game (available on the CD-ROM)
- » Select songs for the Worship Time



CONNECT TIME

Warmly welcome everyone to the group.

Here's one you've done before. Gather teenagers in a circle for this Q&A opener—the catch is they have to answer questions in the third person (meaning, they refer to themselves by name instead of using "I"). You can change the questions each time to make your opening activity fresh—we'll use this idea a handful of times throughout the year.

Use fun questions such as:

- » What is your favorite song right now?
- » What personality traits would your ultimate friend have?

» If you could ask your idol three questions, what would you ask?

» What would the “best day” of your life look like?

Add your own questions to this list. It's funny to hear people talk about themselves this way—but this opener has the added benefit of cementing kids' names in their memory, and learning some fun stories about each other.



WORSHIP

SAY: We worship God by consciously giving access to him—by letting him see what we'd rather keep in the shadows. Remember what David said in Psalm 139: “Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.” Let's worship God right now by simply praying this prayer in an attitude of openness and vulnerability.

Read aloud Psalm 139:23-24 (NLT), pausing after each line and asking your kids to repeat what you said:

*Search me, O God, and know my heart;
test me and know my anxious thoughts.
Point out anything in me that offends you,
and lead me along the path of everlasting life.*

Then wait in silence for two minutes, just listening for God's voice and leading.

Then lead kids in three familiar worship songs. If you have a youth band, invite the group to lead your teenagers in worship. Otherwise, play the songs from a CD and encourage kids to sing along—or simply play the music as everyone sits and thinks about the words of the songs.

Then have everyone read aloud, together, this week's scriptural truth: "So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!" (1 Corinthians 10:12 NIV).



TEACHING TIME

SUPPLIES: Pens or pencils, paper, and copies of a word search game

SAY: I've printed out some copies of a word search game. You've probably played these before, but I bet you've never been timed while you played. I'm going to pass these out, face down. When I say go, turn them over and find as many words as possible in 30 seconds. We'll tally up the scores and then play a second round.

Distribute the handouts, and pens or pencils (if necessary), and play the game. Then pass out the second round of word searches, but make them the exact same copies as the ones you just played.

SAY: OK, here we go—round two. Go!

ASK:

- » Which time was easier? Why?
- » When you did the word search the second time, did it take you a second to realize it was the same?
- » If I gave you the same one again, how quickly do you think you could find all of the words?

SAY: As we've mentioned before, we're on this journey on the road to healthier, freer lives. The reason we call this gathering The Landing is that this journey is like coming home to a place where you are loved and where you can be who God created you to be. This journey is for everyone who feels stuck in life—trapped by their hurts, hang-ups, and habits, or their circumstances, or their addictions. It's also a place for people who haven't faced those intense battles but want greater wisdom on leading a healthy life filled with freedom. The principles that we talk about are based on the beatitudes, where Jesus laid out principles for happiness in the sermon on the mount.

Today at The Landing we'll focus on the how-to's of Principle 7. It's a good idea to keep track of the choices we're making in life and the things or behaviors God is asking us to give up. There are several pages in your Student Journal that you can use to continue keeping track of your daily journey. It's important to go back over your day by simply

writing about the good things and bad things that have happened—the successes and the times we blew it.

Here's why:

- » You might notice patterns of behavior or choices that need special attention—you may need help from Jesus and others to identify them and overcome them.
- » You can deal with whatever you need to deal with right away—if there's someone whose forgiveness you need, you can do it quickly. And acting on your convictions right away is a key to going forward.

Just like in the word search games the more you do this the easier it will be to find the things in your life that need attention.

We're going to practice journaling right now, so open your Student Journal to page 175. If you don't have a journal, we've put some pieces of paper out for you to use.

If you have a teenager in your group that doesn't have a journal, give him or her a sheet of paper. Give your teenagers up to five minutes to write. Your group may get done quickly, especially if this is a new or challenging activity for your kids.

SAY: Many of us have no idea how to get started writing in our journals. Let's walk through a few easy suggestions that will get you going. First, start off by writing about just one thing that happened today that you're thankful for. Write as many as you can, but get started by thinking of just one thing.

After a few minutes, **SAY:** From here on out at The Landing we'll check in every time we meet to see how our journaling is coming along—it's a way we can encourage each other and hold each other accountable.

Another way to start writing in our journals is to be on the lookout for the “fruit of the Spirit” showing up in our lives! Just so you know what you’re looking for, let’s quickly read Galatians 5:22-23: “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.”

Wow, that's quite a list!

Have kids each get with a partner (make sure they have at least one Bible between them) and read the passage. See if any of them can begin to remember any of Galatians 5:22-23 from memory.

After a few minutes, randomly ask a few teenagers to recite Galatians 5:22-23.

Then **SAY:** Asking ourselves a few questions every day will help us journal. Let's walk through these questions right now on your journal pages. First, answer the question: "Today, how did I show love to others?"

Give kids a chance to write. After a couple of minutes or so, **SAY:** Now answer the question: "Today, how did I act in an unloving way toward anyone?"

After a couple of minutes or so, **SAY:** Now answer the question: "Today, how did others see in me the joy of having a personal relationship with Jesus? If they didn't, why not?"

After a couple of minutes or so, **SAY:** Now answer the question: "Today, how did I maintain my peace?"

After a couple of minutes or so, **SAY:** Now answer the question: "Today, how was I patient? What caused me to lose my patience? Do I need to make amends with anyone?"

After a couple of minutes or so, **SAY:** Now answer the question: "Today, how did I act kindly or unkindly toward others?"

After a couple of minutes or so, **SAY:** Now answer the question: "Today, how have I been faithful?"

After a couple of minutes or so, **SAY:** Now answer the question: "Today, how did I do at keeping my word with others?"

After a couple of minutes or so, **SAY:** Now answer the question: "Today, how did I show gentleness and self-control? Did I lose my temper or speak a harsh or unkind word to someone? Did I go back into any of my hurts, hang-ups, and habits?"

After giving your students some time to write, **SAY:** This week, I'd like to encourage you to keep this journal going. If you liked answering the questions we just went over, set aside some time each day to jot the answers down. If you'd rather write freely and you have a good sense of how to do this, go ahead and do it your way. What's important is that you begin this process. Remember, your journal is for your eyes only. Keep it in a safe place. While none of us is going to read each other's journal, we are going to use them next week to build on what we started today.



SMALL GROUPS

Prior to beginning your small group, read the Small Group Guidelines on pp. 17-18 with your teenagers. Remember, as a leader you are to model these guidelines for your group as you lead the discussion.

Break your larger group into small groups of three or more, with a conversation leader in each one. To prime the pump for discussion, have the leaders begin the small group time by telling about their own experience

of the power of journaling in their life. Then have groups each discuss these questions (available on the CD-ROM).

ASK:

- » What's something that surprised you or challenged you about this journaling experience?
- » Why is it so important to our growth in Christ—and our ability to move through our hurts, hang-ups, and habits—to follow this practice of a "daily inventory"?
- » If you have journaled in the past, how did it impact your everyday life?
- » What are some of the things that could keep you from journaling, and what are ideas for overcoming those hurdles?
- » Is there something you'd like to share from your journaling experience today?

CLOSING

Close by reading the Serenity Prayer together (available on p. 3 of their Student Journal). Keep in mind, some teenagers may not want to read aloud with the rest of the group. That's OK; encourage them to focus on the words being shared.

God, grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change,
the courage to change the things I can,
and the wisdom to know the difference.

Living one day at a time,
enjoying one moment at a time;
Accepting hardship as a pathway to peace;

Taking, as Jesus did,
this sinful world as it is;
Not as I would have it;
Trusting that you will make all things right
If I surrender to your will; So that I
may be reasonably happy in this life
and supremely happy with you forever
in the next. AMEN.

- Reinhold Niebuhr

Don't forget to remind your students to spend time with their journals this week, reflecting on what God is teaching them during this journey.



CONNECT TIME

Serve refreshments of some kind so kids and leaders can hang out and connect. Consider having some healthy options for those who may use food as a way of coping. A ping-pong table, foosball table, or even a few board games will give teenagers an excuse to connect.

Landing

DAILY INVENTORY

lesson forty-three

DAILY INVENTORY

lesson forty-three

PRINCIPLE 7:

Reserve a daily time with God for self-examination, Bible reading, and prayer in order to know God and his will for my life and to gain the power to follow his will.

SCRIPTURAL TRUTHS:

"So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!" (1 Corinthians 10:12 NIV).

SCHEDULE

- ❖ CONNECT TIME (15 minutes)
- ♫ WORSHIP (10 minutes)
- 📖 TEACHING TIME (30 minutes)
- 🎥 VIDEO TIME (15 minutes)
- 👥 SMALL GROUPS (30 minutes)
- 🕒 CLOSING (5 minutes)
- ❖ CONNECT TIME (15 minutes)

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- » CD player (optional)
- » CD with worship music (optional)
- » TV and DVD player
- » The Landing DVD 4
- » Copies of situation slips (available on the CD-ROM)
- » A small object that can be hidden
- » A prize (a candy bar or a food item might be best)

PREPARATION

- » Pray for your teenagers and your meeting
- » Review this lesson
- » Gather supplies
- » Select songs for the Worship Time
- » Make copies of situation slips (available on the CD-ROM)
- » Hide the small object before kids arrive



CONNECT TIME

Warmly welcome everyone to the group.

Give your students some extra time to hang out and get to know one another.

WORSHIP

Then lead kids in three familiar worship songs. If you have a youth band, invite the group to lead your teenagers in worship. Otherwise, play the songs from a CD and encourage kids to sing along—or simply play the music as everyone sits and thinks about the words of the songs.

Then have everyone read aloud, together, this week's scriptural truth: "So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!" (*1 Corinthians 10:12 NIV*).



TEACHING TIME

SUPPLIES: copies of the situation slips.

ASK:

- » How did your journaling go this week?
- » Did anyone write in their journals every day?
- » Did anyone find it super hard to carve out time to journal?

SAY: If you weren't able to journal every day, don't beat yourself up over it. We talk a lot about breaking bad habits here in The Landing; journaling is about starting a good habit. Have you ever noticed how hard it is to break a bad habit and how hard it is to start a good one?

If you did journal this week, you may have seen some patterns or recurring items pop up. It's one thing to notice them; it's another thing to act on them. A few weeks ago we looked at making amends and offering forgiveness. It would be great to think that if you've done those actions you are done, you'll never have to forgive anyone or apologize ever again, but that wouldn't be true. The truth is, since we are all in relationships of one form or another, we are going to hurt people from time to time and we will be hurt by others. The key is to realize it quickly, and then do something about it.

Have your students get into trios.

SAY: We are going to spend some time role-playing tonight. We'll be passing out some slips of paper with situations on them. When you get your slip, act as if this situation was in your journal, either today or yesterday, and then act out either offering the forgiveness needed or making the amends.

Some suggested scenarios:

- » I told someone else something you asked me to keep secret.
- » I joined in as others made fun of you.
- » I lost my temper with you when you wouldn't let me see your homework.
- » You are my mom. You asked me to do something, and instead of listening, I yelled at you and stormed out of the room.

- » I took all of the credit on a class assignment when we actually worked on it together.
- » You are my dad. You told me I couldn't go to the party, but I went anyway.
- » You asked me out, and I didn't want to go, so I lied and said I was busy.
- » You sent me a text and I never replied. I said I didn't get it, but I did.
- » I posted that picture of you from the party.
- » I've been saying I haven't had a drink in weeks, but that's not true.
- » I've owed five dollars for a week. I always say I don't have it, but I do.
- » I told you the cigarette smoke you smelled on me was from my friends, when I was the one smoking.
- » You are my mom. I told you I was passing all of my classes, but I actually have two Ds and an F.
- » You borrowed something from me that I love and you broke it.
- » You said you would call me about hanging out; you didn't and I heard you and the rest of the group went out.
- » You are my dad. You said I could borrow the car this weekend and then changed your mind.
- » You said something untrue about me.
- » You were supposed to pick me up and you never showed.
- » You flirted with my crush.
- » You broke my confidence. I told you something I've never told anyone else and you told someone.

» You are my parent. You didn't come to my game and you said you would. You had a good reason, but it still hurt.

ASK:

- » How did it feel to role-play some of those issues?
- » How do you think your journal could help you?
- » If you saw something like this in your daily inventory, could you act on it?

SAY: Remember, it's important to write in your journal every day, even if it's only for a few minutes. When something surfaces in your journaling that you know you need to do something about, do it promptly.

VIDEO TIME

Set up a DVD player and TV in your meeting area. Ahead of time, cue up the video "Psalm 139" from DVD 4 in the kit. Play the video — this one is 13:25 minutes long.



SMALL GROUPS

Prior to beginning your small group, read through the following Small Group Guidelines with your teenagers.

1. Focus on your own thoughts and feelings when sharing with the group.
2. Please avoid ALL cross talk.
3. We are here to support one another.
4. Value and protect anonymity and confidentiality.
5. Avoid offensive language; it has no place in a Christ-centered group.

Remember, as a leader you are to model these guidelines for your group as you lead the discussion.

After the whole group has watched the video, split into your small groups, with a conversation leader in each one. Have your conversation leaders ask these questions (available on the CD-ROM) about the video, with the intent to draw out personal stories from the kids in the group.

Remember, as the leader, you may want to model some of these answers for your group by sharing from your own experience.

ASK:

- » As you watched the video, what impacted you the most? Explain.

- » What's risky about praying David's prayer in Psalm 139?
- » What's freeing about praying the prayer?
- » There's a strength we can find in our weakness when we're brutally honest about our life—the good and the bad. Why does this kind of "weakness" produce strength in our life?
- » What's something you'd like to share with the group that you learned by looking back over your journal entries from this week?

At the end of this discussion, the leader should close in prayer, thanking God for bringing us strength in our weakness.

CLOSING

SUPPLIES: a small object (already hidden), and a prize.

Tell your teenagers that you've hidden a small object somewhere in your meeting room—be sure to tell them what the object is—and promise a treat for whoever can find it first. If no one finds it within two minutes, no one receives the prize.

Award the prize to the winner. Or stop the search if no one has found the object after two minutes, and reveal where the item was.

ASK:

- » How is this experience like the daily inventory we've been learning about?
- » What "treasure" have you found by pursuing and finding what has been hidden in you?

Close by reading the Serenity Prayer together (available on p. 3 of their Student Journal). Keep in mind, some teenagers may not want to read aloud with the rest of the group. That's OK; encourage them to focus on the words being shared.

God, grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change,
the courage to change the things I can,
and the wisdom to know the difference.

Living one day at a time,
enjoying one moment at a time;
Accepting hardship as a pathway to peace;

Taking, as Jesus did,
this sinful world as it is;
Not as I would have it;
Trusting that you will make all things right
If I surrender to your will; So that I
may be reasonably happy in this life
and supremely happy with you forever
in the next. AMEN.

- Reinhold Niebuhr

Don't forget to remind your students to spend time with their journals this week, reflecting on what God is teaching them during this journey.



CONNECT TIME

Serve refreshments of some kind so kids and leaders can hang out and connect. Consider having some healthy options for those who may use food as a way of coping. A ping-pong table, foosball table, or even a few board games will give teenagers an excuse to connect.

Landings

RELAPSE

lesson forty-four

RELAPSE

lesson forty-four

PRINCIPLE 7:

Reserve a daily time with God for self-examination, Bible reading, and prayer in order to know God and his will for my life and to gain the power to follow his will.

SCRIPTURAL TRUTHS:

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly"
(Colossians 3:16 NIV).

SCHEDULE

- ❖ CONNECT TIME (15 minutes)
- ♫ WORSHIP (15 minutes)
- 📖 TEACHING TIME (40 minutes)
- 👥 SMALL GROUPS (30 minutes)
- ㉔ CLOSING (5 minutes)
- ❖ CONNECT TIME (15 minutes)

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- » CD player (optional)
- » CD with worship music (optional)
- » Bibles
- » Paper
- » Pens or pencils
- » A few blindfolds—you can use old T-shirts, bandanas, or other material
- » A large flip pad or large sheet of butcher paper or newsprint (you also could use a whiteboard, with dry-erase markers)
- » Markers

PREPARATION

- » Pray for your teenagers and your meeting
- » Review this lesson
- » Gather supplies
- » Select songs for the Worship Time



CONNECT TIME

SUPPLIES: A few blindfolds—you can use old T-shirts, bandanas, or other material.

Warmly welcome everyone to the group.

SAY: I hope you're ready to have some fun. Today we are going to have a good old-fashioned three-legged race.

Have everyone pair up; if you have an odd number of teenagers get some adult leaders involved. Do three rounds. First do a traditional race with the partners' legs tied together. After the first round, have one of each pair put on a blindfold. For the last round tell the students they are not allowed to talk.

ASK:

- » How did that go? Did anyone have a really hard time? Why?
- » Did any pair do really well? Why?
- » What did you learn from the second and third rounds?



WORSHIP

Lead kids in three familiar worship songs. If you have a youth band, invite the group to lead your teenagers in worship. Otherwise, play the songs from a CD and encourage kids to sing along—or simply play the music as everyone sits and thinks about the words of the songs.

Then have everyone read aloud, together, this week's scriptural truth: *"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly"* (*Colossians 3:16 NIV*).



TEACHING TIME

SUPPLIES: Bibles; paper; pens or pencils; markers; and a large flip pad, or large sheet of butcher paper or newsprint.

Get your teenagers into trios, give each group a piece of paper and a pen or pencil, and **SAY:** You have two minutes to come up with as many songs that deal with loneliness or hard times as you can. You don't have to write the lyrics—just the name of the song. Let's see how many you can come up with in your trio. Go!

After two minutes, find out which trio has the longest list. Have a person from that trio stand and read the list.

Then **ASK** trios to discuss:

- » When have you gone through a time of feeling isolated or lonely?

After five minutes or so, **SAY:** Loneliness is a common theme in songs because it's a common human experience. All of us feel loneliness in our life, even when we're surrounded by people. It's easy to feel like we're all alone when facing our challenges and struggles. And when we feel alone, it's easy to slip back into our old hurts, hang-ups, and habits. That's called "relapse."

Gather everyone together in a circle, with the butcher paper, newsprint, or flip pad in the middle; if your group is large form more than one circle. As teenagers answer the next question, begin writing their responses.

ASK:

- » What are the most common causes of loneliness and isolation among teenagers?

After several minutes of discussion, **SAY:** When we go through times of loneliness and isolation, we're tempted to abandon everything we've worked for and slip back into old struggles. We need strength and encouragement to stay on our journey and not become trapped again by our hurts, hang-ups, and habits. A great place to get encouragement is right here. You're surrounded by people who are in this journey with you. You can hold each other up and encourage each other when things get tough.

Ecclesiastes 4 says, "Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up! Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken."

That is called accountability. When we find safe people to go through life with and people who can help us when we fall, we realize we aren't alone in our struggle against loneliness and isolation.

ASK:

- » Do you know someone, either here at The Landing or anywhere else, that you feel would make a good accountability partner for you? You don't have to say that person's name.
- » Can you think of a way you can encourage someone around you?

Then quietly read aloud Deuteronomy 31:6: **Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.**"

Then **SAY:** The Bible says you are never alone. If you're a follower of Christ, the Holy Spirit is always with you to provide help and comfort. You can turn to him for help whenever you want, wherever you are. You need his strength and the strength of your community here at The Landing to make it through the tough times, when you feel lonely and isolated.



SMALL GROUPS

Prior to beginning your small group, read through the following Small Group Guidelines with your teenagers.

1. Focus on your own thoughts and feelings when sharing with the group.
2. Please avoid ALL cross talk.
3. We are here to support one another.
4. Value and protect anonymity and confidentiality.
5. Avoid offensive language; it has no place in a Christ-centered group.

Remember, as a leader you are to model these guidelines for your group as you lead the discussion.

Break your larger group into small groups of three or more, with a conversation leader in each one. To prime

the pump for discussion, have the leaders begin the small group time by telling about a time (using their discretion) when they felt lonely and isolated in their life. Then have groups each discuss these questions (available on the CD-ROM).

ASK:

- » What typically makes you feel lonely or isolated?
- » What do you typically do to cope when you feel lonely or isolated?
- » How has God been a help to you during past times of loneliness?
- » Do you have someone in mind to keep you accountable?
- » How have you been doing with your journal?

The leader of the group should close this time with a prayer that offers God thanks that he is always with us.



CLOSING

Close by reading the Serenity Prayer together (available on p. 3 of their Student Journal). Keep in mind, some teenagers may not want to read aloud with the rest of the group. That's OK; encourage them to focus on the words being shared.

God, grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change,
the courage to change the things I can,
and the wisdom to know the difference.

Living one day at a time,
enjoying one moment at a time;
Accepting hardship as a pathway to peace;
Taking, as Jesus did,
this sinful world as it is;
Not as I would have it;
Trusting that you will make all things right
If I surrender to your will; So that I
may be reasonably happy in this life
and supremely happy with you forever
in the next. AMEN.

- Reinhold Niebuhr

Don't forget to remind your students to spend time with their journals this week, reflecting on what God is teaching them during this journey.



CONNECT TIME

Serve refreshments of some kind so kids and leaders can hang out and connect. Consider having some healthy options for those who may use food as a way of coping. A ping-pong table, foosball table, or even a few board games will give teenagers an excuse to connect.

Landing

RELAPSE

Lesson forty-five

RELAPSE

lesson forty-five

PRINCIPLE 7:

Reserve a daily time with God for self-examination, Bible reading, and prayer in order to know God and his will for my life and to gain the power to follow his will.

SCRIPTURAL TRUTHS:

*"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly"
(Colossians 3:16 NIV).*

SCHEDULE

- ❖ CONNECT TIME (15 minutes)
- ♫ WORSHIP (10 minutes)
- 📖 TEACHING TIME (30 minutes)
- 🎥 VIDEO TIME (10 minutes)
- 👥 SMALL GROUPS (35 minutes)
- ㉑ CLOSING (5 minutes)
- ❖ CONNECT TIME (15 minutes)

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- » CD player (optional)
- » CD with worship music (optional)
- » TV and DVD player
- » The Landing DVD 4
- » 3X5 cards—several per teenager
- » Pens or pencils
- » Character slips (available on the CD-ROM)

PREPARATION

- » Pray for your teenagers and your meeting
- » Review this lesson
- » Gather supplies
- » Select songs for the Worship Time
- » Copy and cut character slips (available on the CD-ROM)
- » Run through the Teaching Time activity as a reflective exercise for yourself. You will be sharing your testimony with the group next week.

CONNECT TIME

SUPPLIES: character slips.

SAY: Let's play a game pretending we are other people. Everyone grab a piece of paper from this hat; don't show anyone your slip. On that paper you'll see a name of a famous person, either real or fictional. We're going to take turns telling our person's story as if we were the person. Here's the catch: You can't

say the person's name. When you're done, we're going to see if we can guess who you are.

Some suggested people:

- » Cinderella
- » Superman
- » Little Red Riding Hood
- » Darth Vader
- » Mickey Mouse
- » Dora the Explorer
- » Jack Bauer
- » Abraham Lincoln
- » Famous sport stars your kids would know

Make sure to come up with enough characters so that each student can participate.

WORSHIP

Lead kids in three familiar worship songs. If you have a youth band, invite the group to lead your teenagers in worship. Otherwise, play the songs from a CD and encourage kids to sing along—or simply play the music as everyone sits and thinks about the words of the songs.

Then have everyone read aloud, together, this week's scriptural truth: "*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly*" (*Colossians 3:16 NIV*).



TEACHING TIME

SUPPLIES: 3X5 cards and pens or pencils.

SAY: Last week we looked at some ways to avoid slipping back into our old hurts, hang-ups, and habits. We talked about how we can encourage each other and hold each other up, and that daily journaling can help keep us focused. Today we are going to keep going forward.

One way to keep moving forward is to tell your story to someone else. Think about your favorite movie. Although you may like the special effects or the actors in it, what you're probably drawn to most is the story. Every good story has a beginning, a middle, and an end—or a to be continued.

Let me give you an example of one of my favorite stories. Once there was a hero. His birth was shrouded in mystery. He claimed to have a connection with the ultimate power in the universe. This man did amazing things. He had superpowers. He knew what people were thinking. He could change people with the slightest touch, or even with only words.

Then, he was betrayed. One of his inner crew sold him out to the evil empire. He was unjustly tried and was killed for a crime he didn't commit. He said he'd be back.

After he was killed, he was buried, but that wasn't the end of his story. On the third day, he came back from the grave. Only instead of punishing the people who killed him, he forgave them. Not just for killing him, but for everything they'd ever done. Of course, this hero is Jesus. And his story continues.

What is your story? Maybe you're here for the first time and all of this kind of freaks you out a little. Relax. No one is going to ask you to stand up here and tell your story. But if you've been coming to The Landing for a while now, you've probably seen some changes in your life. Telling other people about those changes can be scary, but it can help keep you from a relapse, and it can help others find what you have found.

So today we'll spend some time thinking about and actually writing our stories.

Hand out several 3X5 cards and pens or pencils to each teenager. As you lead them through this exercise, be sure to give them plenty of time to answer the questions you'll be asking.

SAY: Every good story has a beginning. Yours does too. So, let's take a few minutes and write the first part of our stories. We'll call this the "old me." Again, if you're newer this may be the current you. That's OK. Just answer these questions as honestly as you can. No one is going to read anything you write.

On the top of each card write the letters OM for "Old Me."

SAY: On the first card, start at the very beginning; write down when and where you were born. Do you have any brothers or sisters? Where do you fit in the line up?

Next card: As a child what coping skill did you use to get attention or to protect yourself?

Next card: How did you handle pain and disappointment?

Next card: What's your biggest hurt, hang-up, or habit?

The next few cards will reflect what has happened on your journey here at The Landing, so on top of these cards write the letters TL for "The Landing." If applicable, describe your experience in turning your life over to Christ.

Next card: What are some of the positive changes you have seen in your life?

Next card: Have you forgiven yourself and others for pain in the past? How?

Next card: Have you made amends to the people you have hurt?

SAY: I think that's enough for this week. Next week we'll spend some time on the "New Me" and our "To Be Continued" parts of our stories. Please bring these 3X5 cards back with you. And I'll be sharing my testimony with you next week.

VIDEO TIME

Set up a DVD player and TV in your meeting area. Ahead of time, cue up the video "Good vs. Great" from DVD 4 in the kit. Play the video—this one is 9:27 minutes long.

SMALL GROUPS

Prior to beginning your small group, read through the following Small Group Guidelines with your teenagers.

1. Focus on your own thoughts and feelings when sharing with the group.
2. Please avoid ALL cross talk.
3. We are here to support one another.
4. Value and protect anonymity and confidentiality.
5. Avoid offensive language; it has no place in a Christ-centered group.

Remember, as a leader you are to model these guidelines for your group as you lead the discussion.



CLOSING

Close by reading the Serenity Prayer together (available on p. 3 of their Student Journal). Keep in mind, some teenagers may not want to read aloud with the rest of the group. That's OK; encourage them to focus on the words being shared.

God, grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change,
the courage to change the things I can,
and the wisdom to know the difference.

Living one day at a time,
enjoying one moment at a time;
Accepting hardship as a pathway to peace;
Taking, as Jesus did,
this sinful world as it is;
Not as I would have it;
Trusting that you will make all things right
If I surrender to your will; So that I
may be reasonably happy in this life
and supremely happy with you forever
in the next. AMEN.

- Reinhold Niebuhr

Don't forget to remind your students to spend time with their journals this week, reflecting on what God is teaching them during this journey.

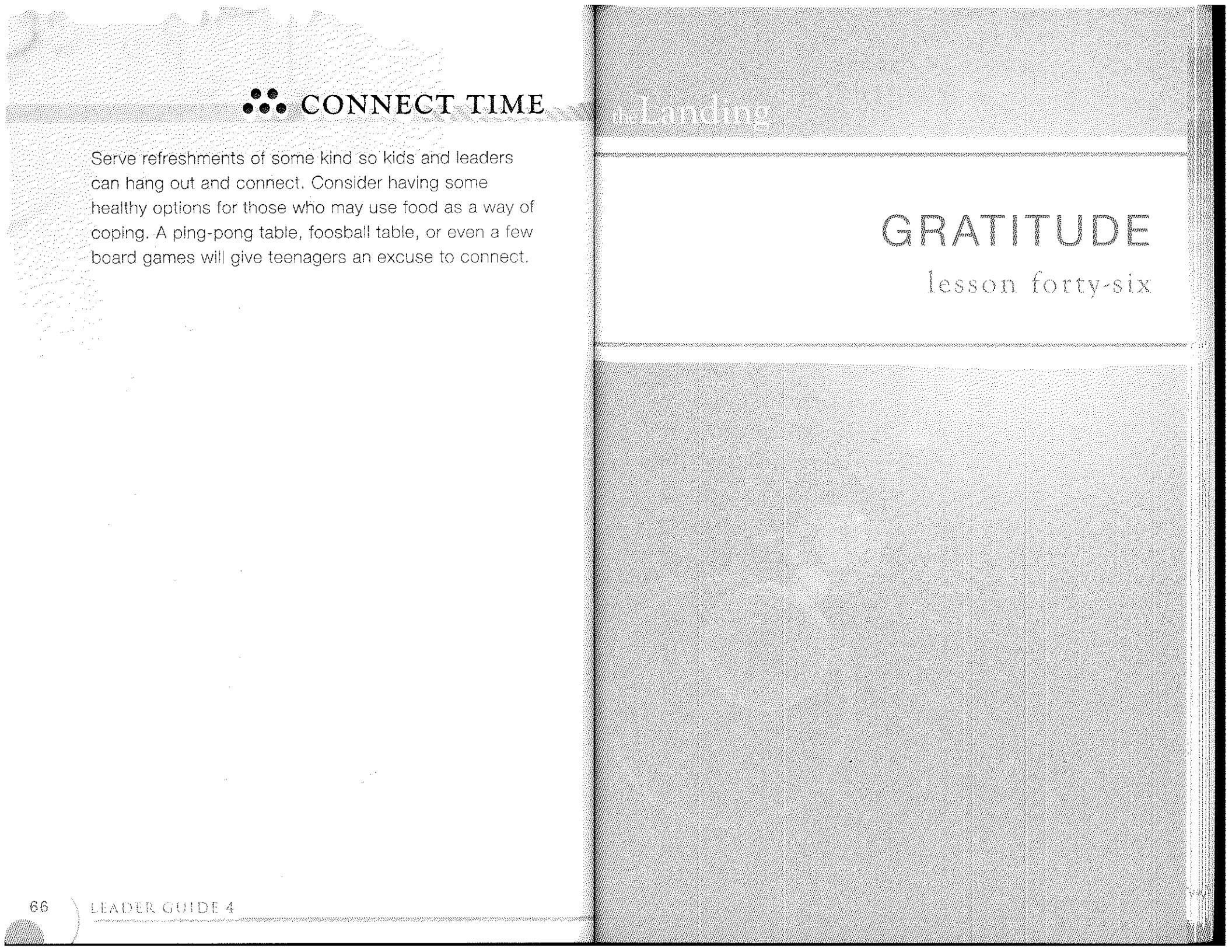
After the whole group has watched the video, split into your small groups, with a conversation leader in each one. Have your conversation leaders ask these questions (available on the CD-ROM) about the video, with the intent to draw out personal stories from the kids in the group.

Remember, as the leader, you may want to model some of these answers for your group by sharing from your own experience.

ASK:

- » As you watched the video, what impacted you the most? Explain.
- » When is "good" not good enough in life?
- » How is the temptation to slide into relapse related to the tension between good and great in your life?
- » How do you think telling your story will help you avoid relapse?
- » How do you feel about sharing your story?
- » How have you been doing with your daily journaling?

At the end of this discussion, the leader should close in prayer, thanking God for giving us the strength to finish our journey.



CONNECT TIME

Serve refreshments of some kind so kids and leaders can hang out and connect. Consider having some healthy options for those who may use food as a way of coping. A ping-pong table, foosball table, or even a few board games will give teenagers an excuse to connect.

Hanging

GRATITUDE

lesson forty-six

GRATITUDE lesson forty-six

PRINCIPLE 7:

Reserve a daily time with God for self-examination, Bible reading, and prayer in order to know God and his will for my life and to gain the power to follow his will.

SCRIPTURAL TRUTHS:

*"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly"
(Colossians 3:16 NIV).*

SCHEDULE

- ❖ CONNECT TIME (15 minutes)
- 🎵 WORSHIP (15 minutes)
- 📖 TEACHING TIME (40 minutes)
- 👥 SMALL GROUPS (30 minutes)
- ⌚ CLOSING (5 minutes)
- ❖ CONNECT TIME (15 minutes)

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- » CD player (optional)
- » CD with worship music (optional)
- » 3X5 cards—several per teenagers
- » Pens or pencils

PREPARATION

- » Pray for your teenagers and your meeting
- » Review this lesson
- » Gather supplies
- » Select songs for the Worship Time
- » Be prepared to share your story within a 5- to 7-minute timeframe

CONNECT TIME

Warmly welcome everyone to the group.

Here's one you've done before. Have your teenagers and adult leaders stand in a circle and, one by one, quickly respond to a bizarre question. Each person gets just two seconds to think before responding—the whole group should count in unison "One thousand one, one thousand two" to count off the two seconds each person is allowed. If someone cannot answer within the two-second allowance, they're out of the circle. Create your own wacky questions, or use these as a starter.

ASK:

- » If you were a candy bar, which would you be?
- » If you could go on a road trip, where would you go and who would you take?
- » What's the weirdest thing you've ever eaten?
- » Have you experienced another culture? Tell us about it.

If you want, ask your teenagers to suggest their own wacky questions ahead of time.

WORSHIP

Lead kids in three familiar worship songs. If you have a youth band, invite the group to lead your teenagers in worship. Otherwise, play the songs from a CD and encourage kids to sing along—or simply play the music as everyone sits and thinks about the words of the songs.

Then have everyone read aloud, together, this week's scriptural truth: "*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly*" (*Colossians 3:16 NIV*).



TEACHING TIME

SUPPLIES: 3X5 cards and pens or pencils.

Have students get into trios.

SAY: I know that there have been times in this journey that have been difficult. Maybe even today you are struggling. For the last few weeks we've been talking about staying focused and moving forward on our journey. We talked about how prayer and reading our Bibles, having help and encouragement from others, and telling our stories can help us avoid the mistake of slipping back into what we feel is more comfortable. Today we're going to spend a few minutes creating gratitude lists. A gratitude list is basically just a list of things we're thankful for. So, in your groups spend a few minutes talking about things you are grateful for. If you have a hard time getting started maybe start with, "I'm thankful that I'm breathing right now" or, "I'm thankful that I am here tonight." I'll give you a few minutes and then call you back together.

ASK:

- » Did some of you come up with the same things to be grateful for?
- » How did it feel to express thankfulness?
- » Was this the first time this week you thought about the things you are thankful for?

Read aloud 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18: "Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

ASK:

- » How is it possible to give thanks in all circumstances?
- » Does God want us to give thanks even in the middle of bad situations in life, too? How do we do that?
- » When has it been hard for you to be grateful to God in your life? Explain.

SAY: Last week we started writing our stories. If you were here last week, I hope you brought your 3X5 cards back with you. If you didn't or if you weren't here, I can remind you of the questions we asked last week.

But I did promise you last week that I would share my story with you. I'll keep it short, so don't worry, but one thing I am so grateful for is what God has done in my life.

Here's my story.

Tell them your story. Make it a 5- to 7-minute version of your testimony. If you've never shared your story before, just answer the questions in Lesson 45 and the questions that follow in this lesson as well. Then, just share your story. If you have shared your testimony before, just edit it down to 5-7 minutes. Keep a few things in mind before you share:

- » Keep all graphic descriptions or accounts out of your testimony. Remember the age group you are sharing with.

- » Try to highlight anything from your teen years.
- » Make sure you make your story encouraging—focusing more on what God has done for you and the changes you have made than any other part of your story.

SAY: Thanks for letting me share. Now let's continue writing our stories together. We can actually think of our stories as a thank you note to God. As we talk about the changes he has made in our lives, we are saying thank you.

Last week we looked at the "Old Me," and "The Landing" parts of our stories. Now we'll move on to the "New Me." Remember to answer each question on one 3X5 card.

Write NM on these cards for "New Me."

ASK:

- » Have any relationships been healed or improved?

After giving your students a few minutes to write, **ASK:**

- » Next card: How has your relationship with Jesus grown?

After giving your students a few minutes to write, **ASK:**

- » Next card: What do you do to celebrate the changes God has made in your life?

After giving your students a few minutes to write, **ASK:**

- » Next card: Name three people God has placed in your life that you are grateful for and why.

After giving your students a few minutes to write, **ASK:**

- » Next card: In what area of this journey are you especially thankful for God's power?

Now for the last section of our stories—the "To Be Continued" cards. Label these BC.

ASK:

- » What are some recent victories you can share with others?

After giving your students a few minutes to write, **ASK:**

- » Next card: What encouragement could you give to someone just coming to The Landing?

After giving your students a few minutes to write, **ASK:**

- » Next card: How can you give back to your friends and family who are in similar situations as you?

SAY: Now, if we put our cards in order we have a pretty good start on our stories. Take time this week to look at the cards in your stack and thank God for what he has already done in your life. Bring back your cards next week.



SMALL GROUPS

Prior to beginning your small group, read through the following Small Group Guidelines with your teenagers.

1. Focus on your own thoughts and feelings when sharing with the group.
2. Please avoid ALL cross talk.
3. We are here to support one another.
4. Value and protect anonymity and confidentiality.
5. Avoid offensive language; it has no place in a Christ-centered group.

Remember, as a leader you are to model these guidelines for your group as you lead the discussion.

Break your larger group into small groups of three or more, with a conversation leader in each one. To prime the pump for discussion, have the leaders begin the small group time by telling about a time (using their discretion) when they found a reason to be thankful during a hard time. Then have groups each discuss these questions (available on the CD-ROM).

Remember, as the leader, you may want to model some of these answers for your group by sharing from your own experience.

ASK:

- » What's one situation in your life that you'd have a hard time finding a reason to be grateful? Explain.
- » Are you generally a grateful person, or is thankfulness more of a struggle for you? Explain.
- » What do you notice that's different about people who tend to be grateful, compared to people who don't tend to be grateful?
- » What have you noticed about yourself when you're living with a grateful heart, and when you're not?
- » Are you looking forward to writing your story?
- » How are you doing with your daily journaling?

The leader of the group should close this time with a prayer that offers God thanks for the group.



CLOSING

Close by reading the Serenity Prayer together (available on p. 3 of their Student Journal). Keep in mind, some teenagers may not want to read aloud with the rest of the group. That's OK; encourage them to focus on the words being shared.

God, grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change,
the courage to change the things I can,
and the wisdom to know the difference.

Living one day at a time,
enjoying one moment at a time;
Accepting hardship as a pathway to peace;
Taking, as Jesus did,
this sinful world as it is;
Not as I would have it;
Trusting that you will make all things right
If I surrender to your will; So that I
may be reasonably happy in this life
and supremely happy with you forever
in the next. AMEN.

- Reinhold Niebuhr

Don't forget to remind your students to spend time with their journals this week, reflecting on what God is teaching them during this journey.

CONNECT TIME

Serve refreshments of some kind so kids and leaders can hang out and connect. Consider having some healthy options for those who may use food as a way of coping. A ping-pong table, foosball table, or even a few board games will give teenagers an excuse to connect.

Handling

GRATITUDE

Lesson forty-seven

PRINCIPLE 7:

Reserve a daily time with God for self-examination, Bible reading, and prayer in order to know God and his will for my life and to gain the power to follow his will.

SCRIPTURAL TRUTHS:

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly"
(Colossians 3:16 NIV).

SCHEDULE

- CONNECT TIME (15 minutes)
- ♫ WORSHIP (10 minutes)
- ▢ TEACHING TIME (35 minutes)
- ▢ VIDEO TIME (5 minutes)
- ▢ SMALL GROUPS (35 minutes)
- ▢ CLOSING (5 minutes)
- CONNECT TIME (15 minutes)

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- » CD player (optional)
- » CD with worship music (optional)
- » TV and DVD player
- » The Landing DVD 4
- » Copies of "Road Signs" handout—one per teenager (available on the CD-ROM)
- » Copies of station instructions (available on the CD-ROM)
- » Puzzle
- » 3X5 cards
- » Pens or pencils

PREPARATION

- » Pray for your teenagers and your meeting
- » Review this lesson
- » Gather supplies
- » Select songs for the Worship Time
- » Make copies of "Road Signs" handout
- » Make copies of station instructions
- » Set up stations before kids arrive

CONNECT TIME

SUPPLIES: copies of "Road Signs" handout, and pens or pencils.

Warmly welcome everyone to the group.

Give your teenagers each a "Road Signs" handout, and a pen or pencil, and then **SAY:** Look at this list of road

signs as a starter for brainstorming. On the back of your handout, write which road sign on the list—or one that isn't on the list—best represents who you are right now or who you want to be.

After a few minutes, ask your teenagers to each stand and tell about their road sign, explaining how it reflects who they are or who they want to be.

WORSHIP

Lead kids in two or three familiar worship songs. If you have a youth band, invite the group to lead your teenagers in worship. Otherwise, play the songs from a CD and encourage kids to sing along—or simply play the music as everyone sits and thinks about the words of the songs.

Then have everyone read aloud, together, this week's scriptural truth: "*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly*" (*Colossians 3:16 NIV*).

TEACHING TIME

SUPPLIES: Pens or pencils, 3X5 cards, and a puzzle.

SAY: For the last few weeks we've been writing our stories together. Many of you are excited about sharing your stories with others, and we are going to give you an opportunity to do just that. No, not

today, don't worry. But soon. Sometimes this process of writing our stories can be a bit overwhelming, though, so today we are going to put them aside and focus on more things we are thankful for.

As we've mentioned before, we're on this journey on the road to healthier, freer lives. The reason we call this gathering The Landing is that this journey is like coming home to a place where you are loved and where you can be who God created you to be. This journey is for everyone who feels stuck in life—trapped by their hurts, hang-ups, and habits, or their circumstances, or their addictions. It's also a place for people who haven't faced those intense battles but want greater wisdom on leading a healthy life filled with freedom.

Today at The Landing we're going to focus on having a grateful attitude in four areas of our life: toward God, toward others, toward our journey here in this group, and toward our church or youth group.

You'll set up three stations around the room.

Station 1: Thankful to God

Print up the sheets with the following Scripture verses.

Read through these verses and take a few moments to thank God.

Philippians 4:6: "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."

Psalm 107:15: "Give thanks to the Lord for his unfailing love and wonderful deeds for men."

Psalm 106:1: "Praise the Lord. Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever."

Colossians 3:17: "And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."

Station 2: Thankful for Others

Set up a puzzle on a table. You are going to finish the puzzle as a group. Here's the catch: No one gets to put more than five pieces of the puzzle together. If you have a larger or smaller group, adjust the number of pieces each student can complete accordingly. Also, you don't have to have a huge 1,000-piece puzzle because it would take too long to complete. So don't worry if the puzzle seems simple or small; you'll want to find one you can complete in the time allotted. Then, take one piece of the puzzle out and hold on to it until the rest of the puzzle is complete, without telling the students. Allow students to make multiple visits if needed and even work together if the puzzle ends up being more challenging than you thought.

When the puzzle is complete, **SAY:** As you can see we had to work together in order to finish the puzzle. Although a few of us may have been able to sit down and complete it by ourselves, we had to rely on each other to finish it.

Place the last piece in the puzzle. **SAY:** In order for us to keep going on this journey we will need each other. Let's just take a minute to silently pray and thank God for putting the people in this room together, thank him for placing each person in this room in your life, and ask him how you can show one another how you are thankful for them.

Station 3: Thankful for My Church and Youth Group
Set up a stack of 3X5 cards. Instruct your students to write a thank you note to either the church's senior pastor or youth pastor, expressing gratitude for providing The Landing as a place for them to work on their hurts, hang-ups, and habits.

SAY: There's one more area that we are going to explore, but instead of doing it at a station, we'll do it in small group. We'll be talking about the things we have learned so far in The Landing. Be thinking of things you have seen or heard or the changes you have seen in your life as a result of your time here.

If you have enjoyed the last two weeks of thinking about the things you are grateful for, I want to let you know about a section in your Student Journal. On

page 199 you can complete a written Gratitude List. This is a good exercise because having a written list helps to remind us of the things we are thankful for, especially on those days when we have a hard time remembering.

VIDEO TIME

Set up a DVD player and TV in your meeting area. Ahead of time, cue up the video "Thank You, God" from DVD 4 in the kit. Play the video—this one is 1:31 minutes long.

SMALL GROUPS

Prior to beginning your small group, read through the following Small Group Guidelines with your teenagers.

1. Focus on your own thoughts and feelings when sharing with the group.
2. Please avoid ALL cross talk.
3. We are here to support one another.
4. Value and protect anonymity and confidentiality.
5. Avoid offensive language; it has no place in a Christ-centered group.

Remember, as a leader you are to model these guidelines for your group as you lead the discussion.

After the whole group has watched the video, split into your small groups, with a conversation leader in

each one. Have your conversation leaders ask these questions (available on the CD-ROM) about the video, with the intent to draw out personal stories from the kids in the group.

Remember, as the leader, you may want to model some of these answers for your group by sharing from your own experience.

ASK:

- » As you watched the video, what impacted you the most? Explain.
- » Why is it so easy to forget about the things that make us grateful to God?
- » How have you seen God move in your life over the course of your time in The Landing?
- » What is one thing you have learned or one change you have made during our time together?

At the end of this discussion, the leader should close in prayer, thanking God for all the reasons the teenagers are grateful.

CLOSING

SAY: Let's take a few minutes to silently thank God for all of the things he has done in our lives. Tell him thanks for all of the big things, and all of the little things, too. Then, if you are comfortable, say out loud one thing you are thankful for. You'll know when to start because I'll go first.

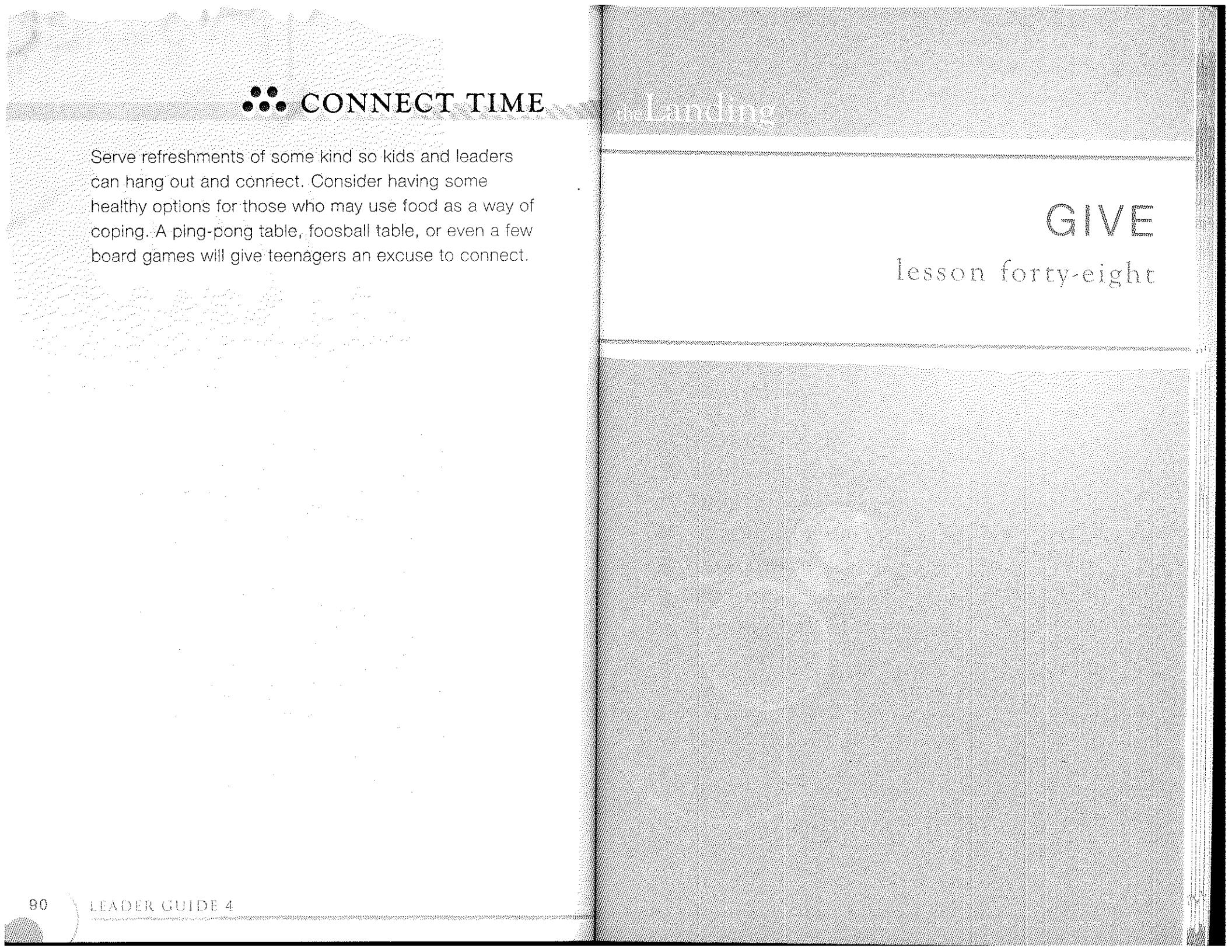
Close by reading the Serenity Prayer together (available on p. 3 of their Student Journal). Keep in mind, some teenagers may not want to read aloud with the rest of the group. That's OK; encourage them to focus on the words being shared.

God, grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change,
the courage to change the things I can,
and the wisdom to know the difference.

Living one day at a time,
enjoying one moment at a time;
Accepting hardship as a pathway to peace;
Taking, as Jesus did,
this sinful world as it is;
Not as I would have it;
Trusting that you will make all things right
If I surrender to your will; So that I
may be reasonably happy in this life
and supremely happy with you forever
in the next. AMEN.

- Reinhold Niebuhr

Don't forget to remind your students to spend time with their journals this week, reflecting on what God is teaching them during this journey.



CONNECT TIME

Serve refreshments of some kind so kids and leaders can hang out and connect. Consider having some healthy options for those who may use food as a way of coping. A ping-pong table, foosball table, or even a few board games will give teenagers an excuse to connect.

Landings

GIVE

Lesson forty-eight

GIVE lesson forty-eight

PRINCIPLE 8:

Yield myself to God to be used to bring this Good News to others, both by my example and by my words.

SCRIPTURAL TRUTHS:

"Happy are those who are persecuted because they do what God requires" (Matthew 5:10 GNT).

"Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also might be tempted" (Galatians 6:1 NIV).

SCHEDULE

- ❖ CONNECT TIME (15 minutes)
- 🎵 WORSHIP (15 minutes)
- 📖 TEACHING TIME (40 minutes)
- 人群 SMALL GROUPS (30 minutes)
- ⌚ CLOSING (5 minutes)
- ❖ CONNECT TIME (15 minutes)

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- » CD player (optional)
- » CD with worship music (optional)
- » Pens or pencils
- » Small candy bars
- » Copies of the Candy Bar handout (available on the CD-ROM)

PREPARATION

- » Pray for your teenagers and your meeting
- » Review this lesson
- » Gather supplies
- » Select songs for the Worship Time
- » Make copies of the Candy Bar handout (available on the CD-ROM)

CONNECT TIME

SUPPLIES: 3X5 cards, and pens or pencils.

Warmly welcome everyone to the group.

This is an opening “connect” activity that you’re doing once every month. Have teenagers get in a circle. Give them each a 3X5 card and something to write with (if they don’t already have a pen or pencil). Ask them to write one creative question on their card that’s designed to discover what their friends in the group think, feel, and believe. For example: “If you had the whole day to yourself, what would you do?” Or “Would you rather give money to a cause, or give your time to it?”

Ask teenagers to pass the cards to you, then quickly select five question-cards based on which ones you think would be most interesting to answer. Then ask one teenager to volunteer to sit in a chair in the middle of your circle—the “Hot Seat.” One by one, ask the Hot Seat person the five questions.

Encourage the remaining kids in the circle to ask at least two follow-up questions (total) after every answer from the Hot Seat person.

WORSHIP

Have your teenagers hold in front of them anything of value that they brought to The Landing—a cell phone, a wallet, an iPod, a photo of their family, and so on.

Then **ASK:**

- » What would you be willing to give to another person here at The Landing—right here and now?

No matter whether people offer something serious or funny or nothing at all, follow up and **SAY:** It’s not always easy to give something to someone, especially if the “something” actually matters to us. And few things matter more to us than our hearts—yet God has asked us to give him our hearts. How can he do that? Well, God’s already given us his heart—and everything else that’s of value to him. God wants us to give all because he’s already given all. Let’s worship God now.

Then lead kids in two or three familiar worship songs. If you have a youth band, invite the group to lead your teenagers in worship. Otherwise, play the songs from a CD and encourage kids to sing along—or simply play the music as everyone sits and thinks about the words of the songs.

Then have everyone read aloud, together, this week's beatitude: "*Happy are those who are persecuted because they do what God requires*" (Matthew 5:10 GNT).



TEACHING TIME

SUPPLIES: copies of Candy Bar handout.

Give each teenager a small candy bar and a "Candy Bar" handout (available on the CD-ROM). Tell your teenagers to read all of the directions and follow them. If a kid follows the instructions and turns in his or her candy bar to you, give that person two candy bars in return (even if you get only half of a candy bar).

ASK:

- » How well did you follow the instructions with the candy bar game?
- » Did anyone read all the way through the instructions first? Why or why not?

Read Matthew 5:14-16.

ASK:

- » What does it mean to be the light of the world?
- » How is sharing our stories like letting our light shine before other people?

SAY: A huge part of this journey is giving back to others. Whether it is your first time here today or if you've been coming since week one, helping others will impact them as well as you.

You may be thinking, "What are you asking me to give? What can I give?" Well, we're not talking about money. Although some of you may have extra money that could help others financially, what we're really talking about is giving of yourself.

ASK:

- » What are some ways we can give to friends, family members, and other people?
- » What have you learned here at The Landing that you could pass on to someone else?

SAY: One great thing we can share with others is our story. If you have your 3X5 cards that we've been using to outline your story, go ahead and get those out now. If you didn't bring them or if you haven't done this yet, don't worry—I have the questions we've been using. Go ahead and take a look at those and follow along as best as you can.

Get students into pairs.

SAY: Telling your story in front of a group can be scary. So as a form of practice, go ahead and just read through your cards with your partner.

Give the students 10 minutes or so to complete.



SMALL GROUPS

Prior to beginning your small group, read through the following Small Group Guidelines with your teenagers.

1. Focus on your own thoughts and feelings when sharing with the group.
2. Please avoid ALL cross talk.
3. We are here to support one another.
4. Value and protect anonymity and confidentiality.
5. Avoid offensive language; it has no place in a Christ-centered group.

Remember, as a leader you are to model these guidelines for your group as you lead the discussion.

Break your larger group into small groups of three or more, with a conversation leader in each one. To prime the pump for discussion, have the leaders begin the small group time by telling about a time when they "gave what they had to give" to others. Then have groups each discuss these questions (available on the CD-ROM).

Remember, as the leader, you may want to model some of these answers for your group by sharing from your own experience.

ASK:

- » What is one way you can give back to others?
- » What is one way to serve that seems natural for you?
- » How did it feel telling your story to someone?
- » Do you think you'd be able to tell our entire group your story?
- » How can your story help someone else?
- » How are you doing with your daily journaling?

The leader of the group should close this time with a prayer that offers God thanks for giving us good gifts that we can give to others.



CLOSING

Close by reading the Serenity Prayer together (available on p. 3 of their Student Journal). Keep in mind, some teenagers may not want to read aloud with the rest of the group. That's OK; encourage them to focus on the words being shared.

God, grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change,
the courage to change the things I can,
and the wisdom to know the difference.

Living one day at a time,
enjoying one moment at a time;
Accepting hardship as a pathway to peace;
Taking, as Jesus did,
this sinful world as it is;
Not as I would have it;
Trusting that you will make all things right
If I surrender to your will; So that I
may be reasonably happy in this life
and supremely happy with you forever
in the next. AMEN.

- Reinhold Niebuhr

Don't forget to remind your students to spend time with their journals this week, reflecting on what God is teaching them during this journey.



CONNECT TIME

Serve refreshments of some kind so kids and leaders can hang out and connect. Consider having some healthy options for those who may use food as a way of coping. A ping-pong table, foosball table, or even a few board games will give teenagers an excuse to connect.

WELCOMING

GIVE

Lesson forty-nine

PRINCIPLE 8:

Yield myself to God to be used to bring this Good News to others, both by my example and by my words.

SCRIPTURAL TRUTHS:

"Happy are those who are persecuted because they do what God requires" (Matthew 5:10 GNT).

"Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also might be tempted" (Galatians 6:1 NIV).

SCHEDULE

- ❖ CONNECT TIME (15 minutes)
- ♫ WORSHIP (10 minutes)
- 📖 TEACHING TIME (35 minutes)
- 🎥 VIDEO TIME (5 minutes)
- 👥 SMALL GROUPS (35 minutes)
- ⌚ CLOSING (5 minutes)
- ❖ CONNECT TIME (15 minutes)

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- » CD player (optional)
- » CD with worship music (optional)
- » CD with soft background music (optional)
- » TV and DVD player
- » The Landing DVD 4
- » Deck of playing cards
- » 3X5 cards—several per teenager
- » Pens or pencils
- » Paper

PREPARATION

- » Pray for your teenagers and your meeting
- » Review this lesson
- » Gather supplies
- » Select songs for the Worship Time

CONNECT TIME

SUPPLIES: a deck of playing cards.

Warmly welcome everyone to the group.

Divide the deck among your teenagers—for example, if you have 10 kids in your group, they'll each have about five cards. It's OK if kids don't have the exact same number of cards each.

Then **SAY:** Find someone who has a same card number as you. Then talk about your "favorites"

when you were the same age as your card number—your favorite foods, sports, activities, people, and so on. If you have a jack or queen, talk about when you were 11 years old. And if you have a king or ace, talk about when you were 12 years old.

After a couple of minutes, **SAY:** Now find someone different who has a card from the same suit as one of your cards—hearts, clubs, spades, or diamonds. Then find as many common current "favorites" as you can. For example, maybe both of you love Mexican food or a certain store at the mall.

After a couple of minutes, **SAY:** Now find someone different who has a card with the same color and number. Talk about one way you've grown closer in community during your time at The Landing.

WORSHIP

Hold up one of the "King" cards from your deck of cards.

ASK:

- » Think about some things that make Jesus stand out from every other person who ever lived—what are some of those things?

Lead kids in two or three familiar worship songs. If you have a youth band, invite the group to lead your teenagers in worship. Otherwise, play the songs from a

CD and encourage kids to sing along—or simply play the music as everyone sits and thinks about the words of the songs.

Then have everyone read aloud, together, this week's beatitude: "*Happy are those who are persecuted because they do what God requires*" (Matthew 5:10 GNT).



TEACHING TIME

SUPPLIES: CD player, CD with soft background music, 3X5 cards, paper, and pens or pencils.

SAY: Today we're going to work some more on our stories. Last week you told one other person your story, and that was probably uncomfortable for some of you. But remember: Sharing our stories with others is one amazing way to give back. For the next few minutes we're going to write our stories. So I have some pieces of paper for you to transfer your story from your 3X5 cards. We'll start with your "Old Me" cards. For the next five minutes write out your story as if you were presenting it to the whole group. Use your cards as guideposts to make sure you hit the highlights, but don't be afraid to add anything else God has shown you.

Play soft music in the background and allow students some time to write. If you have new students remember

that this can be uncomfortable for them. You may want to have a leader spend some time quietly talking to them just explaining what's going on. Reassure them that no one will be asking them to share their story at this time.

After about five minutes, **SAY:** OK, now we're going to move on to "The Landing" portion of your 3X5 cards. Go ahead and write out what has gone on in your life since coming to The Landing.

After about five minutes, **SAY:** Let's keep on moving. Let's spend some time on the super fun stuff, the "New Me." Write out all of the changes you have seen. While you're doing this, take some time to enjoy any victory, no matter how small it seems.

After five minutes, **SAY:** And now, let's wrap it up with our "To Be Continued" cards. Just like any good movie that you just know will be made into a sequel, let us know what you're hoping to do now, for God and in the lives of others.

After the students are done writing **SAY:** You've now written your story—or most of it, at least. If you didn't have time to finish, try and get it done before next week. In the next two weeks we'll be asking for volunteers to share their stories with the whole group. We'll have you read your written-out story so don't worry about trying to memorize it.



VIDEO TIME

Set up a DVD player and TV in your meeting area. Ahead of time, cue up the video "Meet the Sanders: Serving Heathens" from DVD 4 in the kit. Play the video—this one is 2:23 minutes long.



SMALL GROUPS

Prior to beginning your small group, read through the following Small Group Guidelines with your teenagers.

1. Focus on your own thoughts and feelings when sharing with the group.
2. Please avoid ALL cross talk.
3. We are here to support one another.
4. Value and protect anonymity and confidentiality.
5. Avoid offensive language; it has no place in a Christ-centered group.

Remember, as a leader you are to model these guidelines for your group as you lead the discussion.

After the whole group has watched the video, split into your small groups, with a conversation leader in each one. Have your conversation leaders ask these questions (available on the CD-ROM) about the video, with the intent to draw out personal stories from the kids in the group.

Remember, as the leader, you may want to model some of these answers for your group by sharing from your own experience.

ASK:

- » As you watched the video, what impacted you the most? Explain.
- » As we go about sharing our stories with others, how can we avoid being like the couple on the video?
- » How do we know what God wants us to give to others?
- » Who is willing to share their story next week?
- » How are you doing with your daily journaling?

If any student is ready to share, refer them to the group leader to schedule who will share next week.

At the end of this discussion, the leader should close in prayer, thanking God for all the ways the group members are giving to others.



CLOSING

SAY: If you are ready to share next week, let me know—I know I speak for the other leaders when I say we can't wait to hear your stories!

Close by reading the Serenity Prayer together (available on p. 3 of their Student Journal). Keep in mind, some

teenagers may not want to read aloud with the rest of the group. That's OK; encourage them to focus on the words being shared.

God, grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change,
the courage to change the things I can,
and the wisdom to know the difference.

Living one day at a time,
enjoying one moment at a time;
Accepting hardship as a pathway to peace;

Taking, as Jesus did,
this sinful world as it is;

Not as I would have it;

Trusting that you will make all things right
If I surrender to your will; So that I
may be reasonably happy in this life
and supremely happy with you forever
in the next. AMEN.

- Reinhold Niebuhr

Don't forget to remind your students to spend time with their journals this week, reflecting on what God is teaching them during this journey.

CONNECT TIME

Serve refreshments of some kind so kids and leaders can hang out and connect. Consider having some healthy options for those who may use food as a way of coping. A ping-pong table, foosball table, or even a few board games will give teenagers an excuse to connect.

LEADER NOTE: Next week you will have students share their stories. Depending on the size of your group, try to make sure you have enough stories for each of the next two weeks. In other words, don't have every student share next week, even if you have time. After the first group of students has gone, more are likely to want to share the following week.

DO NOT make any student share if he or she is uncomfortable or new to The Landing. Remember that this is a journey.

If possible, try to get a copy of the stories from each student who will share next week. This will help you make sure that they don't plan to share anything that is unclear or too graphic. You don't have to spend a lot of time editing what the teenagers want to say, but if you know what they're going to share, you won't be surprised.

in Landing

YES

lesson fifty

PRINCIPLE 8:

Yield myself to God to be used to bring this Good News to others, both by my example and by my words.

SCRIPTURAL TRUTHS:

"Happy are those who are persecuted because they do what God requires" (Matthew 5:10 GNT).

"Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also might be tempted" (Galatians 6:1 NIV).

SCHEDULE

- CONNECT TIME (15 minutes)
- 🎵 WORSHIP (15 minutes)
- 📖 TEACHING TIME (40 minutes)
- 👥 SMALL GROUPS (30 minutes)
- ⌚ CLOSING (5 minutes)
- CONNECT TIME (15 minutes)

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- » CD player (optional)
- » CD with worship music (optional)
- » "Clean" trash—soda cans, newspaper, milk cartons, wrappers, and so on.

PREPARATION

- » Pray for your teenagers and your meeting
- » Review this lesson
- » Gather supplies
- » Select songs for the Worship Time



CONNECT TIME

SUPPLIES: "clean" trash.

Warmly welcome everyone to the group.

Get a bunch of clean trash. You're looking for things like soda cans, old milk cartons, newspapers, plastic containers, cardboard boxes, junk mail—anything that you would put in the recycle bin. Spread it out in the front of the room. Have students find a piece of trash that they think could be used again or be made into something that could be used again.

ASK:

- » How could your item be used again?
- » What would have to happen to it first?

WORSHIP

Lead kids in three familiar worship songs. If you have a youth band, invite the group to lead your teenagers in worship. Otherwise, play the songs from a CD and encourage kids to sing along—or simply play the music as everyone sits and thinks about the words of the songs.

Then have everyone read aloud, together, this week's beatitude: *"Happy are those who are persecuted because they do what God requires"* (Matthew 5:10 GNT).



TEACHING TIME

SAY: Let's talk about recycling. So many of us are concerned with being "green" or eco-friendly and a big part of that is recycling.

ASK:

- » What happens when something is recycled?

SAY: In the recycling process, something that is old or something that's been thrown away is turned into something new. Lots of times we recycle things that we can't even see being used again. It seems like junk. Maybe you have a ton of pain in your life or you've had things happen and you're just not sure how you can be used by God. Here's the

amazing thing about God—he specializes in recycling our lives. We have all had things in our lives that cause us pain, and we've all blown it in ways that embarrass us. Some of us have had people tear us down and made us feel like trash. But God can and will use what you've gone through to help others, if you let him. Listen to these amazing verses.

Read Isaiah 40:28-31.

SAY: Now we're going to have a few of you share your stories. If you are going to share today you already know it; if you're new here tonight, don't worry, I'm not going to ask you to volunteer. One thing before we begin; one of our guidelines is, "What is shared in the group stays in the group." Please remember that this applies to more than just our small groups. So, make sure anything that's said will not be repeated outside of the group. Remember, The Landing is a safe place.

Then have the pre-picked students share their stories.



SMALL GROUPS

Prior to beginning your small group, read through the following Small Group Guidelines with your teenagers.

1. Focus on your own thoughts and feelings when sharing with the group.
2. Please avoid ALL cross talk.
3. We are here to support one another.
4. Value and protect anonymity and confidentiality.
5. Avoid offensive language; it has no place in a Christ-centered group.

Remember, as a leader you are to model these guidelines for your group as you lead the discussion.

Break your larger group into small groups of three or more, with a conversation leader in each one. To prime the pump for discussion, have the leaders begin the small-group time by telling about a time when they "gave what they have to give" to others. Then have groups each discuss these questions (available on the CD-ROM).

Before group starts each leader should remind the students to not make judgmental statements about the stories. Things like "Thanks for sharing" or "When so and so said..." are fine, but make sure it doesn't slip into cross talk.

ASK:

- » Did hearing other people's stories get you excited to share your own? Why or why not?
- » What's something in your life you hope God will recycle?
- » What are some ways you're already saying "YES!" to God in your life?
- » What's one way other people say "YES!" to God that you really admire? Explain.
- » How are you doing with your daily journaling?

The leader of the group should close this time with a prayer that commits everyone to saying "YES!" to God.

CLOSING

Close by reading the Serenity Prayer together (available on p. 3 of their Student Journal). Keep in mind, some teenagers may not want to read aloud with the rest of the group. That's OK; encourage them to focus on the words being shared.

God, grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change,
the courage to change the things I can,
and the wisdom to know the difference.

Living one day at a time,
enjoying one moment at a time;
Accepting hardship as a pathway to peace;

Taking, as Jesus did,
this sinful world as it is;
Not as I would have it;
Trusting that you will make all things right
If I surrender to your will; So that I
may be reasonably happy in this life
and supremely happy with you forever
in the next. AMEN.

- Reinhold Niebuhr

Don't forget to remind your students to spend time with their journals this week, reflecting on what God is teaching them during this journey.

CONNECT TIME

Serve refreshments of some kind so kids and leaders can hang out and connect. Consider having some healthy options for those who may use food as a way of coping. A ping-pong table, foosball table, or even a few board games will give teenagers an excuse to connect.

Landline

YES

lesson fifty-one

PRINCIPLE 8:

Yield myself to God to be used to bring this Good News to others, both by my example and by my words.

SCRIPTURAL TRUTHS:

"Happy are those who are persecuted because they do what God requires" (Matthew 5:10 GNT).

"Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also might be tempted" (Galatians 6:1 NIV).

SCHEDULE

- CONNECT TIME (15 minutes)
- ♪ WORSHIP (10 minutes)
- 📖 TEACHING TIME (35 minutes)
- 🎥 VIDEO TIME (10 minutes)
- 👥 SMALL GROUPS (30 minutes)
- ⌚ CLOSING (5 minutes)
- CONNECT TIME (15 minutes)

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- » CD player (optional)
- » CD with worship music (optional)
- » TV and DVD player
- » The Landing DVD 4
- » Paper
- » Pens or pencils

PREPARATION

- » Pray for your teenagers and your meeting
- » Review this lesson
- » Gather supplies
- » Select songs for the Worship Time

••• CONNECT TIME

Warmly welcome everyone to the group.

Here's one you've done several times during the year, and is fun to do again. Have your teenagers and adult leaders stand in a circle and, one by one, quickly respond to a bizarre question. Each person gets just two seconds to think before responding—the whole group should count in unison "One thousand one, one thousand two" to count off the two seconds each person is allowed. If someone cannot answer within the two-second allowance, they're out of the circle. Create your own wacky questions, or use these as a starter.

ASK:

- » What's your favorite cologne or perfume, and how many sprays do you use?
- » What's your favorite restaurant and the your favorite dish there?
- » Would you rather go to the beach or the mountains?
- » If you could drive any car right now, what would it be?

If you want, ask your teenagers to suggest their own wacky questions ahead of time.

WORSHIP

Lead kids in three familiar worship songs. If you have a youth band, invite the group to lead your teenagers in worship. Otherwise, play the songs from a CD and encourage kids to sing along—or simply play the music as everyone sits and thinks about the words of the songs.

Then have everyone read aloud, together, this week's beatitude: "*Happy are those who are persecuted because they do what God requires*" (Matthew 5:10 GNT).



TEACHING TIME

SAY: Wow, we are almost done with our year of The Landing. Some of you have been here since the first week and others of you are newer. That is so great because no matter where we are on our journey, God is not done with us yet. In fact, just because our year of The Landing is almost done doesn't mean that we are done. Next week we are going to celebrate how far we've come, and then in two weeks we'll start right back at the beginning. So there are a few options for each of us. Maybe you've been with us for a year and you feel like you've gotten some help and you're ready to step out on your own. I'd like to encourage you to find somewhere in our church to serve—somewhere you can give back what you have received. You may want to do that here at The Landing. We'd love for you to become student leaders. You can help us run our small groups and give back from your experience. Or you may want to come back and begin the journey with us again.

Whatever you choose, the key is to keep moving forward. We need to keep our guard up and not become complacent and slip back into our hurts, hang-ups, and habits.

ASK:

- » What are some of the things you have learned at The Landing to keep from going back into your hurts, hang-ups, and habits?

» How will you keep moving forward?

SAY: Those are great ideas. We'll keep moving forward by setting aside a daily time with God. During that time we'll pray, read our Bibles, and examine our lives. We'll take a daily inventory to see if there are trouble spots or new patterns developing. We'll also see if we've hurt anyone or if anyone has hurt us, and then we'll quickly make amends or offer forgiveness if we need to. We'll keep journaling, and we will keep connected to the safe people we have met here. And we will give back. We will allow God to recycle our pain and use us for his purpose.

Now we're going to have a few of you share your stories. If you are going to share today you already know it, I'm not going to ask for volunteers. One thing before we begin; one of our guidelines is, "What is shared in the group stays in the group." Please remember this applies to more than just our small groups. So, make sure anything that's said will not be repeated outside of the group. Remember, The Landing is a safe place.

Then have the pre-picked students share their stories.



VIDEO TIME

Set up a DVD player and TV in your meeting area. Ahead of time, cue up the video "Beenie Weenies" from DVD 4 in the kit. Play the video—this one is 6:17 minutes long.



SMALL GROUPS

Prior to beginning your small group, read through the following Small Group Guidelines with your teenagers.

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2. Please avoid ALL cross talk.
3. We are here to support one another.
4. Value and protect anonymity and confidentiality.
5. Avoid offensive language; it has no place in a Christ-centered group.

Remember, as a leader you are to model these guidelines for your group as you lead the discussion.

After the whole group has watched the video, split into your small groups, with a conversation leader in each one. Have your conversation leaders ask these questions (available on the CD-ROM) about the video, with the intent to draw out personal stories from the kids in the group.

Before group starts each leader should remind the students to not make judgmental statements about the stories. Things like "Thanks for sharing" or "When so and so said..." are fine, but make sure it doesn't slip into cross talk.

ASK:

- » As you watched the video, what impacted you the most? Explain.
- » Why is it often a surprise that God wants to work through us to impact others?
- » When have you been in a situation like you saw in the video—when you almost accidentally made an impact in someone's life?
- » How are you going to keep moving forward?
- » What are your next steps?

At the end of this discussion, the leader should close in prayer by asking God to encourage each one of your teenagers.



CLOSING

SUPPLIES: paper and pens or pencils.

If the weather's good, wrap up by having teenagers go outside for a short walk or sit and look at the sun or stars. Make sure each kid has a piece of paper and a marker. Ask them to think about how God is encouraging them right now, whatever they're facing in life. If you can't go outside, simply have your teenagers find some space alone in or near your meeting area and do the same thing.

Gather together and ask your teenagers if they could share one thing they wrote as a way to honor God's goodness.

Close by reading the Serenity Prayer together (available on p. 3 of their Student Journal). Keep in mind, some teenagers may not want to read aloud with the rest of the group. That's OK; encourage them to focus on the words being shared.

God, grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change,
the courage to change the things I can,
and the wisdom to know the difference.

Living one day at a time,
enjoying one moment at a time;
Accepting hardship as a pathway to peace;
Taking, as Jesus did,
this sinful world as it is;
Not as I would have it;
Trusting that you will make all things right
If I surrender to your will; So that I
may be reasonably happy in this life
and supremely happy with you forever
in the next. AMEN.

- Reinhold Niebuhr

Don't forget to remind your students to spend time with their journals this week, reflecting on what God is teaching them during this journey.

CONNECT TIME

Serve refreshments of some kind so kids and leaders can hang out and connect. Consider having some healthy options for those who may use food as a way of coping. A ping-pong table, foosball table, or even a few board games will give teenagers an excuse to connect.

and Landing

CELEBRATION

lesson fifty-two

CELEBRATION lesson fifty-two

PRINCIPLE 8:

Yield myself to God to be used to bring this Good News to others, both by my example and by my words.

SCRIPTURAL TRUTHS:

"Happy are those who are persecuted because they do what God requires" (Matthew 5:10 GNT).

"Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also might be tempted" (Galatians 6:1).

SCHEDULE

- CONNECT TIME (15 minutes)
- ♫ WORSHIP (10 minutes)
- 📖 TEACHING TIME (35 minutes)
- 🎥 VIDEO TIME (10 minutes)
- 👥 SMALL GROUPS (30 minutes)
- ⌚ CLOSING (5 minutes)
- CONNECT TIME (15 minutes)

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- » CD player (optional)
- » CD with worship music (optional)
- » TV and DVD player
- » The Landing DVD 4
- » Streamers, balloons, and other fun party elements
- » Envelopes with letters your teenagers wrote to themselves in Lesson 38

PREPARATION

- » Pray for your teenagers and your meeting
- » Review this lesson
- » Gather supplies
- » Select songs for the Worship Time
- » Bring the envelopes with letters that teenagers wrote to themselves in Lesson 38
- » Decorate the room for your celebration

CONNECT TIME

SUPPLIES: streamers, balloons, or any other elements that make a fun, party-style environment.

Warmly welcome everyone to the group.

To kick off the celebration, invite all of your leaders to share what they've learned over the course of the year, and to share their biggest victory of the year.

After your leaders have shared, **SAY:** If this happens to be your first time with us, this is a little different

than normal. We're finishing a year of this journey together and tonight, we want to celebrate changed lives.

Grab your milestone markers, then **ASK:**

- » Who is here for the first time?

Ask this question based on each milestone and hand out the appropriate key tag to each student. Also, for those students who wrote the letter to Jesus in Lesson 38, hand them their envelopes to read and reflect on at some point this week.

ASK:

- » Would anyone like to share what you've learned over the course of the past year?
- » What would you say was your biggest victory this year?

WORSHIP

SAY: As we say thanks to God through these songs we're about to sing, keep in mind the lessons you've learned on this journey, where you've been, and where you are now.

Lead kids in three familiar worship songs. If you have a youth band, invite the group to lead your teenagers in worship. Otherwise, play the songs from a CD and encourage kids to sing along—or simply play the music as everyone sits and thinks about the words of the songs.

Then have everyone read aloud, together, this week's beatitude: "Happy are those who are persecuted because they do what God requires" (Matthew 5:10 GNT).



VIDEO TIME

Set up a DVD player and TV in your meeting area. Ahead of time, cue up the video "Running the Race" from DVD 4 in the kit. Play the video—this one is 6:35 minutes long.

CELEBRATION

SAY: Instead of having a lesson and our usual small group times, we're going to spend time hanging out, watching a movie, and just having fun. Before we do, though, I just wanted to let you know what's going to happen next. The Landing will be here next week. We'll start at lesson one, Principle 1. If you have been with us the whole year, please know we'd love to have you back next week. In fact, we need you back. We'd love to have you come back as student leaders so we can have more groups. Or if you don't feel like you're ready for that, come back and go on the journey with us again. If you've been coming for a while, or even if it's your first time, and you missed some of the lessons, you'll be able to start at the beginning next week. If you're back with us next

week, bring along some friends who could benefit from what you've experienced at The Landing. And if you've gone through a full year with us, spread the news about how others can benefit from coming to The Landing.

Now, let's have some fun!

Here are a few suggestions of ways to celebrate; please note that some of these would require leaving your meeting space for the remainder of your time together this week:

- » **Movie Night:** Bring some snacks, pizza, soda, water, and other supplies and enjoy an appropriate movie together. To stay on the safe side, bring a rated G or PG movie to show your group. You know your students and your church better than we do, so make sure whatever you bring is appropriate for your setting.
- » **Sporting Event:** This will require some planning ahead of time. If you have an amateur, college, or professional sports team nearby, plan on taking your group to one of their games.
- » **Game Night:** Encourage teenagers to bring their favorite games with them. Again, make sure that the games they choose to bring are appropriate for your setting.
- » **Family Fun Park:** If you have a local family fun park with miniature golf, bowling, or laser tag nearby, consider taking your kids there to celebrate. Playing together is just another way to continue to build trust and relationships.

Of course, you're not limited to these options. You know your teenagers better than we do, so do something that will be fun and memorable for them.

⌚ CLOSING

Close by reading the Serenity Prayer together (available on p. 3 of their Student Journal). Keep in mind, some teenagers may not want to read aloud with the rest of the group. That's OK; encourage them to focus on the words being shared.

God, grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change,
the courage to change the things I can,
and the wisdom to know the difference.

Living one day at a time,
enjoying one moment at a time;
Accepting hardship as a pathway to peace;
Taking, as Jesus did,
this sinful world as it is;
Not as I would have it;
Trusting that you will make all things right
If I surrender to your will; So that I
may be reasonably happy in this life
and supremely happy with you forever
in the next. AMEN.

- Reinhold Niebuhr