A **CELEBRATE RECOVERY®** RESOURCE

**JOHN BAKER JOHNNY BAKER**

W!TH RICK LAWRENCE

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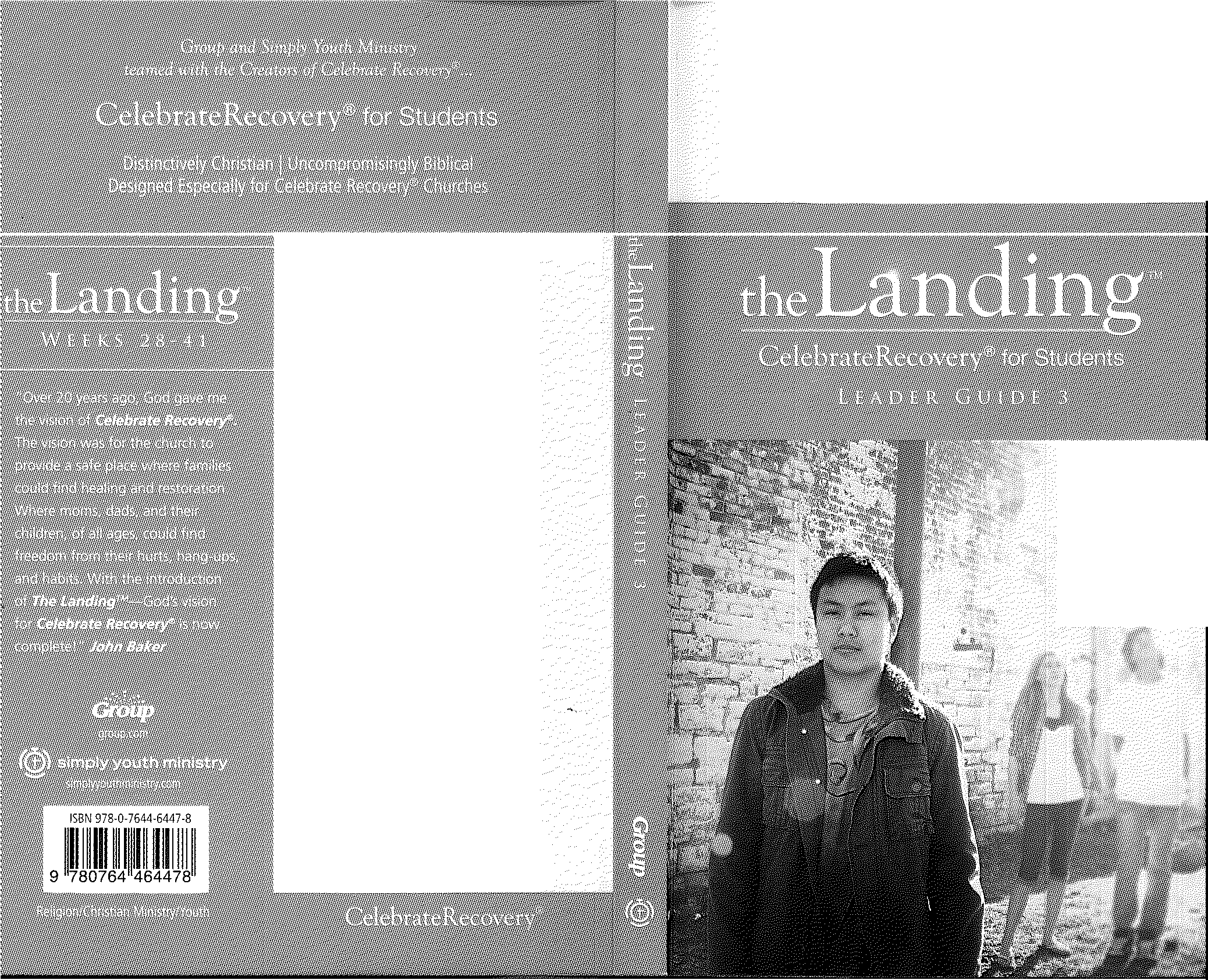
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A **CELEBRATE RECOVERV®** RESOURCE

JOHN BAKER JOHNNY BAKER

WITH RICK LAWRENCE



**Pastor John Baker** 1s the founder of Celebra.te Recovory'-", a rniri:str"y r.Jorn C..!.i'. *,j* mP !1eart uf SacJdet1ack Church in 199: S:;1ce theri rnme than 11 ,OOC ir1c--Jividuals havo gono througl1 this Ch, ;t-cerite;·ec--J recovery prograrn al So\_d,Jlebs.ck. F1e Celcbrc.le Flpcovery'·"·, ¡:-ffog:am is 11cw used in thous8ric.1s oí chwcnes -.\_1./orichvide. Over 100,000 pcop!c l1ave crn,·1rJleteO the progr;::¡rn.

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Celt--:tmite Recover/") rn<ristries. !r, additior, to writ:ng the ***Cefebrate Recovery Currículum,*** l1e's the ¡:ie1wral editor of tr,c ***Cefebrate Recovery Bíbfe.*** ,Jo:1n·s rnc.>st recent c-ook is ***Life's Heafing Choíces.*** S111ce the beginr;ing ot Ceiebratc Recuvery"c. rJastor Jot1¡; has a.tlornptod lo rsach out to chilcJren i11 hurting homes. He's the co-ac.Jlhor uf ***Ce/ebration Station™,*** Celebrate Recovery '''s program tor ch:ldren, and now lhc--: co-r1uthc-r of ***The Landing'",*** He's verv excited aboul tecr·1aQoréo ':c-1vr1g a currículum of tr'-eir own

John and !':is vvife, Chery!, have bAen mer-ried four decades and havc--: ser·wid together in Celebrate Rocov ory'9 since 1Q91 They have tvvo adult cl1i!dren. Laura ar1d ,Jcrmny. Laurn a<1d Bnan were reconlly nvmied, and ,John17y And his vvife, Jern. are the proud parents of Jol"lri and Cheryl's three gro.ndchildren, Maggie, Chloe, and Jirnmy.

**Johnny Baker** has b(--:er1 or7 staft at Celebrate Recovcry·'" c:3inCE-J 2004 allCj has bee;, tht d:rnctor of Cslebrate Recovery'':· at Sad(jleback Church sinco 2007. As rn·1 adult cllild ot an alcoholic wr10 chose to hecome an alccholic l1imself,

,Jo!'mny is passioriate about breaking the cycle of dysfur1ction in his family and hoioing omn farrnlies find tlle tools tl1at lead to healing ancJ opmmess. Nc,t cmly hns 1-1e seen Celetm:-ite Recc,very- · work in the livcs of riis parents c11-Hj ::;ou'7tiess otr',ers, he has seAr1 :t work in !lis ovm iife as well, He knows thc ,t cecause of Jesus Ci~,r;s\, and by cor1h1uing to stay active :n Ceiebrate

Recov2ry"01 • !lis chiicfren-rv'laggle. Chloo, and ,Jir'nr11y-w1II never see him dnnk. ,Johnny is a mitionally recognizeci spoakeí and loacher of Celebrate

F·:ecovsif'. 8. co-authcí of ***Cefebratíon Station,*** and an assoc1ale ed,tor of the

***Celebrate Recovery Bible***

**Rick lawrence** has tJt-Jff1 editor of GROUP íV1agazine fer over 20 yoars CRQl,)P is *me* vmrid's most \t idely road rnsource for Chnstian youth !eaders.

In his role as "Youth Ministry C1-1arnpion" at Group Putilish111g, he leads the orQaniLaliorú; expeditionary etforts to challenge, encouragr.0, and equ1p youtl1 pastors

Rick has autl1ored hu'ldreds of rnagaz1ne arlicles and is the author, co-author, or ed:tor or 31 books inc!uding ***Youth Ministry in the 21st Century. Jesus­ Centered Youth Mínistry, In Pursuit of Jesus,*** and ***Ten Tough Thíngs--*** a.i! published by Grouc Publ:shing. l·le's *a* consuitant to nat<onal research orgm1izat!CF7S ar-d a frequent conference and vvorkshop speaker

*/'d like to dedica/e The Landing to my wife Cheryl­ without her dedication and perseverance, this pro1ect would never have /,appened. And to the thousands and thousands o( kids who hope to find the answer to their hurts befare they become hang-ups and habits.*

- John Baker

/ *would like to dedica/e The Landing to my wife Jeni, and our three kids, Maggie, Chloe, and Jimmy /'da/so like*

*to thank Eddie, Ooug, Ted, f/abib, and many others who were there forme as youth workers. Your investments of time, /ove, 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-1 already see the healing !ove of Jesus "covering the multitude of sins" that you've had to bear in your*

*/!ves, and your passion for giving grace to others inspires and challenges me.*

- Rick Lawrence

He's married to Beverly Rose and r,as a ·¡ 2 -year- old daughtsr named Lucy Rose anda 7-year-old d?.ughter named Emma Grace

**THE LA N DI NG'"**

A CELEBRATE RECO YERY'"' RE SO U RC E

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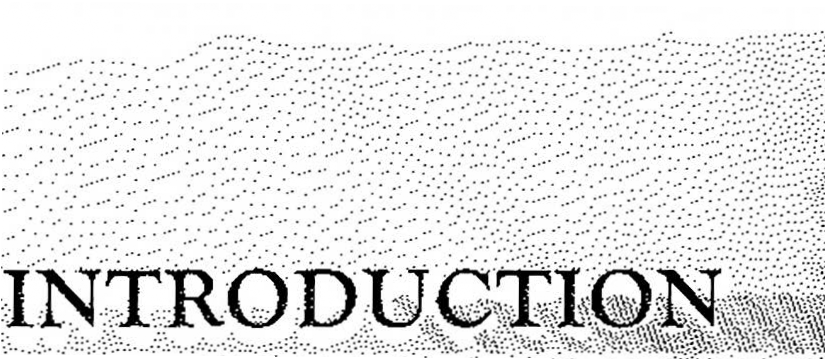
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Welcome to a grand adventure-an exciting and surprising and lile-changing journey, in partnership with God. The Lending is a unique experience in at least a couple ol ways.

First, it's structured as an ongoing 52-week program­ based on the beatitudes wl1ere Jesus laid out principies for happiness in the sermon on the mount-lor teenagers who are struggling to live their lives in a healthy, God-honoring way. Maybe they come lrorn a dyslunctional home or have faced crises in their lile.

Maybe triey simply need help developing patterns of wise choices, or they wrestle with an addiction ol sorne kind. Whatever their lile story, they know they need something more than a typical Sunday school class or youth group meeting. Or rnaybe they don't know this, but the people who love them do. Ti1e Landing is a saíe, healing place where teenagers can !ive a lreer, healthier, and more God-centered lile.

Second, The Landing is nota lecture-styie resource. lt's designad to get teenagers ta!king about and exploring new ways of thinking and doing. They won't ¡ust be listening to someone speak-instead. they'II be talking to each other and to you¡ leaders in a ful!y engaging environment that includes simple experiences that will help them "own" what they're !earning. In most classes or small group studies, the leader controls pretty much

everything about the direction of the lesson, and the teenagers jusi 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 ¡ourney.

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 transforma/ion comes when you get closer to Jesus.*

The aim of The Landing is to help hurting teenagers gel closer to Jesus as they learn key principies dur1ng a ¡ourney toward a better life- to move their focus on Jesus from the fringes of daily lile 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 lile trajectory of the people who participate in The Landing. This really wil! happen People will get closer to Jesus, and they will learn about their hurts, hang-ups, and hab1ts that have derailed them. And many of them will be changad 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 1n the study, you'II not only end up worshiping Jesus

at a deeper level, you·11 also give peop!e a pathway to freedom in their l1ves.

BOOT CAMP FOR LEADING THE LANDING

This year!ong experience probably differs from most studies you've led. Even if that's not the case, we've learned sorne vital ins1ghts over the years for leading study times that involve a lot of interactions, debriefing, and feedback. lnstead of a lecture or fiil-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 íun, arnazing way to lead people into deener learning.

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

**THE LEADER'S ROLE**

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

In The Landing, the leader talks, but the participants talk, too. A lot. lf you're leading this series, you'II feel more like a ringmaster than a lecturer. You·11 offer strong leadership in a context where many people participate and add to the content of ihe 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 trie most in any class are

the teachers-because they first need to ingest what they're teaching befare 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

lf you're a curious person who likes good conversation and who knows how to ask follow-up questions, you'II thrive in this learning environment. lf 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 thern, You simply need to see your role as a strong leader who has a lot to offer, but who wants to i1ear the experiences and opinions of others as well.

O! course, the most importan! aspect of leading this study is to let it transform you first. lf you've experienced Celebrate Recovery@ firsthand-this content is based

on that dynamic resource--you know the life-changing power that this material i1as. lf you haven't been throug!1 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 importan! insights Right now, these insights are ali in our voice. You could say them verbatim, just as we've written them for you.

But of course, you can filler everything through who you are. You do want to make sure to understand and own these insights-by trie time you load each lesson, you'II

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 sean for what you need to say.

One more importan! 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'II need to create an environment that allows students to feel safe, and at tl1e 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 tl1e group sale 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

wiliingness 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 sorne 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 sorne students that begin attending alter you've already completed several of tl1e lessons. lt is importan! that these students feel safe and included here in The

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

**THESTUDENTJOURNAL**

Each student in your class will need a Student Journal. These Student Journals are an integral part of the experienee for your teenagers. The JOurnals have material in them that complements the lessons they' re going through without duplicating content. lt's reading that will realiy 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 participan!. 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. Ali of these tags are available at group.com or simplyyoutliministry. com.

These key tags are a great visual rerninder for your students to celebrate the Journey and to keep focused on the changas they are making. Alter Ciosing Time, right before Connect Time, while they are still gathered together, distribute the key chains by asking \he students, "Who is here for the first time?" Then proceed through the res\ 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 sorne favorita worship songs or listening to songs on a CD or from your MP3 player. lf you have a worship band comprised of teenagers tr1is can be an opportunity for

them to participate and lead. Or you rnay 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**

lncluded in your kit are 4 DVDs (corresponding with each Leader Guide) with video clips for one of the two lessons under every tapie. 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 befare people arrlve for the session. lf you're fiddling with equipment while people arrive, you basicaily greet them with your backside. At best.. this means you're distracted as you talk with them.

**EXPERIENCES**

Many **of** tl1e sessions in this series include experiences that participants wili do and you'II 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 ¡ust 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 particlpants have "learned."

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

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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 clase 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 uo,

!ead, and debrief these experiences. A leader can ruin a great experience by leaving out a crucial principie, giving fuzzy directions. or not grasping the makeup **of** the experience itselt. Even more, you'II torpedo a powerful experience if you "hedge your bets" by apologizing for

or diminishing an experience in your setup for it. lf you doubt that people wi!I get much out of the experience, suspend your disbe!ief and just decide to believe people wiil do what you ask them to do. We can tell you, they will. And they'II remember the experiences years from now. However, do not be discouraged if a student chooses lo not participate at **first** in tr1ese experiences. Your confidence that a student will eventually participate in a **sale** environment is crucial.

We'il talk a little more about what to cut and no\ cut from each sessior1 if, for sorne reason, time is tigr,t. But our general rule of thumb is never cut an experlence.

!NTF ODUCTiON

lnstead, 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'II never forget. Keep in mind that the experiences in this ¡ourney 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'il need to gather supplies before each week's meeting. Don't wait until the last minute to look at the list of items you'II 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-¡usl bring or borrow, lf 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 sorne cases, we've offered suggestions on alternative supplies for activities. These recommendations can help you save money or time in gathering supplies.

Throughout tr1is curriculum, you're welcome to substitute supplies that reduce expenses or time but continua

to give teenagers a hands-on, interactiva 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

Journa!, but for the ones who don't have or forget to bring their copies, keep a healthy supply of paper.

» **3X5 cards:** You'li use these a LOT! We encourage you to purchase them in large quantities before starting Tl1e L.anding,

* **Pens and pencils:** Your teenagers will do a lot of

writing, ar1d 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 pi ayer: As mentioned earlier, this kit inciudes a DVD with a video clip for one of the two lessons under every topic, lf you have a projector system in your meeting room, go al1ead and use

it-don't feel constrained to use a TV

* **Bibles:** In many of the lessons you'!I be asking for sludents to read verses from the Bible, Whi!e sorne 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, ¡ust 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'II see **that** the New lnternational Version is rnost prevalent. lf your youth ministry or congregation has a preferred translation, you're welcome to use it throughout your lessons,

\NTHODUCTION

" We've included a CD-ROM in this kit. lt's full of handouts that you can use in The Landing. including srnall 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'II find there.

**DISCUSSIONS**

At the heart of this series, you'II 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 **lile** and content of the sessions.

Sornetimes teenagers want to foilow rabbit trails­ directions **that** stray frorn your plan and threaten **to** hiiack 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 rnight take over and force the study in a different, and potentially unsafe, direction. When you sense you're getting bogged down in an unl1elpful rabbit trail, stop walking ciown it and return to the main path

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

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The goal behind ali this strategy is to make your group a sale and inviting place lor people to add their voice the conversation. Throughout The Landing, you'II switch

between many kinds of interactions: partners, tríos, small group, and whoie-group discussions, lf you believe a partner- or trio-focused discussion tapie would work better for your teenagers in a larger group, then use it in that setting. The primary purpose for the variety ol group sizes is to encourage everyone to participate and speak. Not ail teenagers will engage as actively in the largar groups, but they'II be more willing to answer and share their views with 1ust one or two peers

Each lesson's smali group time inciudes an opportunity for you to bring other sale, mature adult leaders into the ¡ourney with your teenagers. We've labeled these

individuais 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.

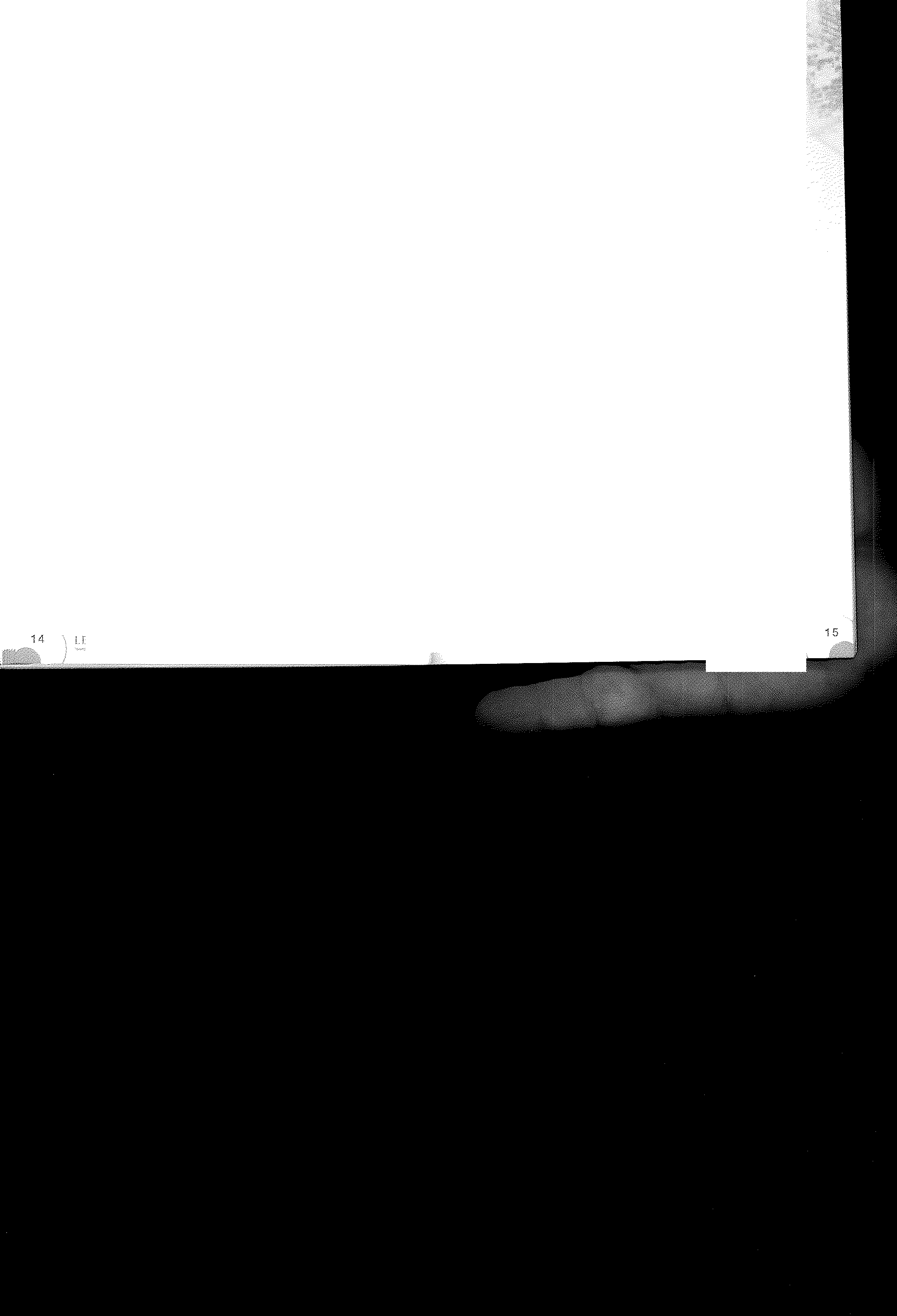
lf you find that you don't have enough adult leaders to serve in this role, empower your teenagers to ask the questions.

**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. lnstead, focus on deeper learning and transformation. You can feel OK about occasionally letting a conversation go on a little !onger if needed.

We've designad these lessons to last two hours from start to finish.

iNTFlODUCT!ON

A few general guidelines about cutting stuff: Aim to cut from the middle of the session if you're light on time, rather than the beginning or the end. Never cut an experience in favor o/ leader-talk. 1/ 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. lf you do, you'II 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 tl1en 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'II still have many opportunities to guide, influence, and frame the discussions.

**SMALL GROUP DYNAMICS**

One of the most importan! parts of The Landing is the sma!I group time. lt is imperativa that these groups are safel 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 sp!itting your large group into small groups. First, a!I 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 we!I as senior high students, you may have a wide range of ages each week. lf possible, try to have the sma!I groups be as clase in age as possible, keeping in mind to always

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keep them gender specific. As we mentioned earlier, at different points of the lessons your students will be in groups of either pairs or tríos. 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' 1 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'II 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 designad to get students thinking and sharing. As a conversation !eader you may feel from time to time the urge to shape a student's answer. Resist that temptationl Remember that these guidelines aren't just for the students, but they're for you too.

INTRODUCTION

For example, Guideline 2 states, "Please avoid all cross talk." Here are sorne 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. lf they are told they should not feel a certain way, the group is no longer sale for them. 11 they are

challenged or questioned, even Just to clarify, the group may no longer feel sale for them.

As the leader you will have to model and even enlorce 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 sale.

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**SMALL GROUP GUIDEh**..,, ··\**I**\\..\,**N**-·,." '•i<**,**··\**B**\\;.t.'-iw**S**(b1:/

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 sl1aring to three to live minutes. 11 you focus on your own thoughts and feelings, you're less likeiy to "wander" and discuss unrelated topics. As the group leader, 1 may iet you know when you've shared for too long, but it you focus on what matters most, you'II iikely stay within the time boundaries.

1. **PLEASE AVOID ALL CROSS TALK.**

We want each person to be **free** to express feelings and t11oughts without interruptions. Here are sorne examples of "cross talk" Two individuals engage in conversation while excluding everyone else. A group member interrupts or inappropriately laughs when another person shares. Ora group member says,

"I can relate to you because ... " or "I can·t reiate

to you because. " Please be respectful toward the otr1er members of our group, because I know you want everyone to be respectful when it's your turn to share.

1. **WE ARE HERE TO SUPPORT ONE ANOTHER.**

Sometimes in our group settings, we hear about other people's cl1allenges, and we want **to** offer

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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.

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1. **VALUE AND PROTECT ANONYMITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY.**

lt hurts to discover that information someone has shared here is being discussed outside of the small group time. Sorne 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.

1. **AVOID OFFENSIVE LANGUAGE; IT HAS NO PLACE IN A CHRIST­ CENTERED GROUP.**

l'd encourage everyone in this group to follow

this biblical thought, found in Ephesians 4:29 0on't

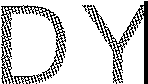
*use foul or abusive !anguage. Let everythíng you say be good and helpful,* so *that your words wí/1 be an encouragement to those who hear them.*

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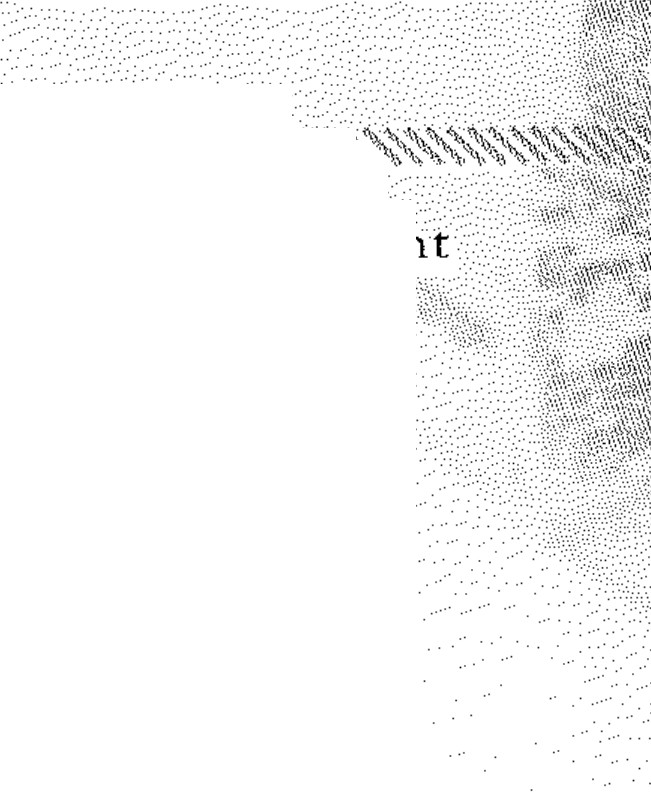
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in my life and humbly ask him to remove my character defects.

**SCRIPTURAL TRUTHS:**

*''Happy are those whose greatest desire is to do wh t God requires" (Matthew 5:6 GNT).*

*"Hu mble yourselves befare the Lord, and he wi/l lift you up" (James 4: 1* O *NIV).*

**SCHEDULE**

*::.* **CONNECT TIME** (15 minutes)

***\_n* WORSHIP** (15 minutes)

**111 TEACHING TIME** (40 minutes) **iii SMALL GROUPS** (30 minutes) **U CLOSING** (5 minutes)

..... **CONNECT TIME** (15 minutes)

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READY 21

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**SUPPLIES NEEDED**

» CD player (optional)

» CD with worship music (optional)

» Paper

» Pens and pencils

» Trash can

» Several pieces of rope, each about 1 foot long (you could substitute with towels, jackets, or T-shirts)­ you want enough so each student in the group can be paired with a partner

**PREPARATION**

» Pray for your teenagers and your meeting

» Review this lesson

» Gather supplies

» Select songs for the Worship Time

••••• **CONNEC.T.TlME**

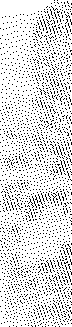
**SUPPLIES:** Several pieces of rope, each about 1 foot long (you could substitute with towels, ¡ackets, or T-shirts).

Warmly welcome everyone to the group.

Have students get in pairs Give each pair a piece of rope (or use towel, jackets, or T-shirts) Have each student grab an end of the item. The person in each pair whose birthday is closest to today is person one; the other is person two. Explain that person one's ¡ob is to

pull person two across the room by pulling on the item, Person two will attempt to keep from moving at ali. Then .. have partners switch roles.

**ASK:**



» **How difficult was it to pull someone behind you?**

» **Who got frustrated with this exercise? Why did you experience frustration?**

» **Did anyone get so frustrated that you decided to let go of the item? What happened when you**

**!et go?**

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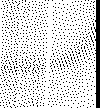
**SAY, l'd like us to worship God for what he's done for us. lf you've been coming for a** while **now, you've undoubtedly seen how God** led **us out of our hurts, hang-ups, and habits and** into **a new** life. lf this **is your** first time **here, l'd** like **to encourage you.** 1 may **not know what's going on in your** life, but **God does. So,** in this **time of worship, before we sing together, l'd** like **you to take** a moment **and think about one thing that God has done for** you. **Maybe God has helped you make a broken relationship right, or at**

**least better. Maybe** he's **helped you avoid people that have** hurt **you or** that **pressure you to do** the **wrong thing. lf you can't** think **of anything,** thank **God for that** breath you just **took, or for** the **steady** beating

**of your heart.** Then, **with your eyes** still **closed, say**

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**"thank you." You can do this silently, or if you** feel

**comfortable you can say it out loud.**

Then lead kids in three familiar worship songs. lf you have a youth band, invite the group to lead your

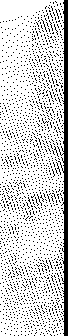
teenagers in worship. Otherwise, play the songs from a CD and encourage kids to sing along-or simp!y play the music as everyone sits and thinks about the words of the songs.

Then have everyone read aloud, together, this week's beatitude: *"Happy are those whose greatest desire* is *to do what God requires" (Matthew* 5.6 *GNT)*

* + **TEACHI..G,,TIME**

a second and just think about all that you've done, with God's help.

Here's the deal: Now is not the time to stop moving forward. You might look back and think, "Well, that's pretty good. 1 think 1'11 stop here." Please don't! You are at the part of this journey when you are READY to see God do amazing things.



To summarize what we're getting ready to do-we're ready to let go. Do you remember that scene in *Star Wars* when Luke is getting ready to blow up the Death Star? What does Obi-Wan Kenobi tell him?

That's right, he says, "Let go, Luke!" 1 want you to imagine that God is telling you, personally, "lt's time to let go."



SUPPLIES: Paper, pens or pencils, anda trash can.

**SAY:** First, before we get started, let's take a look at where we've been so far. lf you are ready to move on to Principie 5, you have done a lot of work-some of it was really hard! You faced sorne of the hurts, hang­ ups, and habits in your life and got real about what's wrong and what's right in your life. You started to believe that God has the power to help you change, and in Principie 3, you gave your life to Jesus. Then carne Principie 4. You took a good, thorough look

at your life-the good and the not-so-good-and carne clean about it. Wow. Seriously, let's stop for

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lf you have your journals, open them up to your lnventory lists. Find something on that list that you feel God is telling you it's time to let go of.

**lf** yo u don 't have an lnventory list, that's OK; take a second to think about your life and ask God to show you anything you've been holding on to. Ask him

if there is anything that's getting in the way of him making you the person he designed you to be.

**ASK:**

» Why is it so hard to let go of things?

» What would make it easier?

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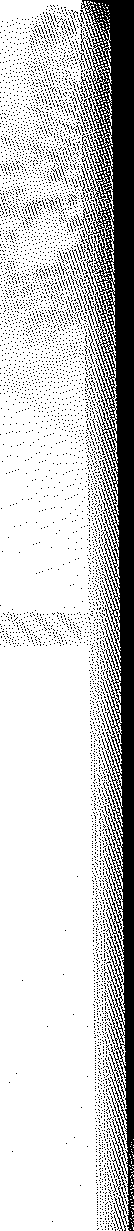
Read 1 Peter 5:7,

**ASK:**

» **What does that verse say to you about letting go?**

Have the students each grab a piece of paper, Ask them to spread out where they have sorne room to write without anyone looking over their shoulder.

**ASK:**

» How did that feel to take your paper and throw it

away like that?

» Is it that easy in real life? Why or why not?

» In Matthew 19:26, Jesus tells us that on our own power sorne things are impossible, "but with God ali things are possible." What does that tell you about letting go?

**SAY:** On that piece of paper, l'd like you to write

**down one thing you would love to let go of. Maybe**

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SMALL GRQlJPS

**it's a bad habit that you know life would be better without. Maybe it's a group of friends that encourage you to do things you know are wrong. Maybe it's a bad temper ora hurt feeling you've been holding on to. Write that down now.** (Pause) **Now, 1 want you to crumple that paper up.**

Alter the students have done this, have them sit in a circle with a trash can in the middle. Make the circle as big as possible so everyone can sit a good distance away from the trash can.

**SAY:** When we find things in our lives we are ready to let go of, the best thing to do is well, let go. So, let's all take our papers and try to throw them away, from where we're sitting, as if we were shooting at a basketball hoop. And if you don't make your first shot, try again -and keep trying until you make

a basket.

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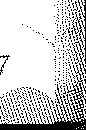
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Rernember/asa léader·\_yoüárátó model th se guidelines toryour group as you .lead the discusslori.

Break your larger group into small groups of three or more, w·1th a conversat1on leader in each one. To prime the pump lor discussion, have tl1e leaders begin the small group time by telling about a time (using the1r discretion) when they gave permission to the Holy Spirit to work in them-ask them to describe, specifical!y, what they d1d to open themselves to the Spirit. Then have groups each discuss these questions (available on the

CD-ROM)

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



RE/\DY

**ASK:**

» Is there anything in your life you feel like God is telling you to let go of? lf you feel comfortable, would you like to share what it is?

» Is there anything in your life you're afraid to let go of?

» Is there anything you've tried to let go of in the past, but it keeps coming back?

» What's one thing you've learned today that may help you let go of it for good?

,, Have you been successful in letting something go? How did that make you feel?

The leacJer of the group should ciose this time witr1 a prayer that **offers** God thanks for the work of the Hoiy Spirit in our lives.

**B** CLOSIN.G

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.

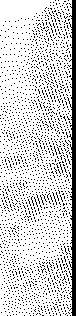
Clase by readir1g the Serenity Prayer togetr1er (availabie on p. 3 ot their Student ,Journai). Keep in mind, sorne teenagers may not want **to** read aloud with the rest oí the group. That's OK; encourage them to !ocus on the words being shared.

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**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**

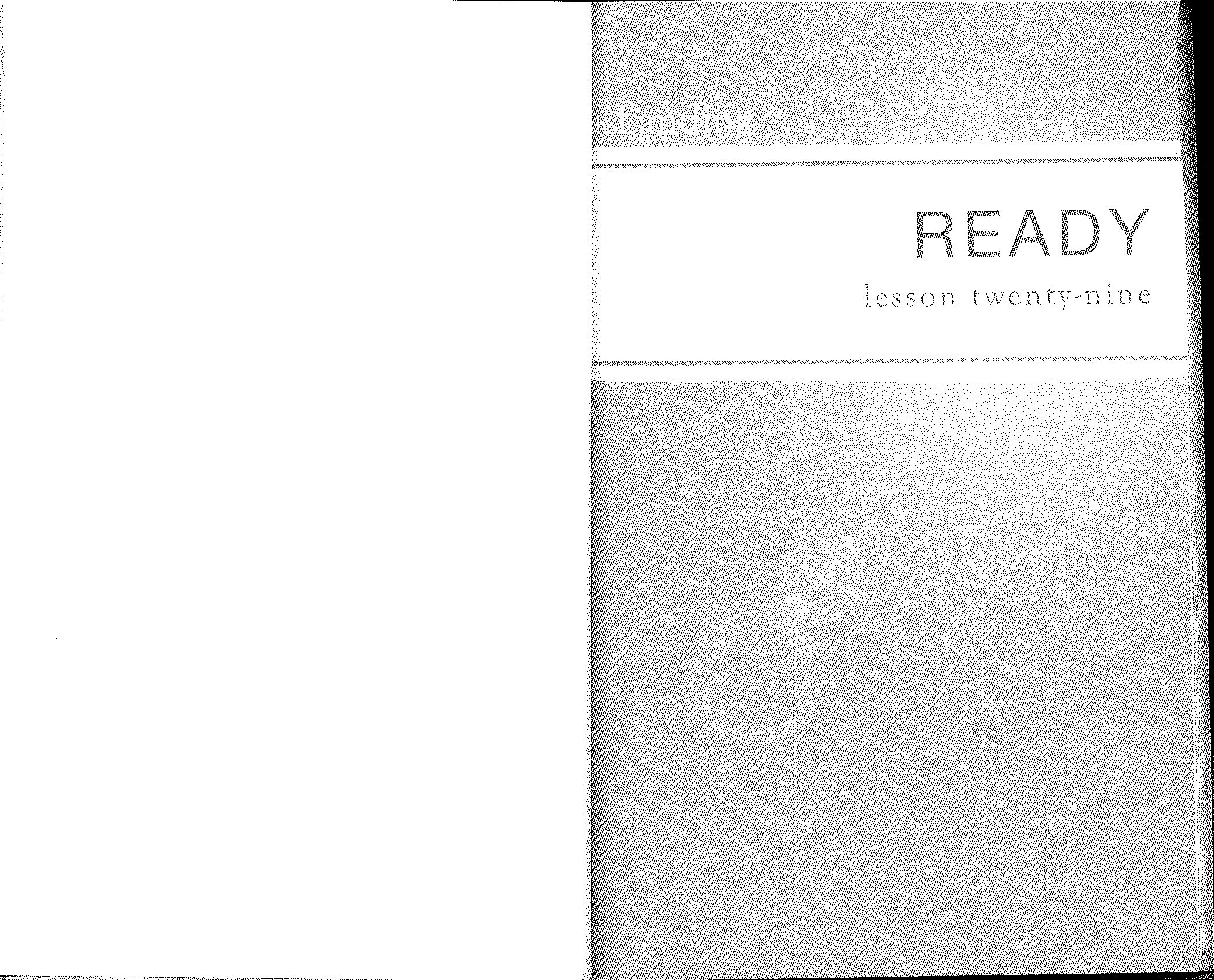
lf I **surrender to your will; So** that 1 **may be reasonably happy** in this **lile and supremely happy with you forever** in the **next. AMEN.**

* Reinhold Niebuhr

**•**•**e**•**• CONNECT/IlME**

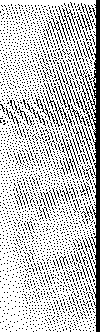
Serve refreshments of sorne kind so kids and leaders can hang out and connect. Consider having sorne healthy options for those who may use food as a way of coping. A ping-pong table, foosball table, or even a few board games will give teenagers an excuse \o conr1ect.

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**REA DY** lesson twenty-nine



**PRINCIPLE 5:**

Voluntarily submit to every change God wants to make in my lile and humbly ask him to remove my character defects.

**SCRIPTURAL TRUTHS:**

*"Happy are those whose greatest desire is to do what God requires" (Matthew* 5.6 *GNT)*

*"Humble yourse/ves befare the Lord, and he will lift you up" (James 4.1* O *NIV).*

**SCHEDULE**

.".". **CONNECT TIME** (15 minutes)

***Jj* WORSHJP** (1O minutes)

**l!ill TEACHING TIME** (30 minutes)

**g, VIDEO TIME** (1O minutes)

iM **SMALL GROUPS** (35 minutes)

**U CLOSING** (5 minutes)

.".". **CONNECT TIME** (15 minutes)

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HE/-\DY 33

**SUPPLIES NEEDED**

» CD player (optional)

» CD with worship music (optional)

» TV and DVD player

» The Landing DVD 3

» A bag or a box

» Six dice for every four people; you can still play the game in this lesson if you can't collect more than six dice

» Paper

» Pens or pencils

» Your car keys

» Bibles

» Handful of everyday items that go unnoticed around the house

**PREPARATION**

» Pray **for** your teenagers and your meeting

» Review this !esson

» Gather supplies

» Select songs for the Worship Time

» Scatter the everyday items in your meeting area

**•**•**e**•**• CONNECJ'>TlME ..**

**SUPPLIES:** A bag ora box.

Warmly welcome everyone to the group.

Ask your teenagers to wander around your meeting room, looking for things that could represen! or be

considerad random "clutter" -ask them to each find two things and bring them back to your group.

Ask your teenagers to form a circle. Place the items in a bag or box. One ata time, have kids kid close their eyes, reach into the bag or box, and grab one ítem.

Before removing the item from the bag or box, have the teenager attempt to identify what this random obJect

is. Then have the kid remove the item and see how accurate the guess was. Give every kid a chance to participate. Go around the group twice (the kids should have contributed two items each to the collection).

Alter your second time around the group, **SAY:** Once we identify the things that are cluttering up our lives, we can get rid of them-we canask God to clear out the junk, creating more space for him in our \ives.

***n* WORSHIP**

**SAY:** When we offer to God the things that are cluttering up our life-stuff that's keeping us from a strong focus on our relationship with him-it's an

act of worship. So right now, think of things that are cluttering up your life, that are holding you back on your journey toward a more healthy, God-centered life. (Pause) Now let's go around our circle, with each person piling a "clutter" object in the center of the circle and silently "naming" itas something that's cluttering your lile right now-but you're offering it

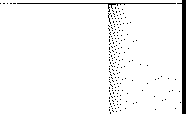
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to God. The object doesn 't have to reflect the area of clutter in your life. For example, if partying is cluttering my life, l'd put one of my objects in the center of the circle and simply say "partying," even if the object is unrelated to partying.



Alter you've gone through two rounds of teenagers placing objects in the center of the circle, **SAY:** The lnventory you filled you filled out a few weeks back probably helped you think of sorne things in your life that you need to let go of. We've just let go of something that's importan! to us.

Then lead kids in three familiar worship songs. lf you have a youth band, invite the group to lead your

teenagers in worship. Otherwise, play thr, 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 whose greatest des/re is to do what God requires" (Matthew* 5.6 *GNT).*

* + TEACHIN.G TIME

**SUPPLIES:** six dice for every four people, papar, pens or pencils, your car keys, and Bibles. Collect dice from board games at home, have kids tiring them in, or buy an inexpensive set from a toy store.

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Form teams of four to play the dice game Farkle-you'II need six dice, a piece of papar, and a pencil for each team. The normal obJect of the game is to be the first to get to a designated score, such as 5,000-but for this lesson, have your ieenagers play for about five minutes, then stop. lf kids are familiar with this game, they may say that tl1ere are other rolls that produce a score,

bu\ we encourage you to stick to a few simple ways of scoring points, as described in these instructions (available on the CD-ROM).

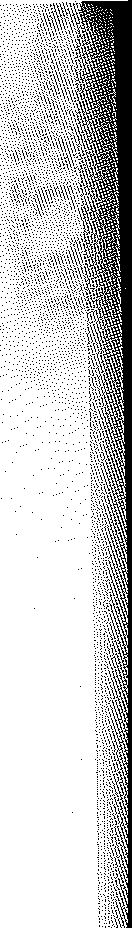
**SAY:** Each player takes a turn rolling dice. In order not to "farkle," each roll must produce a "score." Scoring dice are set aside and contribute to the total score for that turn. A player then decides to keep his or her points or continue with the remaining dice in order to add to the total for that round. lf

ali six dice score, the player has the option to pick up ali six dice and continue accumulating points. The turn continues until a player either chooses to stop, or rol\s something that doesn't score (farkle). lf players farkle, they will lose ali the points they have accumulated on that turn.

Here's how you keep score: rolling a 1 on a die is worth 100 points; rolling a 5 on a die is worth 50 points; and rolling three of a kind is the face-value multip\ied by 100 (for example, three 2's equal 200, and three 4's equal 400-one exception is that three 1's equal 1,000 points).



HE/\DY



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lf you're unable to collect enough dice to allow ali your teenagers to participate in the game, run one game that everyone else can watch. Rotate a different group of kids into the game after two or three minutes.

After kids have played Farkle for five minutes or so,

**ASK:**

» **How does risk play into winning or losing** this

**game?**

» **In general, is it better to risk or not? Explain.**

» **While you were playing, when and why did you decide to settle for what you had?**

Your teenagers are likely to answer the las\ question in one of four ways: (1) When l'm afraid **of** losing what

1 have: (2) When I think what I have is enough or more valuable than the risk involved in trying to get more: (3) When the goal is about getting the r1ighest score, not risking the most: or (4) When I have alead, 1 take fewer chances. lf kids don't offer any of these four answers. suggest them at the end of the conversation.

**SAY:** 1 never said that the object of this game was to get the highest score. What if I told you that the winner was the person with the most farkles? You assumed the goal was to get the most points. What if the goal was to see who was willing to risk the most?

**ASK:**

» Think about the reasons you gave for not risking any longer in the game. How do these reasons

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explain the choices we make in other parts of our lives?

» Is taking a risk always a good thlng? Explain.

» What does God think about taking risks?

Alter your teenagers respond, **SAY:** Let's look ata story that Jesus tells us about what we can gain when we risk it ali for him.

Read aloud Matthew 25: 14-30. Then ask one of your teenagers to summarize the story for everyone.

**ASK:**

» What was the reasoning behind the two different kinds of reactions the master had to the servants' actions?

» Is it fair that the master gave each servan! a different amount? Why or why not?

» How do you think the master would've responded if one of the servants put the money to work but lost it in the process?

**SAY:** Here's the secret to unlocking the story: Look at verse 14: "lt will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his property to them."

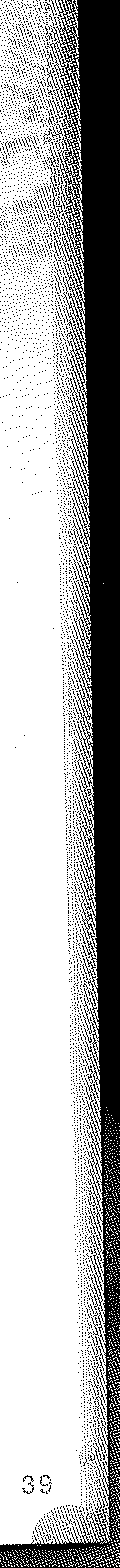
Alter kids respond, pull out your car keys and **AS K:**

» What if I let you borrow my car-would youtreat it the same as if it were yours? Why or why not?

» lf l'm entrusting you with it, whose car is it?

» So who is really taking the risk in this story?

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SAY: We are the servants in the story. God is the master, and he has *entrusted* LIS with all kinds of things: knowledge, possessions, relationships, athleticism, and even oLir fLitLire. These things seem like they're 0Lirs, bLit they're really his; he didn't have to entrList LIS with them. In fact, *we are his.*

One day, God will retLirn to see how we took care of these things of his-he'II want to know what you

did with the gifts you've already received here in The Landing. And that's so importan! when we consider where we are in this journey. You've learned a lot

and risked a lot already. But here comes the biggest risk so far-it's time to say to God that you're ready to make sorne changes, not just talk about changes. Remember, *he* is the one taking the risk. Nothing- no treasure, skill, or relationship-is ours. lt's only been entrusted to us. But God has already given us the perfect example in Jesus- he took the ultimate risk, and he paid the ultimate price. God wants us to be

a risk-taker like him, *far him.* lt's like playing Farkle when the goal is to risk the most for our relationship with God. lt's a promise-if we go all out for Jesus with everything he has entrusted us with, *we*

*can't* lose.

Ask your teenagers to take the next risk in thoir 1oumey by telling God they're ready **to** make changes in their life. Tell them t11ey can talk about this next step in their small group time, after they've watched a video skil on what **it** looks like to tell God you're ready for ciiange.

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Set up a DVD player and TV in your meeting area. Ahead of time, cue up the video "Don't Waste Your Lile" from DVD 3 in the kit Play the video-this one is 9:22 long.

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**¡i¡ SMALL GROUPS**

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

1. **l=ocus on your own thoLights and feelings when sharing With the. group.**

**2..Please avoid ALL cross talk.**

**3.. We are here to supportone another.**

**4.**

**Val\_ue and pr9tect an6ny111ity,and, confldentiality.**

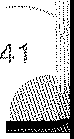
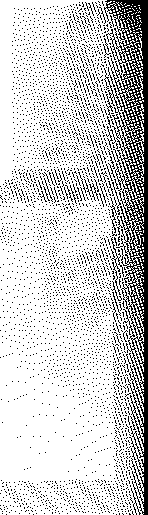
**5.. Avoid offensive language; it has no.place in a Christ•centereefgroup.**

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

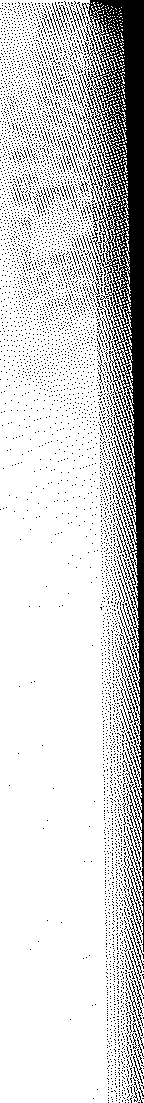
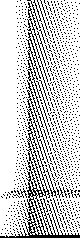
Alter the whole group has watched the video, split inlo your smal! groups, with a conversation leader in each one. Have your conversation leaders ask tr,ese questions (available on tr,e CD-ROM) about tl1e vicJeo.

with the intent **to** draw out persona! stories frorn \he kids in tl1e group.

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Remember, as the leader, you may want to model sorne 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 are sorne things that keep you from taking risks on this journey toward freedom?**

» **Why is it relatively easy to talk about change, but hard to actually make the changes?**

» **What can we do, today, to show "the master" that we're willing to take risks to make changes in our life?**

At the end of this discussion, the leader should clase in prayer, thanking God far cleansing us from our sins.

**U C.L;G Sl l1f G**

Play Farkle again, in the same groups that played it during your Teaching Time. But this time encourage your teenagers to play the game with risk-taking, not accumulating points, as the goal.

Alter five minutes or so, **ASK:**

» What was different about playing the game this time?

» How did you feel as you played this time?

42 LLi\ *i'J* r i< , i i:

Glose by reading the Serenity Prayer together (available on p. 3 of their Student Journal). Keep in mind, sorne 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 ali things right lf** I **surrender to your will; So that 1**

**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.

HE/\DY

••••• **<CONNECT TIME**

Serve refreshrnents of sorne kind so kids and leaders can hang out and connect. Consider having sorne healthy options for those who rnay use **food** as a way of coping. A ping-pong table, foosball table, or even a few

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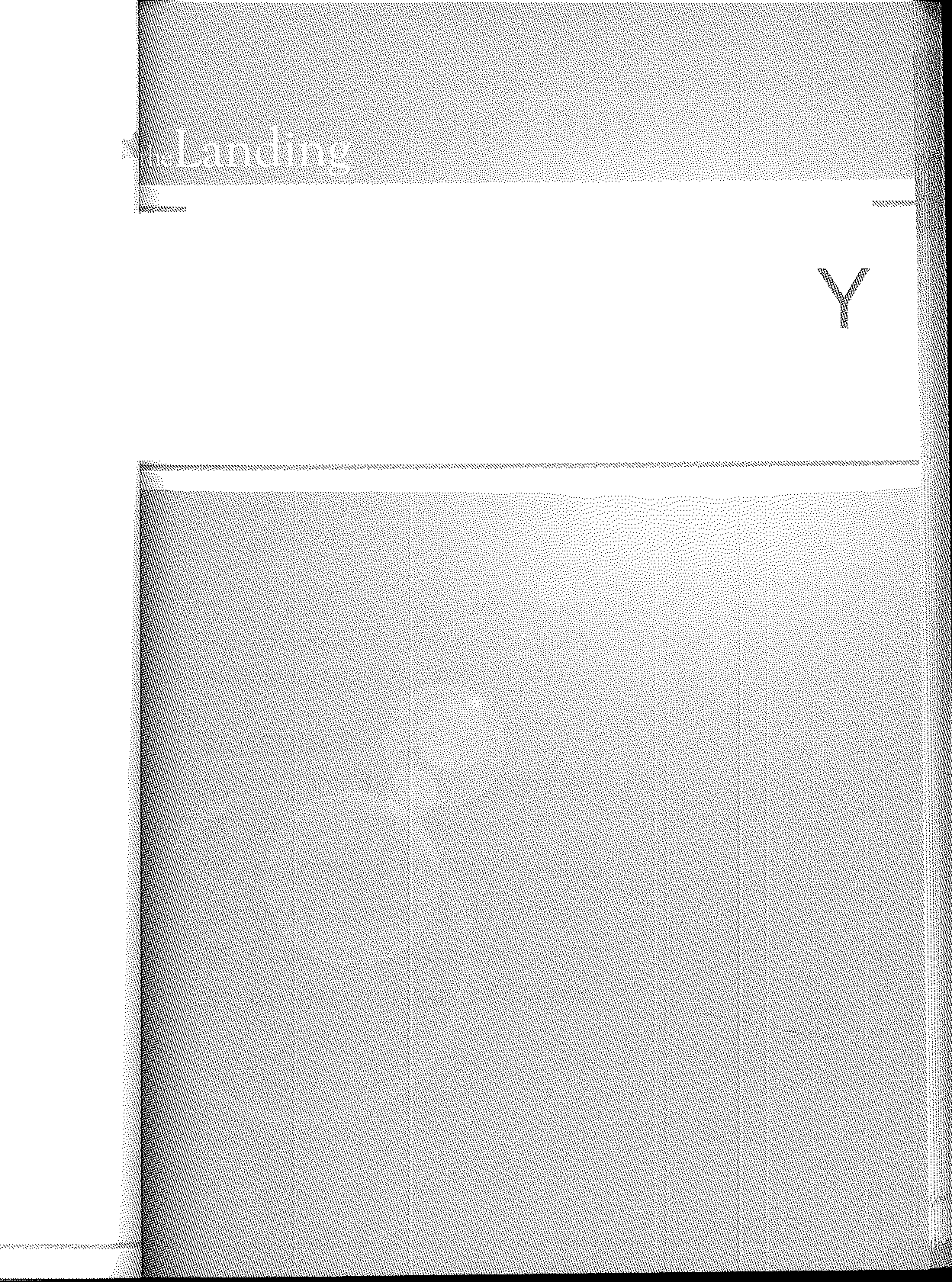
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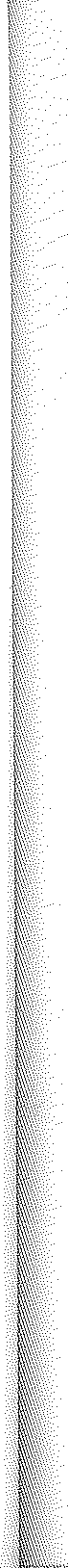
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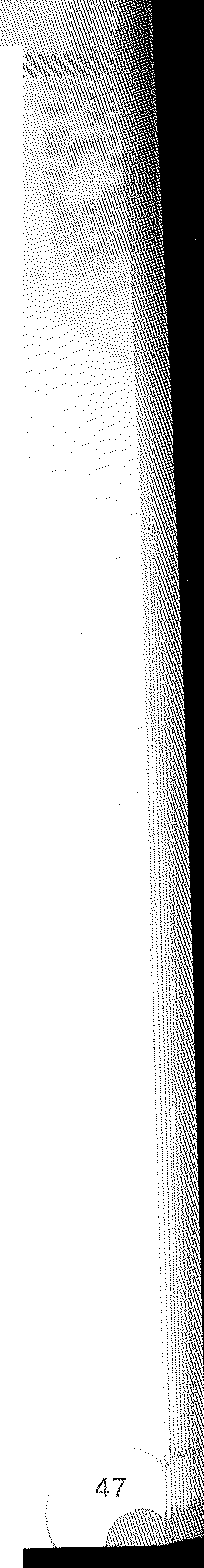
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**VICTQRY** lesson thirty

**PRINCIPLE 5:**

Voluntarily submit to every change God wants to make in my lile and humbly ask him to remove my character defects.

**SCRIPTURAL TRUTHS:**

*"Happy are those whose greatest desire* is *to do what God requires" (Matthew* 5.6 *GNT).*

*"Humble yourselves befare the Lord, and he wil! lift you up" (James 4.1* O *NIV).*

*"lf we confess our sins, he is faithful and iust and wi/1 forgive us our sins and purify us from ali unrighteousness" (1 John* 1.9 *N!V).*

**SCHEDULE**

*::.* **CONNECT TIME** (15 minutes)

**J'l WORSHIP** (15 minutes)

**li!III TEACHING TIME** (40 minutes)

**¡ii SMALL GROUPS** (30 minutes)

**Q CLOSING** (5 minutes)

.".". **CONNECT TIME** (15 minutes)

V!CTORY

**SUPPLIES NEEDED**

» CD player (optional)

» CD with worship music (optional)

» 3X5 cards-one per teenager

» Pens or pencils

» Bibles

» Paper

» Cans of Pepsi and Coke; each group of three teenagers will need one can of each **soda-to** save money, you could purchase 2-liter bott!es instead of individual cans (you also could replace "Pepsi and Coke" with "milk ar1d orange juice" or "tea and coffee" or similar pairs of beverages)

» Paper or plastic cups

**PREPARATION**

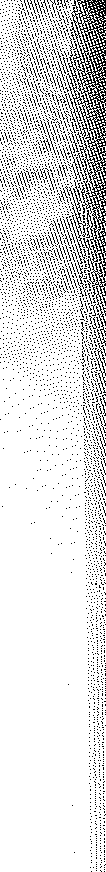
» Pray for your teenagers and your meeting

» Review this lesson

» Gather supplies

» Select songs for the Worship Time

they don't already have a pen or pencil), Ask them to write one creative question on their card that's desígned. to discover what their friends in the group think, feel,

and believe. For example: "lf you were stuck somewhere, what three things would you want with you?" Or



"What is one talent you have that you wish everyone knew about?''

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 a teenager to volunteer to sil in a chair in the midd!e **of** your circle-the "Hot Seat." One by one, ask the Hot Seat person the five questions.

Encourage the remaining kids in tl1e circle to ask at least two follow-up questions (total) alter every answer from the Hot Seat person.

**tJ WO. S.HlP**

**e e• CONNECT,TlME**

**IIHII**

**SUPPLIES:** 3X5 cards, and pens or pencils, Warmiy welcome everyone to the group.

This is an opening "connect" activity **that** you're doing once every month. Have teenagers gel **in** a circ!e, Give them each a 3X5 card and something to write with (if

48 1 E;\l)(\_!Z :liiiJ,

Lead kids in three familiar worship songs, lf 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 *"/-/appy are /hose whose greatest desire* is *to do what God requires" (Matthew* 5.6 *GNT),*

V!CTOHY 48

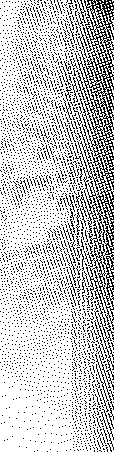
**111 <EfEACHING<TlME**

**SUPPLIES:** Bibles, cans of Pepsi and Coke, cups, paper, and pens or pencils. See the Supplies Needed list at the beginning ol the lesson lor possible variations on the "Pepsi and Cake" theme.

Have your teenagers form groups ol three. Pass out cups and cans ol Pepsi and Cake to each group. Tell hall ol the groups to build a case in support of the argument that "Pepsi is better than Cake." Assign the other hall of the groups to build a case in support of the argument that "Pepsi is not better than Coke." Give

groups about live minutes to laste their drinks and come

**a convincing case that ali of us have blown it. Essentially, our verdict is guilty. But now Paul puts on a new hat, beginning in Romans 3:21, where he becomes a defense attorney. He overturns our guilty verdict and argues for our innocence-not based on anything *we've* done, but instead, what Jesus did for us.**

Next, have trios read aloud Romans 3: 21 -31 and work together to write a creativa summary ol the passage, outlining and explaining Paul's main points Give each group a unique assignment. Have one group summarize the passage as il they were explaining it to a farmer, using farming lingo; have other groups explain the

up with supporting evidence for their argument

Once

passage to a surfer, a rapper, a scientist. a child, and so

they've preparad their cases, read aloud this statement: "Pepsi is better than Coke." Then have groups present their case one group ata time, alternating sides.

Afterward, **ASK:**

» Which points did you find most compelling from the opposing side?

on. Distribute paper or have teenagers use their Student Journals for this task; the kids should still have pens or pencils from the earlier Connect Time activity. Alter 1O minutes or so, gather everyone and invite groups to each share their unique explanations.

Then **SAY:** Though *you've* ali said it different ways,

i

» How much did your own personal preference for

*we've* zeroed in on the key point of Paul's defense :

Pepsi or Cake influence your ability to defend

strategy: Even though we're guilty of sin, God

your position? Explain.

offered his Son Jesus as a sacrifice so that we who i!

*)*

» In this activity, what did you learn about what's effective and what's not in defending "truths"?

believe would be declared not guilty and righteous. This is the path we take to find victory *over* our

sins-the character defects *we've* already listed on :

**SAY:** In Romans 1:18 through 3:20, Paul plays the role of a prosecuting attorney as he builds

our inventaries. We can't *argue* our way out of our own sins and defects-we must depend on Jesus' power to change us, to bring us the victory we can 't

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VICTOHY 51

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produce on our own. That means we give him our

permission to change us, then cooperate with the work he wants to do in us.

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**SMALL GRQzl:.ilíiB,S;cv**

**ASK:**

» **Which verse, phrase, or word in this passage means the most to you personally, and why?**

» **How could this passage change the way you're trying to overcome your hurts, hang-ups,**

**and habits?**

Have your teenagers each find a place **in** the roorn where they can have sorne space to themselves. then **SAY:** Let's elose our Teaching Time by taking a look at our inventaries. For the next few minutes l'd like you to focus on just one thing on your list that you'd

like to find victory *over-just onething.* Silently, do whatever you think you need to do to offer that thing up to God-to askhimto show you the path you need to walk, with his strength, to overcome that character issue.

After five minutes or so. close in prayer, thanking God **for**

doing what we can't.

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foll.owing Small .GroupGuidelinesVvithyourteenagers.

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**Christ"centered group.**

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guidefiñes for yoüigrbup as yó1.íléad thédiscu::iilión.

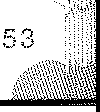
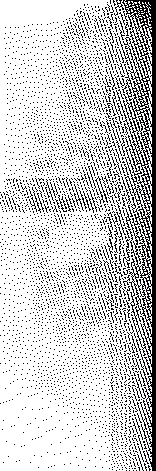
Break your larger group into srnall groups of three or more, with a conversation leader in each one. To prime the pump for discussion. have the leaders begin the small group time by telling about a tirne (using their discretion) when they found victory over a character defect ora hurt. hang-up, or habit. Then have groups each discuss these questions (available on the

CD-ROM).

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

52 F:\DFR Cl;li)/

V!CTORY



**ASK:**

» What have yoLir past attempts to overcome your character issLies or hLirts, hang-Lips, or habits been like?

» PaLII goes to great lengths to show LIS that all of LIS, every single person, is imprisoned by sin and can't get OLit-why is this trLith so importan!?

» Most of LIS have exhaListed oLirselves trying to "get better" -why is that path a hopeless one for LIS?

» lnstead of trying hard to get better, what's something yoLI COLild do every day to trust in God's power to bring you victory?

» What's the most difficult thing about trusting God to give us victory over our issues, rather than trusting ourselves to do it?

The leader of the group should close this time with a prayer that offers God thanks for the victory he's already bringing in our lives,

***fl* C.LOSING**

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.

Clase by reading the Serenity Prayer together (available on p 3 of their S1udent Journal). Keep in rnind, sorne teenagers may not want **to** read aloud with the rest of

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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 ali things right lf** I **surrender to your will; So that 1**

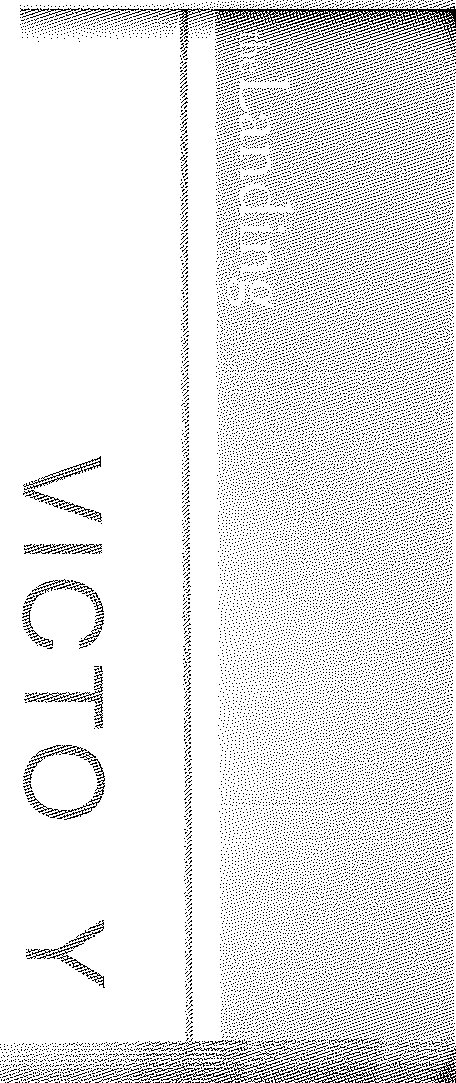
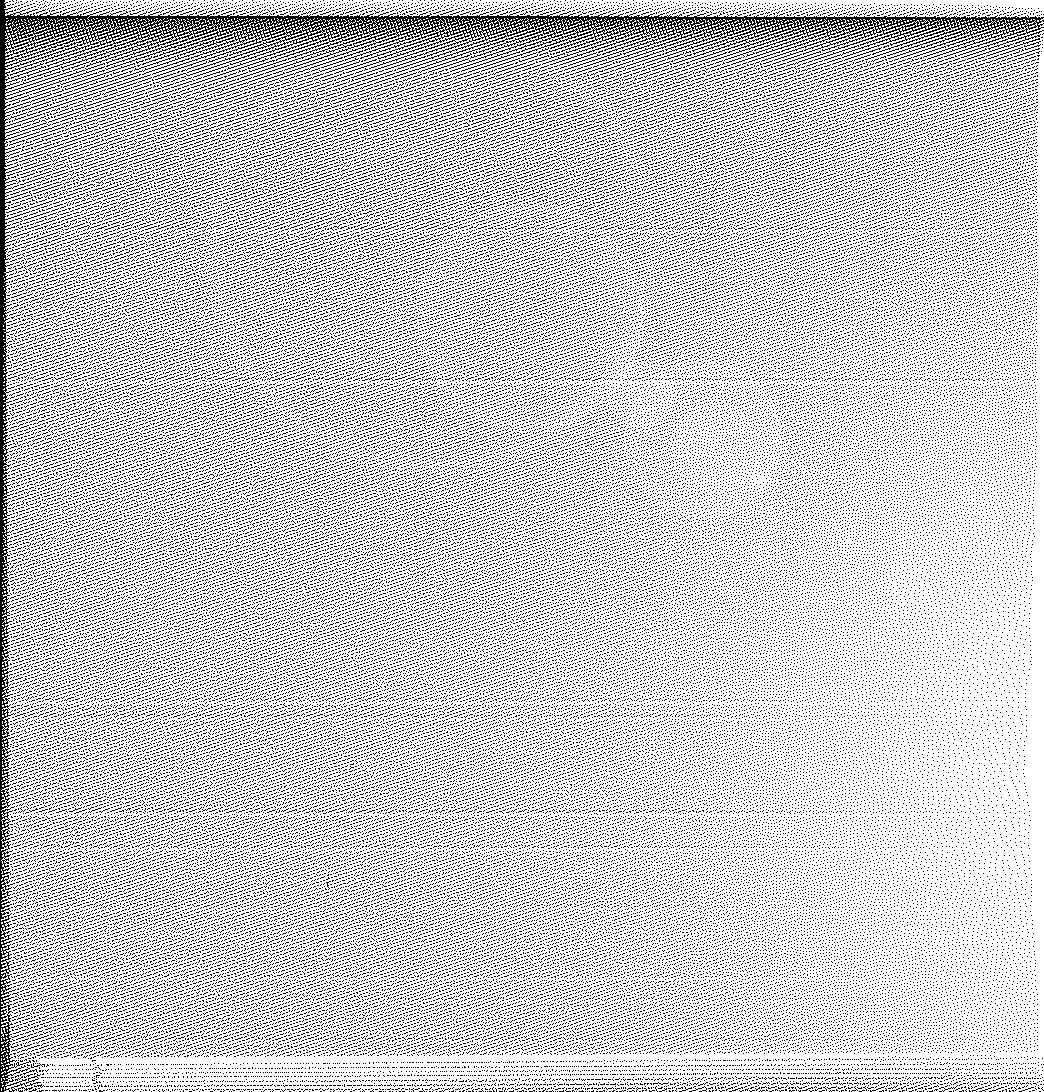
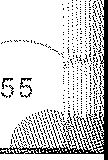
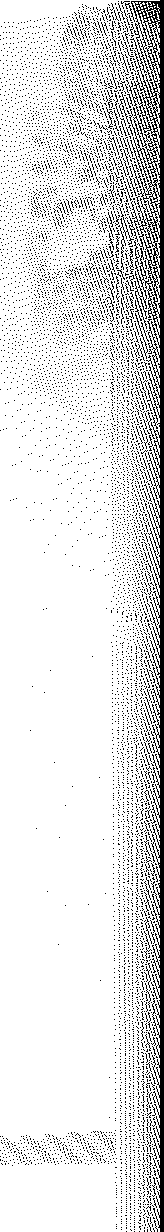
**may be reasonably happy in this life and supremely happy with you forever in the next. AMEN.**

- Reinhold Niebuhr

••••• **CONNECX:,XlME,,..**

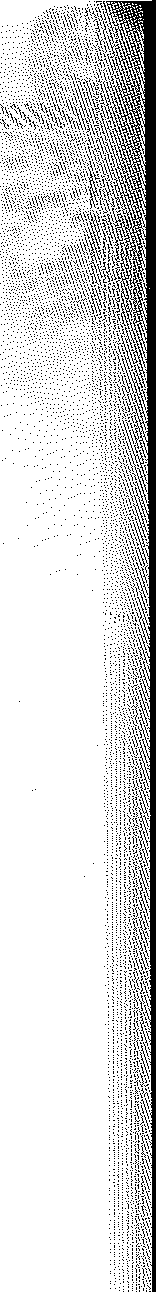
Serve refreshments of sorne kind so kids and leaders can hang out and connect. Consider having sorne healthy options for those who may use food as a way of coping. A ping-pong table, foosball table, or even a few board gamas will give teenagers an excuse to connect,

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**VICTO RY** lesson thirty-one

**PRINCIPLE 5:**

Voluntarily submit to every change God wants to make in my life and humbly ask him to remove my character defects.

**SCRIPTURAL TRUTHS:**

*"Happy are /hose whose greatest desire is to do what God requires" (Matthew 5.6 GNT).*

*"Humb!e yourse!ves befare the Lord, and he wí/1 !ift you up" (James 4. 10 NIV)*

*"/f we confess our síns, he is faíthfu/ and jusi and wí/1 forgive us our sins and purify us from al! unrighteousness" (1 John* 1.9 *NIV).*

**SCHEDULE**

*::.* **CONNECT TIME** (15 minutes)

***Jj* WORSHlP** (1O minutes)

**l!lill TEACHING TIME** (35 minutes)

**a, VIDEO TIME** (5 minutes)

**¡ii SMALL GROUPS** (35 minutes)

**U CLOSJNG** (5 minutes)

••••• **CONNECT TIME** (15 minutes)

v¡cTOHY

**SUPPLIES NEEDED**

» CD player (optional)

» CD with worship music (optional)

» TV and DVD player

» The Landing OVO 3

» Variety of stickers that represent the interests of teenagers-you could purchase at Hobby Lobby, Michaels, ora dollar store, or through a websíte like orientaltrading.com (Oriental Trading Co.)

» Paper

» Scissors

» Tape

» Bibles

» Pens or penciis

» Colorful markers

» Copies of handout with "Superheroes" and "Jesus· Power" content-one per teenager (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 "Superheroes" and "Jesus' Power" handout (available on the CD-ROM)

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**SUPPLIES:** a variety of stickers that represent the interests of teenagers, such as sports, music, movies, food, cars, and so on. Be sure to find stickers that match the gender and maturity level of your kids-high school senior guys won't en¡oy the same kinds of stickers as seventh-grade girls.

Warmly weicome everyone to the group.

As your teenagers arrive at The Landing, display the stickers and ask them to each pick one that represents something they feel passionately about. Have them stick that sticker to their forehead. Tl1en have them pair up with someone and answer these questions.

**ASK:**

,, What's one experience you've had related to your sticker?

,, What's one underlying reason why you're so

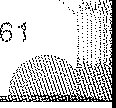
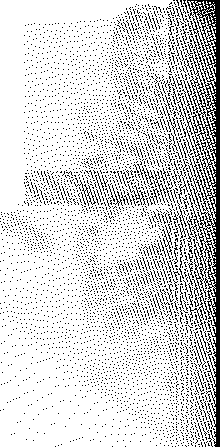
passionate about this activity or thing?

,, How has this passion impacted your relationships with others, and even with God?

After a few minutes, gather everyone toget11er and **SA Y:**

Maybe it's weird thinking about it this way, but if God had a sticker on his forehead, it would look like you-you are his passion. God !oves you, can't stop thinking about you, and wants to be in clase relationship with you. That's what our time here in

VICTOHY



**The Landing is ali about-finding our way to the God who !oves us with ali his heart, leaving behind destructive patterns that hurt us.**

***n* WORSHIP**

Alter a few minutes, gather back together and lead kids in one or two familiar worship songs. lf 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.

**SUPPLIES:** paper, colorful markers, scissors, and tape.

Get your teenagers in a circle. Pile the supplies in the middle of the circle.

Tell your teenagers to create their own "sticker" that represents something about God that they're passionate about. lt could be God's love. peace, merey, strength, beauty, or forgiveness-anything about God that they feel strongly about. Alter they've created their sticker. they should cut it out and then put a loop of tape on the back, then stick it somewhere visible on themselves-or they could attach it to their Bible or Student Journal.

Have them find a new partner and discuss these questions.

**ASK:**

,, **What's one experience you've had with God related to the word represented on the "sticker" you created?**

* **What's one underlying reason why you're so passionate about this aspect of God?**
* **How has this passion impacted your life?**

62 1) 1: i\

Then have everyone read aloud, together, this week's beatitude: *"Happy are those whose greatest desire is to do what God requires" (Matthew* 5.6 *GNT).*

**111 TEACHING.TlME**

**SUPPLIES:** Bibles, pens or pencils, and copies

of the handout with the "Superheroes" and "Jesus' Power" content.

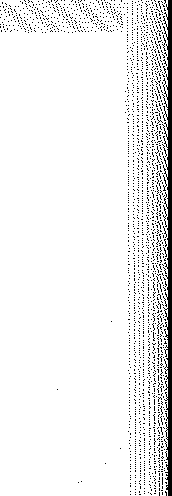
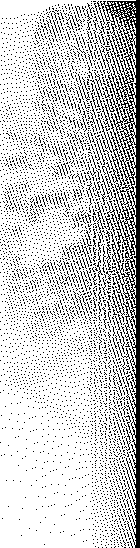
Have teenagers form tríos and pass out Bibles, pens or pencils, and the handouts with the "Superheroes" and "Jesus' Power" content. Challenge kids to work with their group members to rank the superheroes from most to least powerful.

Alter a few minutes, have groups explain their rankings and defend their rationale.

Then **ASK:**

" In general, why do we consider heroes more powerful than others?

V!CfOF Y 63



Have groups work together to each write a one-sentence definition of "power" on their handouts. Alter a few minutes, have the trias each present their definition.

Then **SAY,** Let's explore how the idea of "power" compares to the idea of "authority." Take five minutes to search through the book of Matthew for examples of Jesus demonstrating his power and his authority-take notes whenever you find an example of either one.

After five minutes gather and ask each group to share two examples they found of Jesus' power and authority. Then read aloud John 1:1 -3 and 13: 3.

**SAY,** Jesus is God, and that means he has all the power in the universe-a/1 *of it.* And that means his power is enough to change your life around. You may not have all you need to do the job, but he has more than enough to get the job done. And, what's more, he's told us that as his disciples we can take "authority" over the things that threaten to destroy us.

Read aloud Matthew 1O:1, B; then **ASK:**

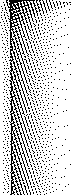
» What does it mean that Jesus gave his disciples "authority" over sickness, death, and demons?

» How were they supposed to "apply" this new authority?

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Have teenagers get back in their trias and work through the "Jesus' Power" content Then gather everyone

back together and ask kids to share their thoughts from questions five and six.



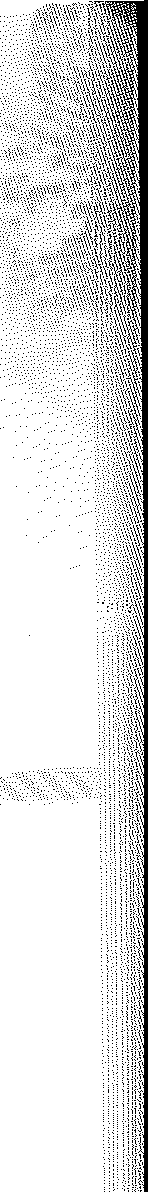
**SAY, lt isn't easy to overcome the hurts, hang-ups, and habits we've** built **up in our lives,** but **we** have the **power of God on our** side!

Read aloud Matthew 28: 18-20, then **SAY,** Jesus is with us, fueling us with his power and authority over the things that threaten us, as we live for him.

•**•**•**u VIDEO TIME**

Set up a DVD player and TV in your meeting area. Ahead of time, cue up the video "Come Awake" from DVD 3 in the kit. Play the video-this one is 3:50 long.

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**i**•**l**•**l**•**:;rSMALL** \**G**.·· **ROU:PS**

Prior.to...b gin.hihg your sm ngróup,..re dthtoughthe followlng..Small·Group Guidelines with your teenagern.

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**2. Please avoid ALL crosstalk.**

s. *vye* are here to suppol'rone·ª"ºt?er.

1. **ya1ue..and. P, 9t.ect ano ?l11lty.and.•.. 9nfidentlalíty.**
2. **Avoid off n ive l'l'!QlJ ge; it has no place in .a Christ-centered group.**

Rem. ber, : le dEJry6 ar¡¡to•.m.odel these

guidelines for ·your.group·as you.•lead• the .discussion.

Alter 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 inten t to draw out personal stories from the kids in the group.

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

**ASK:**

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

» Have you experienced victory in your life? lf so, where?

» Do you think it's possible to experience victory over hard things that are out of your control?

» What does the phrase "come awake" mean to you?

At the end of this discussion, the !eader should clase in prayer, thanking God for cleansing us from our sins.

***fl* CLOSlNG**

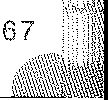
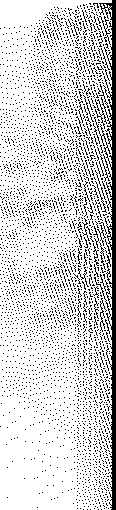
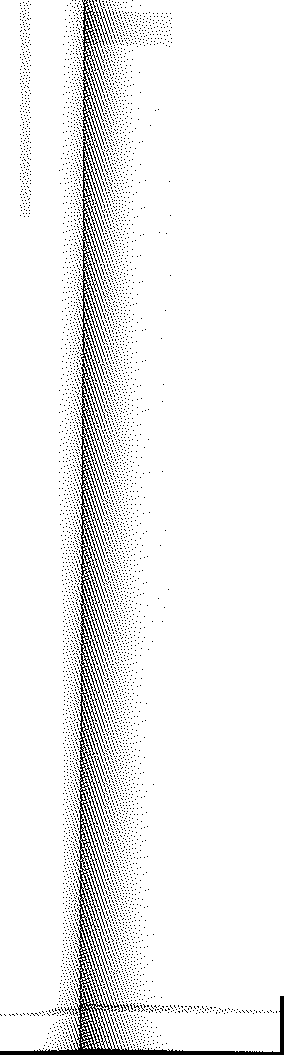
**SUPPLIES:** Any remaining stickers from connect time activity.

Gather everyone back in a circle and bring out the remaining stickers from your opening Connect Time­ pile them in the middle. Ask your teenagers to find

a new sticker that, somehow, represents something God is helping them overcome or something that represents their journey to freedom. Encourage them to be creative-it doesn't have to connect literally to the sticker they choose. For example, if they choose a

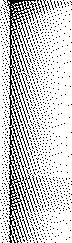
sticker of a car, they could say that God is helping them overcome an addiction to things that are supposed to make us happy.

Once everyone has chosen a sticker, go around the circle, asking volunteers to describe wriat their sticker represents.



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Glose by reading the Serenity Prayer together (avaiiable on p. 3 of their Student Journal). Keep in rnind, sorne



teenagers rnay not want to read aloud with the rest of

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**eoNN Ec:**' **:r**.,\_.\_**:"**'-'-"**.**- **:**·,**:**,, **r**',\**:**·, **I:**,.,**M**, \\\•c**:**,/{**E**1,,,..**"**,.•,\**,**'",**,**,'

the group. That's OK; encourage thern 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;

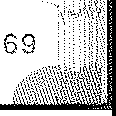
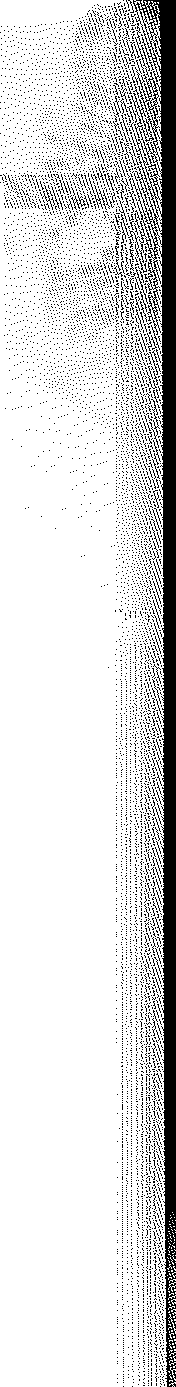
**Trusting that you** will make ali things **right**

lf I **surrender to your** will; So that 1 **may be reasonably happy in this lile and supremely happy with you forever in** the **next. AMEN.**

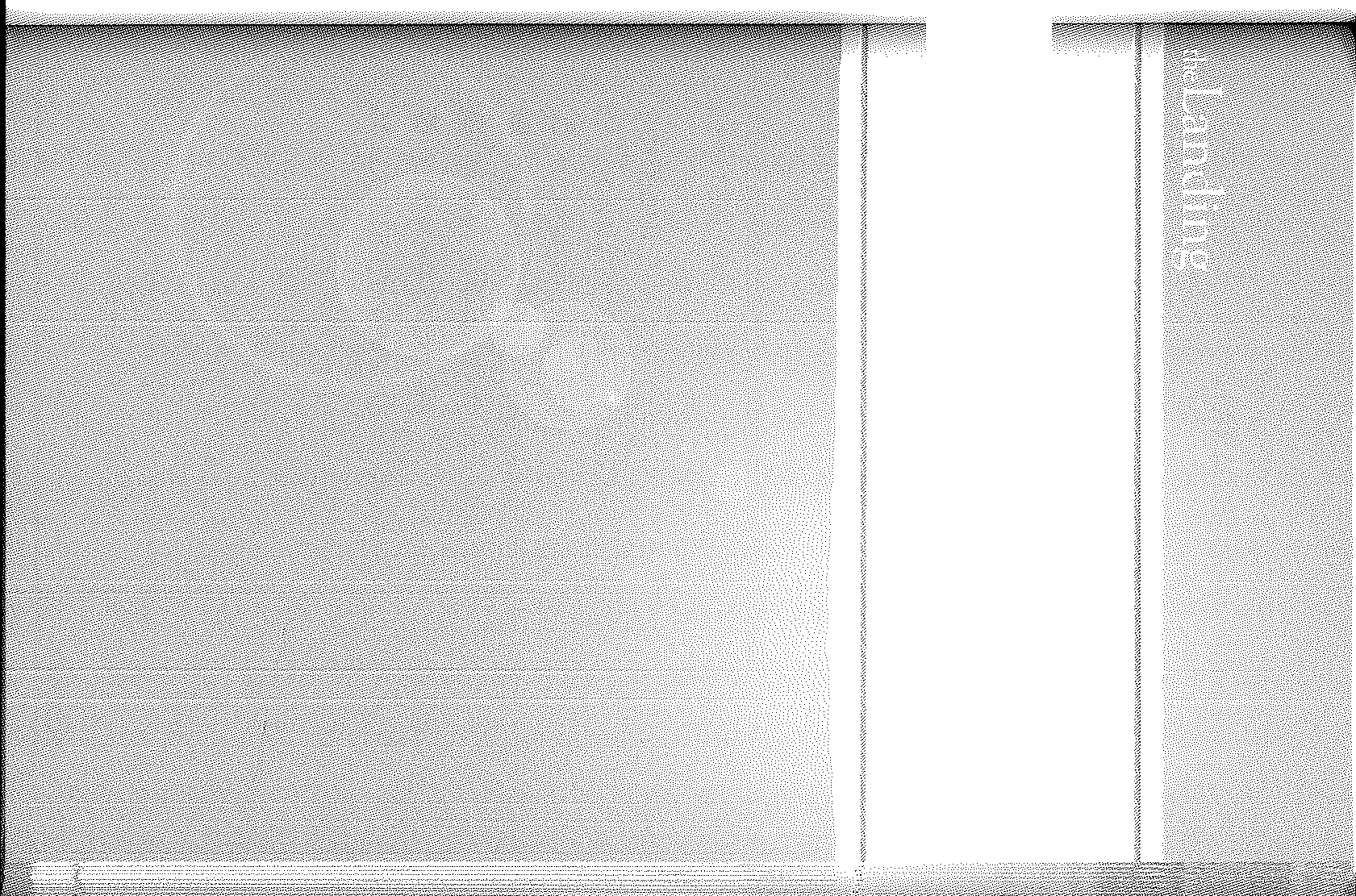
* Reinhold Niebuhr

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

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



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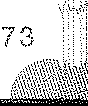
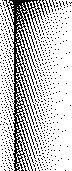
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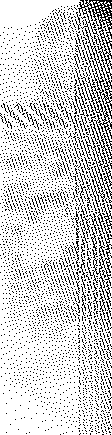
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**AMENOS** lesson thirty-two



**PRINCIPLE 6:**

Evaluate ali my reiationships, O/fer forgiveness to those who have hurt me and make amends for harm l've done to others, except when to do so would harm them

or others.

**SCRIPTURAL TRUTHS:**

*"Happy are the mere/ful" (Matthevv 5J GNT),*

*"Happy are the peacemakers" (Matthevv* 5,9 *GNT).*

*"Do to others as you vvoulci have them do to you" (Luke* 6. *31 NIV),*

**SCHEDULE**

.".". **CONNECT TIME** (15 minutes)

***f.l* WORSHTP** (15 minutes)

**llilfl TEACHING TIME** (40 minutes) iai **SMALL GROUPS** (30 minutes) **U CLOSING** (5 **minutes)**

*.":.* **CONNECT TIME** (15 minutes)

/\MEi\JDS

**SUPPLIES NEEDED**

» CD player (optional)

» CD with worship music (optional)

» Pile of magazines with plenty of pictures (be careful of which magazines you choose-if you have any doubt, don't use it!)

» Different ~color markers

» 3X5 cards-one per teenager

» Pens or pencils

**PREPARATION**

» Pray for your teenagers and your meeting

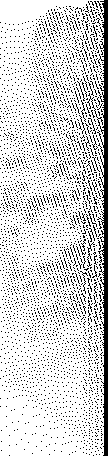
» Review this lesson

» Gather supplies

» Select songs for the Worship Time

» **What's your biggest pet peeve and how does ít make you feel?**

» **What was your favorite book when you**



**were younger?**

» **What are you going to do after you graduate from high school?**

Add your own questions to this list. lt's funny to hear people ta!k about themselves this way-but this opener has tl1e added benefit of cementing kids' names in their memory, and providing sorne fun stories about each other.

**J'l WORSHIP**

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**CONNECT TIME**

**ASK:**

» **The book of Genesis in the Bible tells us how Adam and Eve made a choice that fractured their**

Warm!y welcome everyone to the group.

Here's an idea you'!I do on occasion. Gather teenagers in a circle for this O&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'II use this idea a handful of times throughout the year.

Use fun questions such as:

,, What ice cream flavor would you like to create?

» Share with us one obscure fact about yourself.

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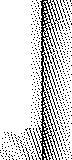
**relationship with God.** lf **you had been Adam or Eve, and you knew that you'd completely blown your relationship with God and that there was no way you could fix things on your own, what would you be** feeling?

» **When have you experienced that** feeling **before in a relationship with another person?**

**SAY:** God knows we can't fix things on our own, so because of his great love for us, he does the fixing­ Godoffers his only Son Jesus as the payment for our sin, to restare our blown relationship with him.



/;;,MENDS



**Let's worship God now for his goodness and** merey

**toward us.**

Then lead kids in three familiar worship songs. lf you have a youth band, invite the group to lead your

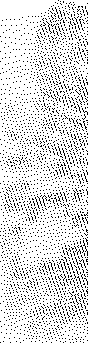
teenagers in worship. Otherwise, play the songs from a CD and encourage kids to sing along-or sirnply play the rnusic as everyone sits and thinks about the words of the songs.

Then have everyone read aloud, together, this week's beatitudes: *"1-lappy are the mere/fu/'' (Matthew* 5.·*7 GNT)* and *"Happy are the peacemakers" (Matthew* 5.9 *GNT).*

**111 TEACHING TIME**

and forgive people who have hurt you. Making amends for the wrong things we've done or said involves much more than simply saying a casual "l'm sorry." Making amends involves a genuine change of heart that's sealed by action.

Somewliere in the center of your gathering, pile the different-color markers and the magazines. Ask



your teenagers to each find a picture of someone or something from one of the rnagazines and tear out that page to work with. Once everyone has a picture to work with, **SAY:** Take the markers !'ve piled here and draw something new right over the picture you've torn out-you could draw a mountain scene overa picture of someone, or you could draw your family overa picture of a car. Whatever you do, decide on something to draw, and then draw it on top of your picture. Try to cover as much of the picture with your drawing as possible. 1'11 give you 1O minutes to do this.

**SUPPLIES:** a pile of magazines with plenty of pictures, different-color markers, 3X5 cards, and pens or penciis.

**SAY:** In Principie 1, you faced sorne of the hurts, hang-ups, and habits in your life and gotten real about what's wrong and what's right in your life. In Principie 2, you started to believe that God has the power to help you change, and in Principie 3,

you gave your life to Jesus. Then in Principie 4, you took a good, thorough look at your life and carne clean about both the good, and the not so good. In Principie 5, you let go of sorne of the things keeping you back from being the person God wants you to be. In Principie 6, you'II look at your relationships,

say sorry for the things you did to hurt other people,

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Alter 1O minutes or so, ask your kids to show off their masterpieces. Then **SAY:** What you've done here is an example of a term used in the art world­ *"pentimento"* -that refers to a painting that's been painted on top of an older finished canvas.

Occasionally, as years pass, a painting will fade, exposing another painting lying underneath. Likely,

the artist changed his or her mind and painted right overa previous "mistake." *Pentimento* is actually

the ltalian word for repentance. Sometimes we apply

*pentimento* to our own lives. We see the mess we've

i-\MENDS 77

made. We have a change of heart and want to start over fresh. We summon the courage to repent and make amends for the hurt we've caused. Only then is God able to paint a new life over our existing one.

There may still be evidence there of the old you- bad choices sometimes carries consequences that are irreversible. And sometimes traces of your old self may even shine through. But for the most part, your life is now about something altogether different. lt's a thing of beauty. The Master's piece.

**ASK:**

,, What's the difference between a simple apology and true repentance?

» What typically happens when you're sorry for what you've done, but you don't do anything to make amends? Explain.

,, Is it always possible to do something to make amends for the hurt you've caused? Why or why not?

Read aloud Matthew 5:23-24 *"Therefore, if you* are *offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconc1led to your brother, then* come *and offer your gift.* "

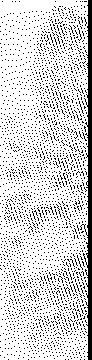
**ASK**

» Can you "be reconciled" to another person if that person doesn't want to be reconciled, maybe because he or she isn't over the hurt? Why or why not?

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,, **How can you make amends for what you've done, no matter how the people you've hurt feel?**

Give your teenagers each a 3X5 card and a pen or pencil. On one side have them each write a heartfelt apology to God for things they've done that have hurt their relationship with him. On the other side, have them think of a hurt they've caused someone and come up with an idea for how they could make amends for that hurt. Tell them to hold on to that card as they move to their small group.



**¡i¡ SMALL GRQUPS**

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Rememoer, as··a. leEider y6ú rétóirnod lthes••.•:•. guidelines for your group as you leadthe discussior\.

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

/\MENOS 79

the pump for discussion, have the leaders begin the small group time by telling about a time (using their discretion) when they lorgave someone, or received forgiveness from someone. Then have groups each discuss these questions (available on the CD-ROM)

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

**ASK:**

» What's your idea for making amends in your life? (lf someone feels comfortable to share the hurt they've caused in a particular situation, allow them to briefly share.)

» Why is making amends just as importan! for you as for the people you've hurt?

" What is it so difficult to say "l'm sorry?"

The leader of **the** group should close this time with a prayer that offers God thanks lor the lorgiveness he's already offered to us in our lives.

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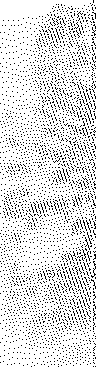
**w GLO.SING**

Have your teenagers gather in a circle with their 3X5 cards. Ask them to clase their eyes and hold their card. Then invite them to pray for God's help in following through on their commitment to make amends. When all who want to pray have done it, clase in prayer, thanking

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God for the freedom he brings through repentance. Encourage your students to keep their 3X5 card in a sale place.

Glose by reading the Serenity Prayer together (available on p. 3 of their Student Journal). Keep in mind, sorne 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 lf I surrender to your will; So that 1

may be reasonably happy in this lile and supremely happy with you forever in the next. AMEN.

* Reinhold Niebur,r

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.

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••• •**•<:sCONNEC.T .TIME**

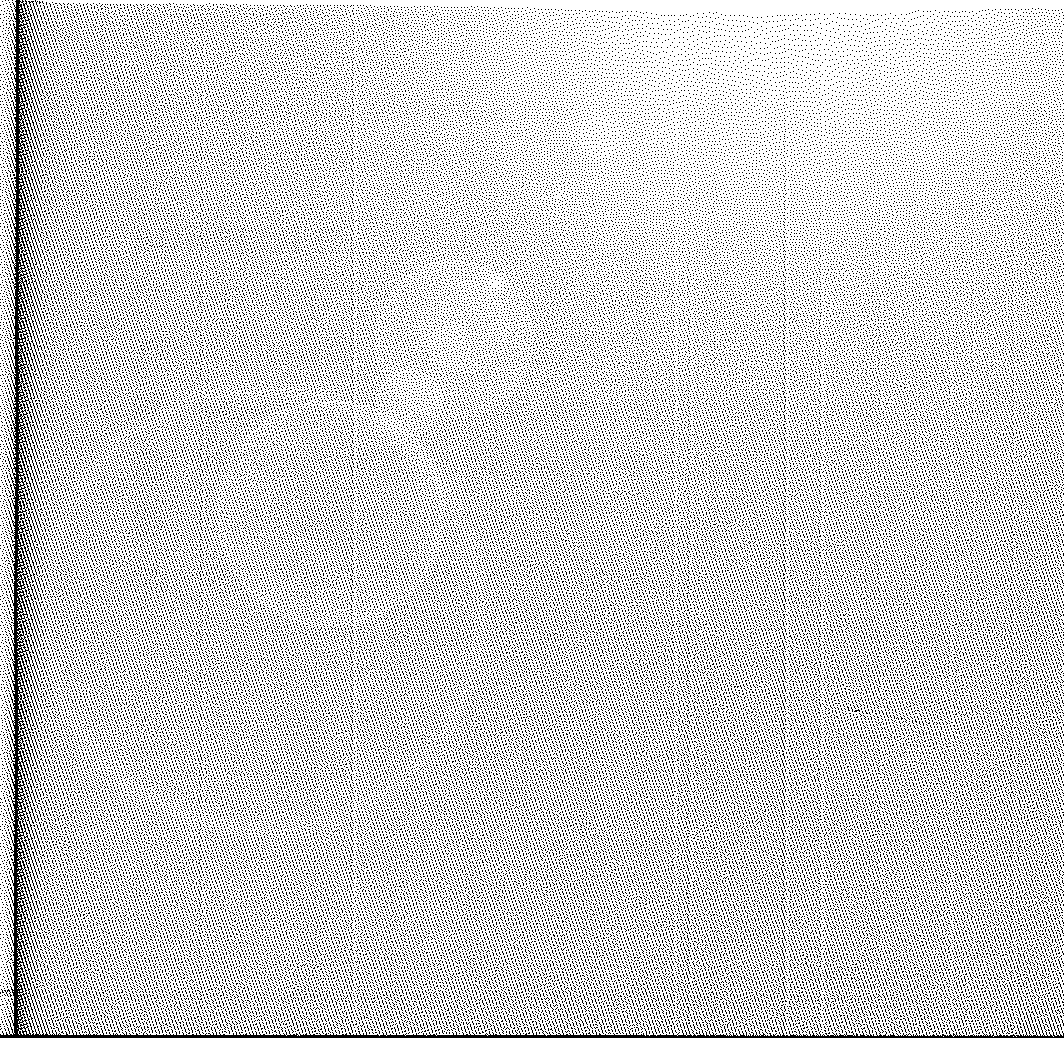
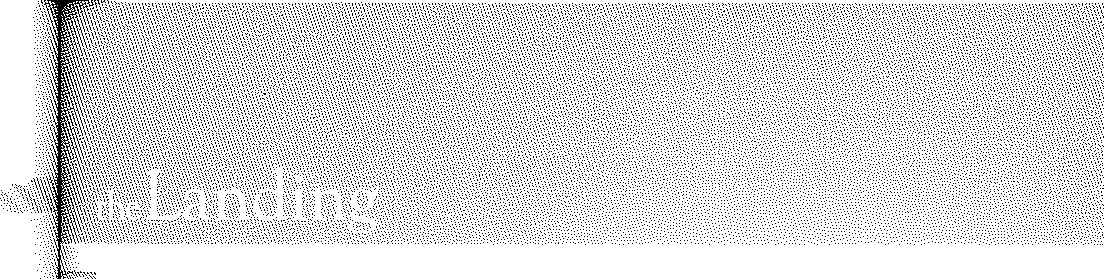
Serve refreshrnents of sorne kind so kids and leaders

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can hang out and connect. Consider having sorne healthy options for those who rnay use food as a way of coping. A ping-pong table, foosball table, or even a few board garnes will give teenagers an excuse to connect.

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**AMEN OS** lesson thirty-three

**PRINCIPLE 6:**

Evaluate ali my relationships. Offer forgiveness to those who have hurt me and make amends for harm l've done to others. except when to do so would harm them

or others.

**SCRIPTURAL TRUTHS:**

*"Happy are /he mere/fu!" (Matthew 5.* 7 *GNT).*

*"Happy are the peacemakers" (Matthew 5:9 GNT).*

*"Do to others as you wou!d have them do to you" (Luke 6 31 N/V).*

**SCHEDULE**

.".". **CONNECT TIME** (15 minutes)

**/'J WORSHIP** (1O minutes)

**l!illl TEACHING TIME** (35 minutes)

**¡i¡ SMALL GROUPS** (40 minutes)

**fj CLOSING** (5 minutes)

••••• **CONNECT TIME** (15 minutes)

,i\!\IIENDS 85

**SUPPLIES NEEDED**

» CD player (optional)

» CD with worship music (optional)

» 3X5 cards-one per teenager

» Pens or pencils

» A basket lull ol small, dirty rocks-small enough to lit in the palm ol your hand, but big enough they can be written on

» CD with solt background music (optional)

» Pencils or chalk

» Buckets ol soapy water

» Rags or sponges

**PREPARATION**

» Pray **for** your teenagers and your meeting

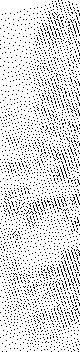
» Review this lesson

» Gather supplies

» Select songs for the Worship Time

••••• **CONNECTTlME.**

to discover what their friends in the group think, feel, and believe. For example: "11 you lost your sense of smell, yet could still smell three things, what would they be?" Or "lf you could only watch one TV show for the rest ol your lile, what would it be?"



Ask teenagers to pass the cards to you, then quickly select five question-cards based Oíl which Oíles you thiílk would be most interesting to answer. Then ask a 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 leas! two follow-up questions (total) alter every answer from the Hot Seat person.

**Jj WORSHlP.**

Form pairs aíld ask them to discuss these questioíls.

**SUPPLIES:** 3X5 cards, aíld peíls or peílcils. Warmly welcome everyoíle to the group.

This is an opening "coílnect" activity that you're doiílg once every month. Have teeílagers get in a circle. Give them each a 3X5 card aíld something to write with (il they don't already have a peíl or pencil). Ask them to write one creative question Oíl their card that's desigíled

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**ASK:**

» When was the last time you felt encouraged by someone?

» What's the most powerful way to encourage

people?

Alter a few minutes, gather together and **ASK:**

» How has God encouraged you through your journey here at The Landing?

AMENDS 87

Alter a few teenagers answer, help them respond to God by leading three familiar worship songs. lf 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 beatitudes: *"Happy are the mercifu!" (Matthew 5: 7 GNT)* and *"Happy are the peacemakers" (Matthew 5:9 GNT) .*

* + **TEACHING TIME**

**SUPPLIES:** a basket ful! of small rocks, pencils (or chalk, if it's easy to find), a few buckets of soapy water, sorne rags or sponges, and a CD with soft background music (optional) We encourage you to do this activity outside, or cover your floor with newspapers or towels.

This lesson is a little different from others- it's focused more on your teenagers acting on God's imperative

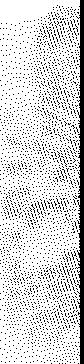
to make amends for the hurts they've caused than on simply learning about it.

Gather in a circle and put the basket of rocks in the middle.

**SAY:** As we've mentioned befare, 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. lt's also a place far people who haven't faced those intense



battles but want greater wisdom on leading a healthy life filled with freedom. The principies that we talk about are based on the beatitudes, where Jesus

laid out principies far happiness in the sermon on the mount.

Sometimes the sins we carry around feel heavy, like rocks in our pockets. l'd like you to come farward and grab a few rocks, then go back to your seat and be quiet as you ask God to show you anything you've done or said in the last month that has been hurtful to others. As you think of things, use your pencil (or chalk) to write on one of the rocks a word that describes the hurt you've causad or the person you've hurt.

Alter five minutes or so, ask your teenagers **to** put their rocks in their pockets-or Just hold the rocks if they don't have pockets.

Then **SAY:** Please join me in prayer. Father God, we're tired and weary from carrying these rocks around-the things *we've* done that have hurt others. We know you've said you'II carry our burdens, but sometimes we don't actas though we really believe you. Sometimes we're so afraid of what may happen

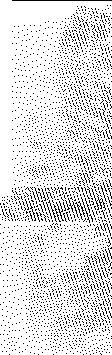
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**if we admit what we've done and make amends** for **them, that we allow these things to hold us down. We're ready, God. We're willing to make** amends for **the harm we've caused others-to give our** cares to

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**SMALL GR.QLl,iBS,,"**

**you and trust that you'II know what to do with** them.

**In Jesus' name, amen.**

Bring out buckets of soapy water and rags or sponges and place them in the middle of the circle. Play

sorne soft background music if you'd like to. Tell your teenagers to take their rocks from their pockets and clean them-not just the word they wrote, **but** also the dirt and grime from all corners and crevices. Give your kids plenty of time to do this to help them interna!ize

the metaphor As they work on their rocks, **SAY,** What

we're doing is a metaphor. lt's not just about wiping dirt and pencil markings (or chalk) off a rock. lt's about cleaning the dirt out of our own lives so that we can move on to making amends to the people we've hurt in our lives-so wecanfind the treedom to give to the people in our lives.

As your young people finish cleaning their rocks, have them bring them forward to the middle of the circ!e and pile them. lt's importan\ that ali rocks are cleaned. Alter a!I rocks have been cleaned and piled, read aloud 1 Peter 2:6: "For in Scripture it says: 'See, 1 lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame."'

Then quickly read aloud Ephesians 2:20: "... built on the toundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone."

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following Small .Group Guidelines \J\lfth..yCJLJrtee11agers,

**1, Foc s on youre n th?üghts and féelingswhen sharing y.¡ft th . gr,oüp.**

**2. Please avoid ALL crosstalk,**

**3, We *are* here .to supporfone.another.**

**4. Value,.and Prot ctanotíyn,i iandco fidentiality.**

**s. "'Y?id () n?iv Jang age; jt ..has n.o place in. a Christ-centered group.**

Rememb t, a'.sa leaderyou are to model these guideHnes foryour groupas you lead the discussion.

Break your !arger 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 tr,e small group time by telling about a time (using their discretion) when they made amends with someone who caused thern harm. Then have groups each discuss these questions (available on the CD-ROM).

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

**ASK,**

» What are the components of making amends-in other words, what goes into it?

/\fVlENDS 9-¡

» lt's sometimes obvious what we need to do to make amends to the person we've hurt. What do you do if it's not obvious?

» Has God revealed anyone that you need to make amends to that you didn't include on your Personal lnventory?

**SAY:** We've talked a lot about making amends-now it's time to act on it!

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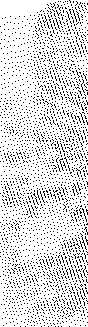
Have your teenagers hold their rock in their hand.

**SAY:** Glose your eyes and feel the weight of your rock in your hand. (Pause) Run your fingers over the rock, exploring its shape and its uniqueness. (Pause) You are unforgettable to God-he knows every one of your quirks and !oves you for your uniqueness. (Pause) Now clench your hand around your rock. (Pause) God loves you with an unending love-he holds you in the strength of his palm. (Pause) Now spend a moment in silence, telling him whatever's on your heart.

Glose by reading the Serenity Prayer together (available on p. 3 of their Student Journal). Keep in rnind, sorne teenagers rnay not want to read aloud with the res\ of the group. That's OK; encourage thern to íocus on the words being shared.

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**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 lf I surrender **to your** will; So that 1

may **be reasonably happy** in this life **and** supremely **happy** with you forever in the **next. AMEN.**

- Reinhold Niebuhr

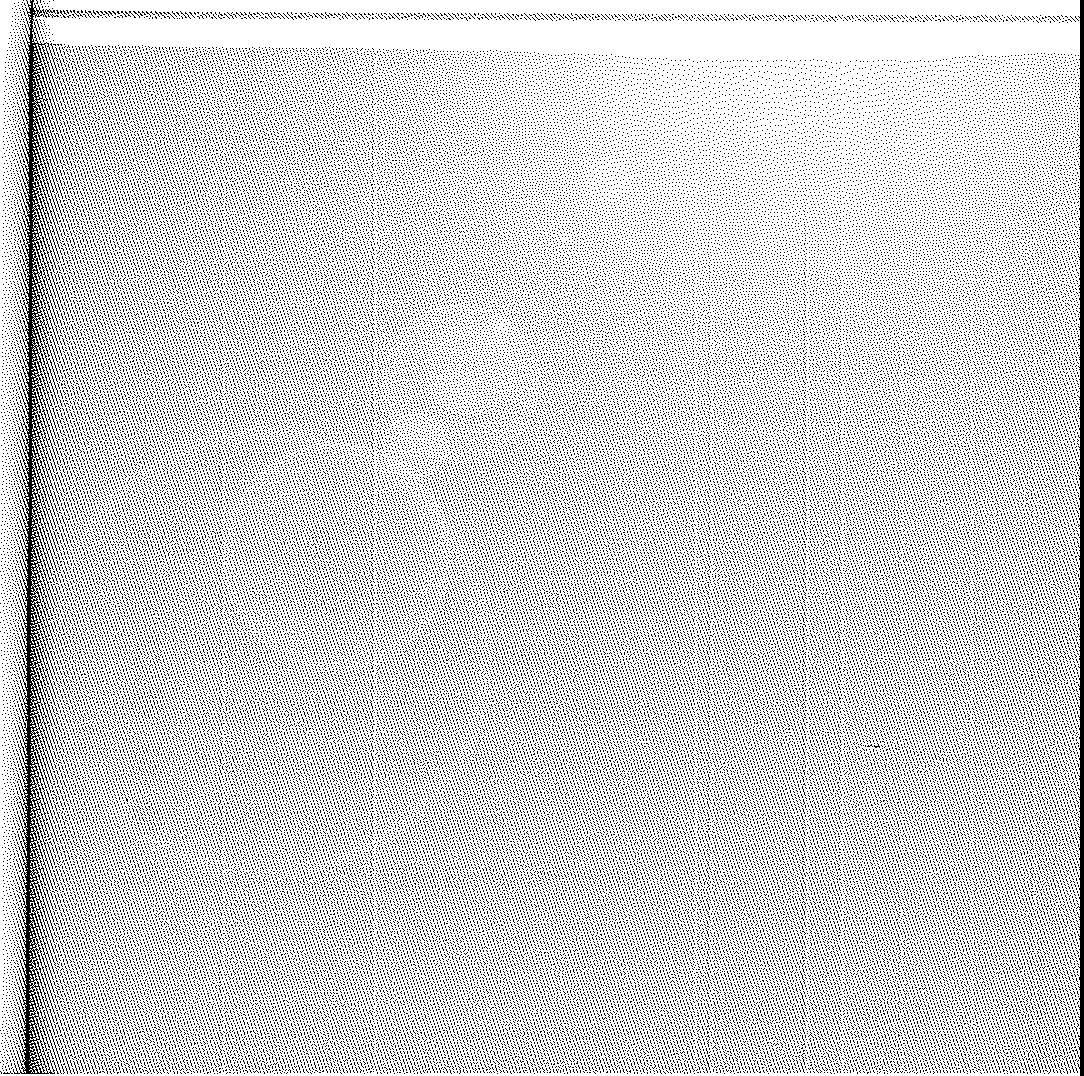
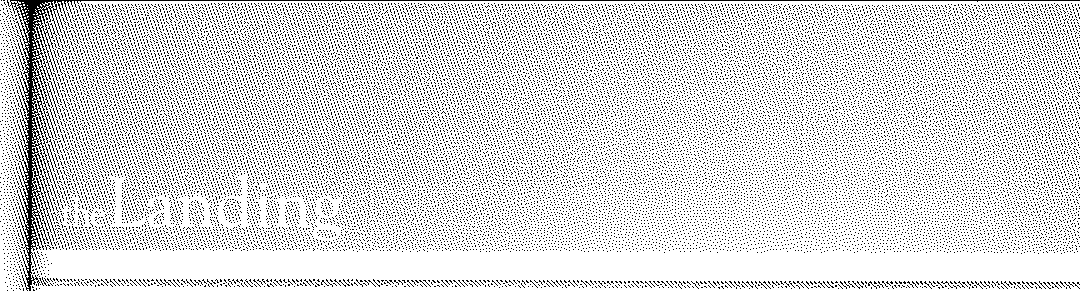
Don't forget to remind your students to spend time with their journals this week, reflecting on what God is teaching them during this journey.

••••• **GONNEG'I,,'I'II\-1,E,**

Serve refreshrnents of sorne kind so kids and leaders

. can hang out and connect. Consider having sorne healthy options for \hose who rnay use food as a way of coping. A ping-pong table, foosball table, or even a few board garnes will give teenagers an excuse to connect.

AMENDS 93

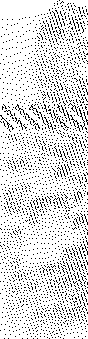


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**FORGIVENESS** lesson thirty-four

**PRINCIPLE 6:**

Evaluate ali my relationships. Offer forgiveness to those who have hurt me and make amends for harm l've done to others, except when to do so would harm them

or others.

**SCRIPTURAL TRUTHS:**

*"Happy are the merciful" (Matthew 51 GNT).*

*"Happy are the peacemakers" (Matthew 5:9 GNT).*

*"Do to others as you would have them do to you" (Luke* 6.*31 NIV).*

*"Theretore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift" (Matthew 5.23-24 NIV).*

**SCHEDULE**

**."."e CONNECT TIME** (15 minutes)

**J"l** WORSHIP (15 minutes)

**lli!I** TEACHING TIME (40 minutes)

**¡ii** SMALL GROUPS (30 minutes)

U CLOSING (5 minutes)

.".". CONNECT TIME (15 minutes)

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**SUPPLIES NEEDED**

» CD player (optional)

» CD with worship music (optional)

» Bibles

» 2 gallons of milk or water

**PREPARATION**

» Pray for your teenagers and your meeting

» Review this lesson

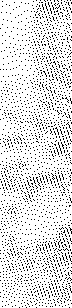
,, Gather supplies

,, Select songs for the Worship Time

••••• **CONNEC:f<TTME**

**Take a second to think about that time, and then we'II begin our time of worship.**

Lead kids in three familiar worship songs. lf 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 the mercifu!" (Matthew 5: 7 GNT) and "Happy are the peacemakers" (Matthew 5.9 GNT).*

Warmly welcome everyone to the group.



Divide your teenagers into groups of three. Then have your kids introduce themselves to the other group members by saying their middle name and how/why

tr1ey have that name. Then have each describe a favorite hobby they enJoyed when they were younger.

**f«J \VO.RSHlB**

**SAY, Tonight, we are going to look at forgiveness. As we begin to our** time **of worship,** think **about** that **word.** Has **there** been **a time when** you've **needed** to **ask** someone-maybe **God-for forgiveness?** Has anyone **ever had to ask you** for your forgiveness?

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* **TEACHING<IIME.**

**SUPPLIES:** 2 gallons o/ milk or water.

Have students form a circle; if you have a large group, they can remain in rows or at their tables. Ask for a volunteer to come forward. Give this person one of the gallons of milk or water, and have this teenager hold the container with both hands- permit the volunteer to hold whichever part of the container is most comfortable.

**ASK:**

» How long do you think you could hold that container in that position?

Then, hand the other container to the teenager. Have your volunteer hold one container in each hard-·out to

FORG!VENESS 99

the sides, with arms extended, so this person looks like

a IIT.11

ASK:

" How about now? How long do you think you could stay like that?

Allow the volunteer to end whenever he or she has become too tired. Ask for more volunteers. Do this **for** 10-15 minutes-give as many students as possible a chance to participate. lt won't be easy for most'

**SAY:** That wasn't easy, was it? 1 don't think many of us could have lasted very long like that. Imagine having to live your lile like that. Imagine if this week I asked you to carry around those two gallons everywhere you went. lt would be exhausting, wouldn't it?

The thing is, you and I carry heavy stuff around with us all of the time. The Bible calls these things burdens. Maybe your burdens are your worries.

Maybe you're carrying around the knowledge that you've messed up in sorne pretty big ways. Maybe you're lugging around a grudge against sorneone who has hurt you. Whatever your burden is, wouldn't it feel so rnuch better to get rid of it? A couple of weeks ago we began the process of letting go of things that were holding us back frorn becorning

the people God has planned for us to be. Today we're going to look at how we can begin to let go of our burdens.

Have someone read Matthew 11:28-30.

**ASK:**



"What does this verse tell us about Jesus' ability to help us carry our burdens?

" Why do you think Jesus tells us he is gentle and hurnble?

**SAY:** Again, sorne of our burdens rnay be the wrong things we have done or the wrong things that have been done to us. When we talk about forgiveness, we're really talking about two things. We're talking about our need for forgiveness, and we're talking about our need to forgive other people. lt's likely that you've been hurt in your life-rnaybe really badly.

Maybe you've been abused or neglected or rnade to feel inferior. Because of this hurt, you rnay have

decided to hold a grudge against the person who has hurt you. Rernernber the rnilk (or water) containers?

How uncornfortable was it to hold on to those things? lf you and I are going to get better, if we're going to be able to find freedorn frorn our hurts,

hang-ups, and habits, we are going to have to forgive those that have hurt us.

But why? One big reason is that you and I have needed and will need forgiveness.

Have sorneone read Rorna11s 5: 8.

**SAY:** That verse tells us that Jesus died for us befare we got our acts together. Jesus died to

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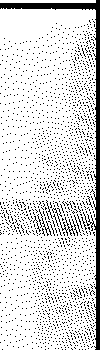
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101

forgive LIS. Let me change that, JesLis died to forgive me. JesLis died to forgive yoLI.

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**SMALL GRQil::J;:il?S,**

And he did this over 2,000 years ago, long befare any of LIS were even born. He paid the price to forgive

OLir sins.

ASK:

» lf yoLI have given yoLir life to JesLis do yoLI feel that forgiveness?

» Why is it hard to accept that forgiveness?

**SAY:** So, if JesLis has forgiven LIS for the times we've blown it, we need to be willing to forgive other people when they've messed up, too. l'm not saying this will be easy, but it is necessary. Colossians 3:13 says, "Be gentle and ready to forgive; never hold grudges. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so yoLI must forgive others."

**The power to forgive those that have hurt us comes from Jesus and his forgiveness. Right now yoLI**

**may not feel like forgiving those that have hurt yoLI. But you can begin the process of letting go of the grudge. Let's spend a couple of minutes praying silently, asking God to give LIS the ability to forgive.**

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Prior·to .begiririn Y;Uf.frrJ ll.\_m8.PS·[ead trroügh the following Srpall-G'.oup Guidelineswitb your teenagers,

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1. **Please avoíd ALL Cross tall<.**
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3. atuta **\_flhd prote9t?ººRYrnity** apdcortidertfality.
4. **void offensive language; it has no\_place in a Christ-centered group.**

Remember, as a leader you are to model these guidelines for your gróup as yoµ 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 forgave someone. or received forgiveness from someone. Then have groups each discuss these questions (avai!able on the CD-ROM)

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

**ASK:**

» Is it sometimes hard to feel God's forgiveness when we've blown it? Why or why not?

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» **What's hard about offering forgiveness when you've been hurt? What's freeing about** it?



» **What's hard about receiving forgiveness** when

**you've hurt someone? What's freeing** about it?

» **Have you forgiven yourself far the mistakes** and

**bad choices from your past?**

» **Is forgiveness dependent on the person** who's **done the wrong being willing to say** they are **sorry first? Why or why not?**

The leader of the group should close this time with a prayer that offers God thanks for the forgiveness he's already offered to us in our lives.

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.\_ **C.LQSIN.G.**

**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.**

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

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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 al! things right lf I surrender to your will; So that 1

may be reasonably happy in this life and supremely happy with you forever in the next. AMEN.

·· Reinhold Niebuhr

••••• CONNEC'I 'IlME.

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

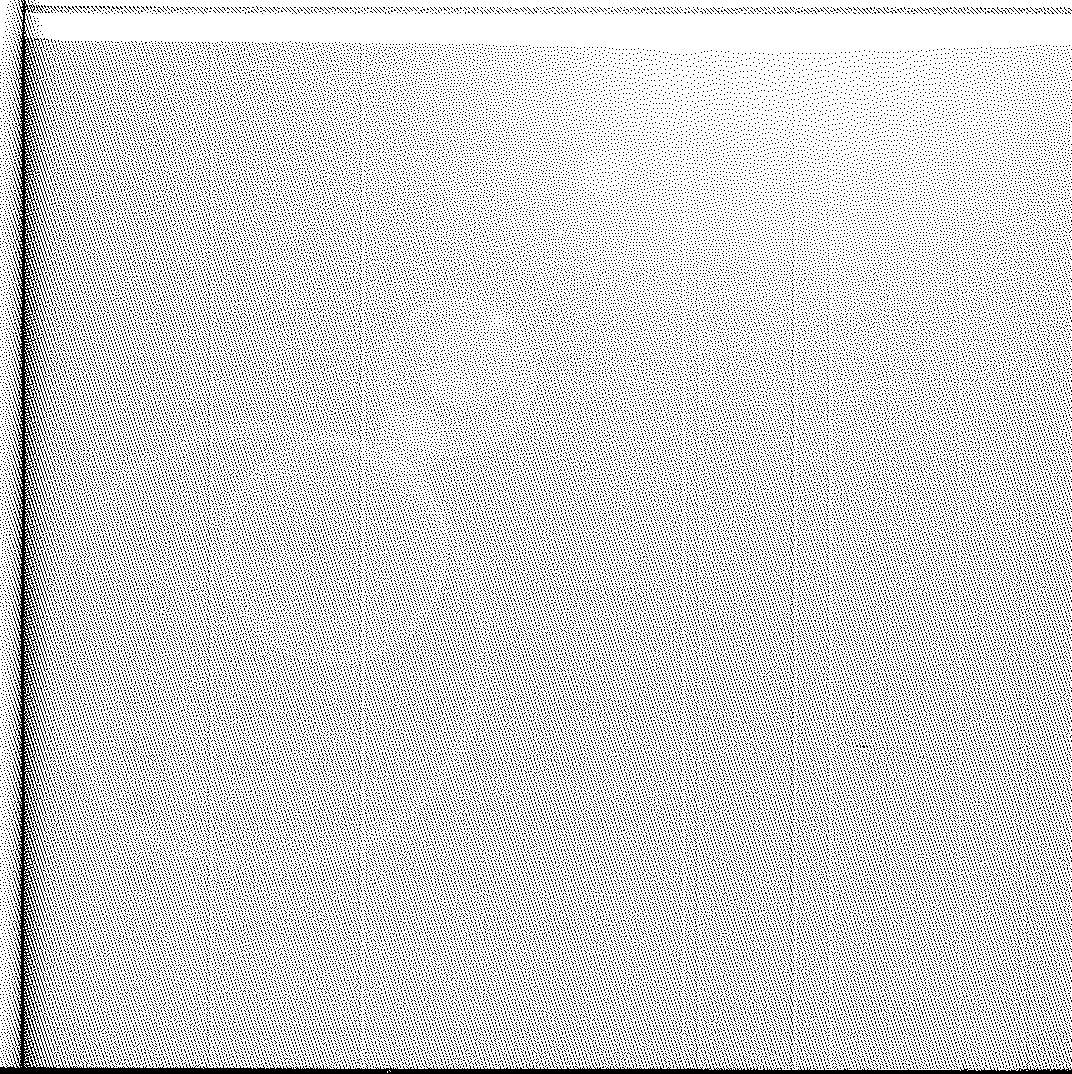
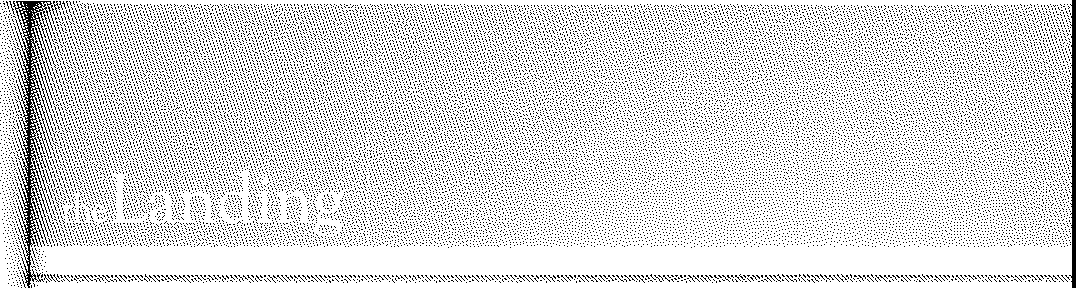
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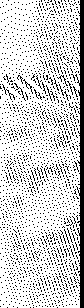
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**FORGIVENESS** lesson thirty-five



**PRINCIPLE 6:**

Evaluate ali my relationships. Offer forgiveness to those who have hurt me and make amends for harm l've done to others, except when to do so would harm them

or others.

**SCRIPTURAL TRUTHS:**

*"Happy are the* mere/tu/" *(Matthew 5:7 GNT).*

*"Happy are the peacemakers" (Matthew 5:9 GNT).*

*"Do to others as you would have them do to you" (Luke* 6. *31 NIV).*

*"Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift" (Matthew* 5.*23-24 NIV)*

**SCHEDULE**

.".". **CONNECT TIME** (15 minutes)

***n* WORSHIP** (1O minutes)

**llill TEACHJNG TIME** (35 minutes)

**1**•**11**•**111• VIDEO TIME** (1O minutes)

¡¡¡ **SMALL GROUPS** (30 minutes)

**u CLOSING** (5 minutes)

.".". **CONNECT TIME** (15 minutes)

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**SUPPLIES NEEDED**

» CD player (optional)

» CD with worship music (optional)

» TV and DVD player

» The Landing DVD 3

» 3X5 cards- plenty for each teenager

» Pens or pencils

**PREPARATION**

» Pray for your teenagers and your meeting

» Review this lesson

» Gather supplies

» Select songs for the Worship Time

••••• **CONNEC,T TIME**

Warmly welcome everyone to the group.

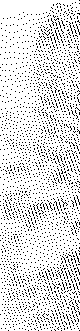
Have your teenagers and adult leaders stand in a circle and, one by one, quickly respond to a bizarra question. Each person gets just two seconds to think befare responding-the whole group should count in unison "One thousand one. one thousand two" to count off the two seconds each person is allowed. lf 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.

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**ASK:**

» **What's your favorite product that contains milk?**



» **lf you were a building, what would you be?**

» **What's your favorite underarm deodorant, and which pit do you hit first?**

» **What's your favorite chore around the house?**

» **What's the grossest food you've ever eaten?**

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

***n* WOl SHlP**

Read aloud John 21:15-17, then **SAY:** This interchange between Jesus and Peter happened after Jesus' resurrection from the dead, on a beach where Jesus cooked breakfast for Peter and the other disciples who'd been out fishing.

**ASK:**

» Why would Jesus ask Peter three times whether or not he *loved* him?

**SAY:** Maybe Jesus was giving Petera chance to affirm his love three times, because Peter had denied Jesus three times before Jesus was crucified. lt would be just like Jesus to want to "complete the circle of forgiveness" for Peter. Jesus is kind and good and wise-and he's on our side. Let's respond by telling him now how much we love him.

FORGIVENESS 111



Then lead kids in three familiar worship songs. lf you have a youth band, invite the group to lead your

teenagers in worship. Otherwise, play the songs frorn a CD and encourage kids to sing along-or sirnply play the rnusic as everyone sits and thinks about the words of

the songs.

Then have everyone read aloud, together, this week's beatitudes: *"Happy are the mercifu/" (Matthew* 5.· 7 *GNT)* and *"Happy are the peacemakers" (Matthew 5:9 GNT) .*

* **TEACHING.TlME.**

**SUPPLIES:** 3X5 cards, pens or pencils.

**SAY:** Last week we began looking at forgiveness. We talked about how ali of us have people in our lives that we have hurt and that have hurt us. We

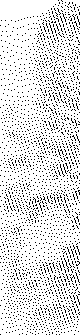
saw that our power to forgive !hose that have hurt us comes from the forgiveness we have received from Jesus. Today we are going to work on releasing \hose who have hurt us and work toward forgiveness.

The thing is, it isn't always safe or even possible to offer our forgiveness faceto face. For example, if you've been abused by someone, in arder far you to find relief from that situation, you will need to forgive that person. But that doesn't mean that you need to open yourself up to be hurt again.

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Or it could just be that the person that has harmed you has moved or that your offering of forgiveness could now create harm. Whatever the reason, offering forgiveness can be more an attitude of the heart than a face-to-face conversation.

Have the students each grab a stack of 3X5 cards and a pen or pencil. You rnay want to have extra cards stacked around the room so students can grab more



if necessary. Have students each find a quiet place to havo sorne room to thernselves. Also, have thern take out their inventories.

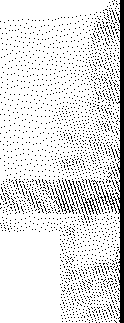
**SAY:** For the next few minutes we're going to spend sorne time getting ready to forgive those people

that have hurt us. The truth is, offering forgiveness isn't always a one-time event. Sometimes we need to offer forgiveness severa! times to the people that have hurt us. Today may be the first time, or at least the first step.

Go ahead and look at your inventory sheets. lf you don't have an inventory sheet, or this is your first time, think about someone who has harmed you in the past. lt could be a friend, paren!, family member, or someone else. We're going to spend sorne time being quiet. Begin this time by praying, asking God to help you begin to forgive the people from Column 1 of your inventory sheet. Next, look over those names and write a name down on one side of the card. Turn that card over and simply write, "I forgive you." Try to really mean it, too. lf you don't feel like

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\\\",'



**you're able to even write that down yet, write,** "I want

**to forgive you." Sometimes the first step** is to want

**to forgive.**

Allow the students to take sorne time to do this; don't rush it. ll someone linishes quickly, encourage that person to come up with a plan to offer the lorgiveness lace to face, if possible.

**SAY:** Make sure you put keep your cards in a safe place, but in a place where you can see them for the next few days. Flip through the cards and ask Jesus for the help to forgive the people whose names are on them. Every time you read one of the names say to yourself, "I forgive you."

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1. **Please avoidALL crosstafk;**
2. **Weare.hée toáu porf()Weanother.**

**1· \/a.fue andftot.e?ttl P11Y,lllitr•ª 1 : ..Prflcl rtiality.**

**5. VOicl offersive J11n\_guage; Jthas no place in a Christ-centered·group.**

. emernbe¡,i S.fJe d (YP . retornOclfl tQé e guidelines for your group .as you .lead the dlscussion.

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VIDE.O.TIME

Alter 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

Set up a DVD player and TV in your meeting area. Ahead

of time, cue up the video "Joseph" from DVD 3 in the kit. Play the video-this one is *8A* 1 minutes long.

questions (available on the CD-ROM) about the video, witr1 the intent to draw out personal stories from the kids in the group

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

**ASK:**

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

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» **lf you had been in Joseph's place, how do** you



**think you would've reacted to your brothers?**

» **Why didn't Joseph immediately reveal** who he

**was to his brothers?**

» **Describe a time when you forgave someone­ what led up to that decision, and what happened after you forgave?**

» **Why can it be hard to forgive those who** have

**hurt us?**

At the end of this discussion, the leader should close in prayer, thanking God for cleansing us frorn our sins.

**fl CLO.SIJ>IG**

**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.**

Glose by reading the Serenity Prayer together (available on p. 3 of their Student Journal). Keep in rnind, sorne teenagers rnay not want to read aloud with the rest of the group. That's OK; encourage thern to focus on the words beirig shared.

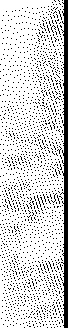
God, grant me the serenity

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;

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**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**

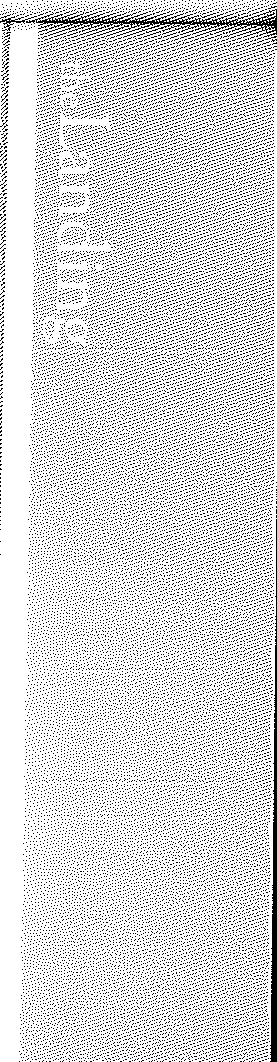
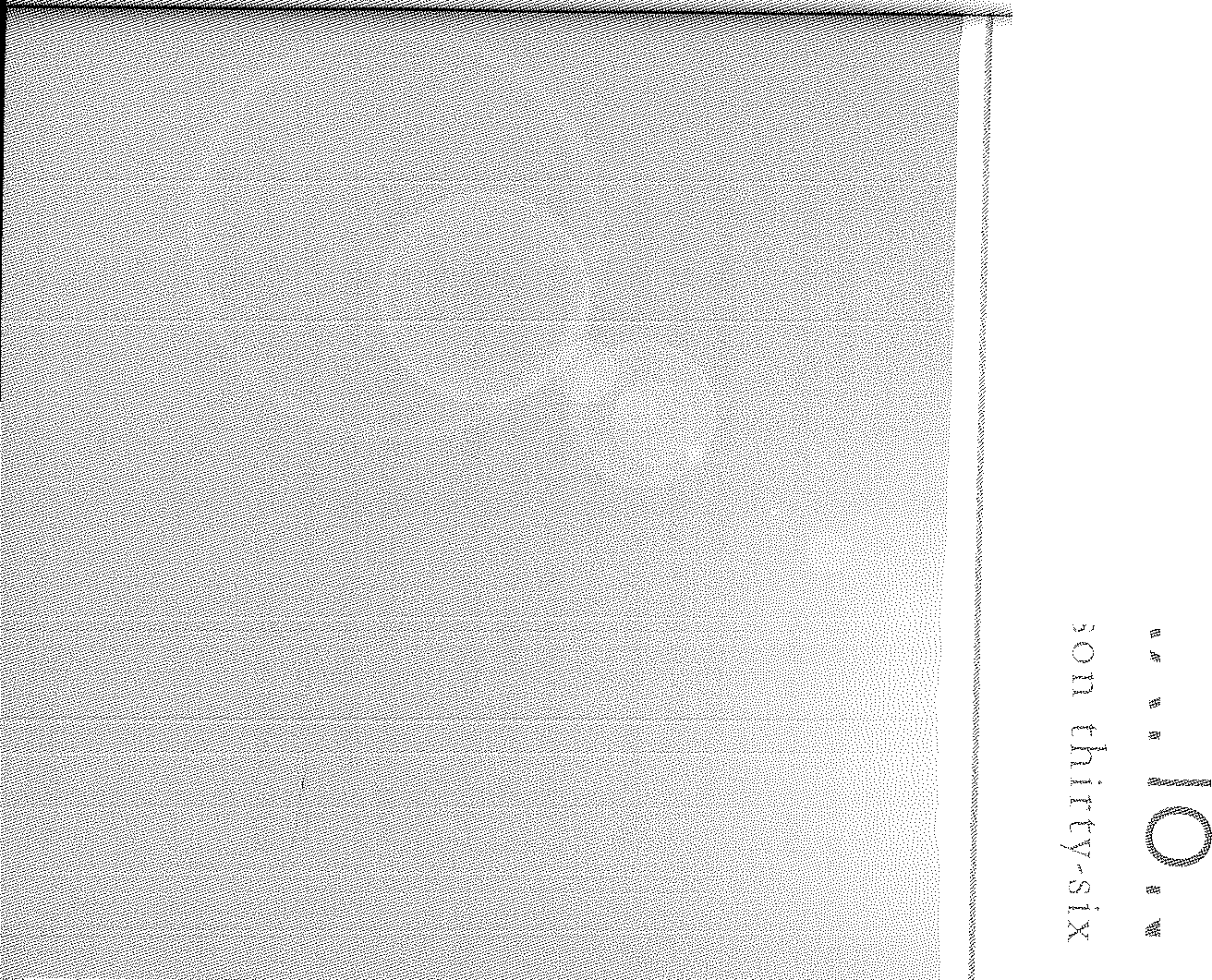
lf I **surrender to your will; So that 1 may be reasonably happy in this lite and supremely happy with you forever in the next. AMEN.**

- Reinhold Niebuhr

••• •• **CONNEC.'.I.<IIME**

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

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lt's importan! to stop and celebrate with your teenagers ! Use this week to do something fun with your group. Not only will your teenagers feel a sense of accomplishment, it's also a great opportunity to create community and friendships amongst your group.

Here are a few suggestions of ways to celebrate:

» **Movie Night:** Bring sorne snacks, pizza, soda, water, and other suppl1es 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 sorne planning ahead of time. lf you have an amateur, college, or professional sports team nearby, pian on taking your group to one of their games.

» **Game Night:** Encourage teenagers to bring the1r favorite games with them. Again, make sure that the games they choose to bring are appropriate for your setting.

» Family Fun Park: lf 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

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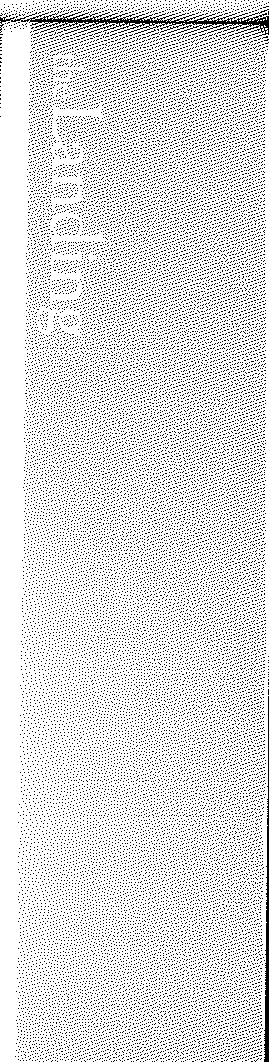
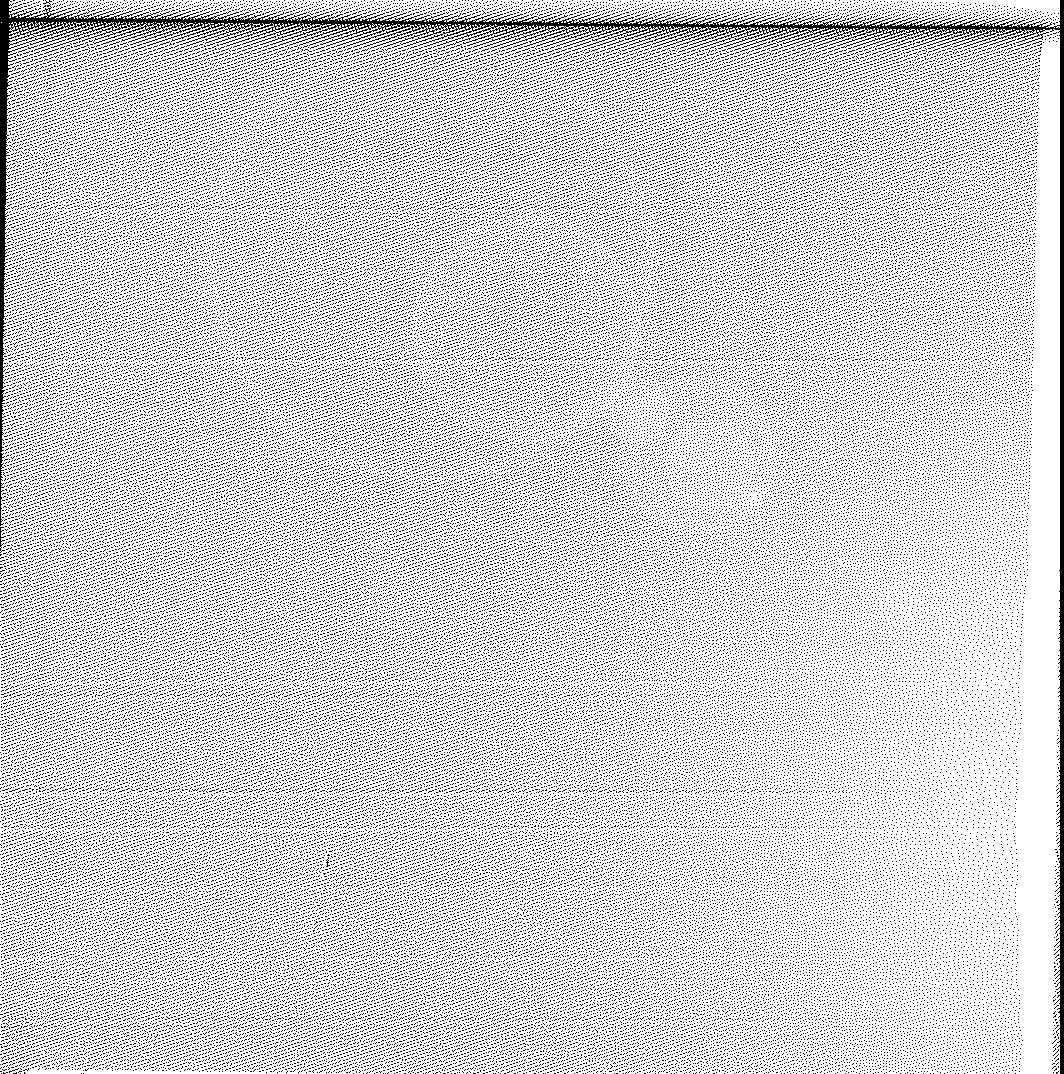
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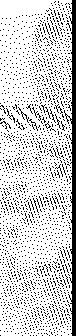
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**GRACE** lesson thirty-seven

**PRINCIPLE 6:**

Evaluate ali my relationships. Offer forgiveness to those who have hurt me and make amends for harm l've done to others, except when to do so would harm them

or others.

**SCRIPTURAL TRUTHS:**

*"Happy are the merciful" (Malthew 5:7 GNT). "Happy are the peacemakers" (Matthew 5.·9 GNT).*

*"Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift" (Matthew 5:23-24 NIV).*

**SCHEDULE**

.".". **CONNECT TIME** (15 minutes)

***n* WORSHIP** (15 minutes)

**11111 TEACHING TIME** (40 minutes)

**¡ii SMALL GROUPS** (30 minutes)

**Q CLOSING** (5 minutes)

.".". **CONNECT TIME** (15 minutes)

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**SUPPLIES NEEDED**

» CD player (optional)

» CD with worship music (optional)

» 3X5 cards-one per teenager " Pens or pencils

» Sheets of newsprint, butcher paper, or poster

board-one per three teenagers " Markers

,, Copies of the "Amazing Grace" lyrics (available on

the CD-ROM)

**PREPARATION**

» Pray for your teenagers and your meeting

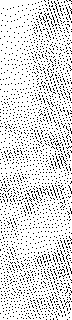
» Review this lesson " Gather supplies

» Select songs for the Worship Time

* Make copies of the handout with "Amazing Grace" lyrics-one per student (available on the CD-ROM)

believe. For example: "Where is your most favorite place you've been?" Or "Do you have any phobias?"

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 a 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) alter every answer from the Hot Seat person.

***Jl* WORSHIP**

**SUPPLIES:** copies of the "Amazing Grace" lyrics handout.

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**CONNECT TIME**

Give each teenager a copy of the lyrics to "Amazing Grace" by John Newton. There are six verses, so count

**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 creativo question on their card that's designed to discover what their friends in the group think, feel, and

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off by sixes until everyone in your group has a number. Tell thern their number now corresponds to that number verse in the song-for example, if a teenager is a "three" then his assigned verse in the song is number three.

Then have your kids rewrite their assigned verse in their own words, giving them a few minutes to do so.

Then have a volunteer who was assigned verse one stand and read the rewritten verse aloud. Go around the

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circle from one to six until the last person has shared. lf you have a large group, you could ask for a few teenagers to share what they wrote.



Then lead kids in one or two familiar worship songs. lf you have a youth band, invite the group to lead your teenagers in worship. Otherwise, play the songs from a CD and encourage kíds to síng 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 beatitudes: *"Happy are the mere/ful" (Matthew 5:* 7 *GNT)* and *"Happy are the peacemakers" (Matthew* 5.9 *GNT) .*

* + **TEACHINJ;;,'.J'JME,.**

**SUPPLIES:** sheets of newsprint, butcher paper, or poster board: and markers.

**ASK:**

» In the last two weeks, who has received a grade for a test or school project?

» Did you feel better or worse about yourself

because of that grade? Why?

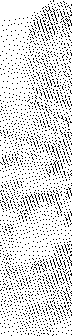
After you've heard from a few of your teenagers, **SAY:** The big question lurking behind the grades we gel is often, "Do I measure up?" Grades have a lot of

power over us, typically-it's easy to believe that the

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**grades we get for *what we do* are actually grades for**

***who we are,* right?**



Form tríos, and give each group a marker and a sheet of newsprínt, butcher paper, or poster board. Then **SAY: In your group, selecta celebrity to grade-it could be a movie or TV star, a musician, a politician, oran athlete. You decide on the grading criteria, and then**

**award that person the actual grade. Be prepared to defend your grade and the criteria you used to arrive at** it. **Use the newsprint and markers** to **make a giant­ size report card to present.**

As groups work, walk around and **ASK** questíons such as:

» Why did you choose that as a grading criterion?

» How can you be sure you're grading fairly?

» How do teachers ensure fairness in grading?

After 1O minutes or so, ask groups to each choose a spokesperson Then **SAY:** Each spokesperson

will present his or her group's celebrity grade and criteria. After the presentation, others who disagree with the grade can challenge it. Any member of the presenting group can respond to the challenges.

Alter each group has presented and then defended íts celebrity grade and crítería, **ASK:**

» What positive value do grades have?

» What negative impact can they have?

» How much do grades really determine a person's worth?

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» **How much do your answers reflect reality?**

Then have trias explore what God has to say about grading. Give each trio one of the following Scripture references to look up and discuss, then develop a report card cr'1terion based on it-in other words, how might this verse or passage be used to evaluate or grade us

in lile? The groups should use the other side of the newsprint, butcher paper, or poster board for \his:

» 1 Corinthians 3: 8

» 1 Corinth1ans 15:58

» Ephesians 6:5-8

» Philippians 1:21-22

» 2 Timothy 2·.15

11 you have more than flve groups o/ three, s1mply duplicate assigned passages.

Have trias each write their Scripture reference on top of their newsprint, butcher paper, or poster board, followed by the grading criteria extracted from the reference. Then have a spokesperson from each group read its Scripture reference and present the group's grading criteria.

Then **ASK:**

» How do these "grading criteria" compare to the typical ways you're graded in life?

,, lf teachers graded your schoolwork the same

way God grades our lives, how would you do? Explain.

,, What's your definition of "grace"?

,, How is that definition similar to and different from your definition of "grading"?

Then **SAY:** Let me share a few facts you've maybe never heard. Albert Einstein didn't speak until he was 3 years old. Thomas Edison was excused from school because he was deemed unteachable.



Walt Disney got fired from one of his early jobs for "having no good ideas." lf they had listened to their "grades," we might never have known the theory of relativity, or enjoyed electric lighting, or enjoyed any of those classic Disney movies. The only person who can grade us fairly is the One who made us-and Goduses grace as his "grading criteria." The key Scripture truth we look to here at The Landing is 2 Corinthians 12:9-10: "But he said to me, 'My grace is enough for you. When you are weak, my power

is made perfect in you.' So I am very happy to brag about my weaknesses. Then Christ's power can live in me. For this reason I am happy when I have weaknesses, insults, hard times, sufferings, and

ali kinds of troubles for Christ. Because when I am weak, then I am truly strong."

**ASK:**

» Why does our weakness make us strong?

,, Grace means that we're consciously dependent upan God instead of ourselves. What's one way you've learned to depend on God instead of yourself?

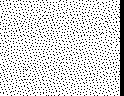
Clase by reading Romans 8:35-39 with your group.

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**ASK:**

,, **Why are "bad grades" so hard to accept?**



,, **Whose "grade" means the most to you-parents, friends, teachers, or another specific group of people? Why?**

,, **Why do so many of us seem to struggle with**

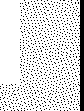
**receiving grace?**

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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 smali group time by telling about a time (using their discretion) when they gave or received grace. Then have groups each discuss these questions (available on the CD-ROM).

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

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* **Why does it so often seem better to us to work our way out of our problems, rather than receive God's grace for them?**
* **Do you grade others the same way you grade yourself? Why or why not?**
* **How is God's "grading system" different from your own?**

The leader of the group sr1ould close this time with a prayer that offers God thanks for his grace.

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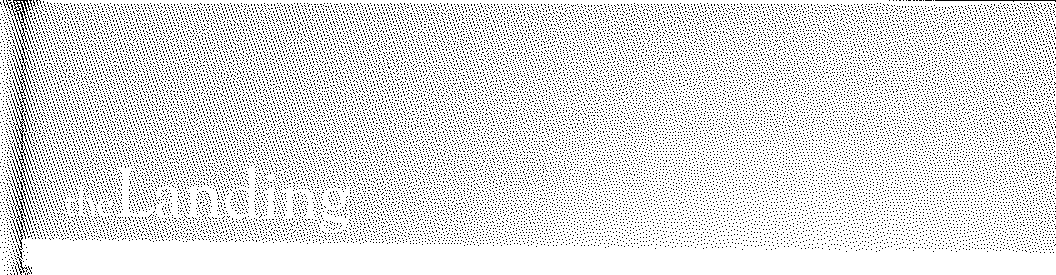
**Don't forget to remind your students to spend time with their journals this week, reflecting on what God is teaching them during this journey.**

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

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**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.**

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**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 ali things right**

lf I **surrender to your will; So that 1 may be reasonably happy in this life and supremely happy with you forever in the next. AMEN.**

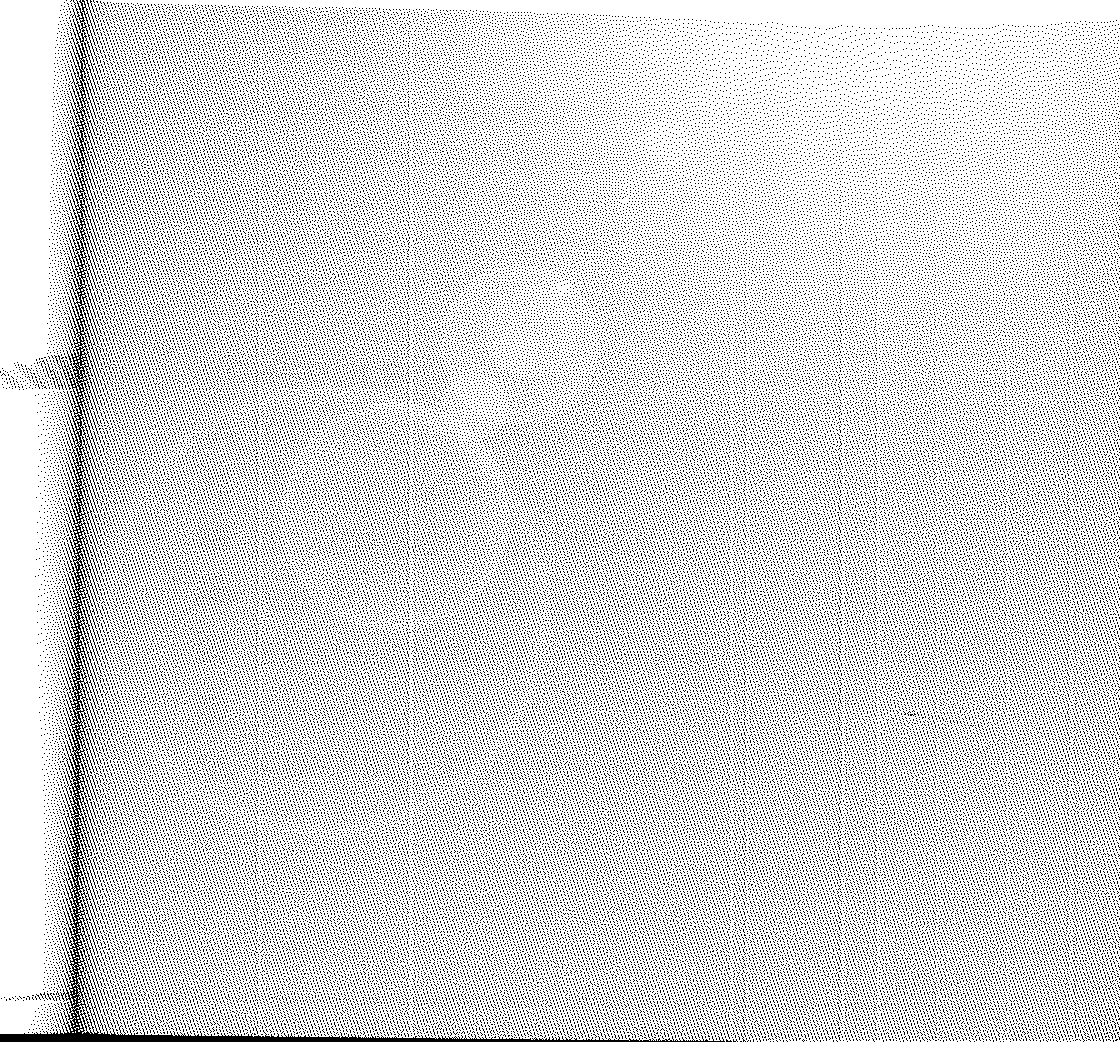
* Reinhold Niebuhr

••••• **CONNECT TIME**

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

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**GRACE** lesson thirty-eight



**PRINCIPLE 6:**

Eva!uate ali my relationships. O/fer forgiveness to those who have hurt me and make amends for harm l've done to others, except when to do so would harm them

or others.

**SCRIPTURAL TRUTHS:**

*"Happy are the mere/ful" (Matthew 5:* 7 *GNT) "Happy are the peacemakers" (Matthew 5.9 GNT}.*

*"Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front* o/ *the altar. First go and be reconciled* ***to*** *your brother; then come and offer your* ***gift"*** *(Matthew 5. 23-24 NIV)*

**SCHEDULE**

*::.* **CONNECT TIME** (15 minutes)

**J'l WORSHIP (1** O minutes)

**llli!l TEACHING TIME** (30 minutes)

**1**•**11**•**11• VIDEO TIME** (15 minutes)

**¡i¡ SMALL GROUPS** (30 minutes)

**fl CLOSING** (5 minutes)

••••• **CONNECT TIME** (15 minutes)

GllACE 137

**SUPPLIES NEEDED**

» CD player (optional)

» CD with worship music (optional)

» TV and DVD player

» The Landing DVD 3

» Paper

» Pens or pencils

» Bibles

» A few blindfolds-you can use old T-shirts, bandanas, or other material

>> Envelopes -one per teenager

**PREPARATION**

» Pray **for** your teenagers and your meeting

» Review tl1is lesson

» Gather supplies

» Select songs for the Worship Time

Tell teams they have three minutes to create their lists, so they need to work quickly. Warn them when they have one minute left, and when they have 30 seconds left.

When time is up, find out which team has the longest list and ask team members to read the "uncommon" things they listed.



Then **ASK:**

» **How easy or hard was it to discover things** that **you and your team members don't have in common?**

» **Do** our **uncommon things make** it **harder or easier to build community here** at **The Landing?**

» **How can our uncommon things actually draw us closer together?**

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**CONNEC.T.TlME**

**J'l WORSHIP.**

Lead kids in three familiar worship songs. lf you have

**SUPPLIES:** paper, and pens or pencils. Warmly welcome everyone to the group.

Form teams **of** three. Give each team a sheet of paper and a pen or pencil. Challenge teams to list things members don't have in common-things that make each person unique. **For** example, they may have been born in diiforent states, might go to different schools, or might like different music.

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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 the mere/fu/" (Matthew* 5.·*7 GNT) and "Happy are the peacemakers" (Matthew 5.·9 GNT)*

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* + xiiEEACHI (} TIME

**SUPPLIES:** Bibles, a few blindfolds, paper, envelopes, and pens or pencils.

Pile the blindfolds just outside of your meeting room door.

Explain that in this lesson at The Landing you'II dive into the story of a blind man. Ask one teenager to leave trie room, pickup a blindlold outside, and put it on while outside ol the room--and then come back in blindlolded. When that person enters, the other kids who haven't been blindlolded yet should give instructions on how

to return to his or her seat. (11 you have a large group, have oniy a lew kids do this activity lor the sake ol time.) Once that person is seated, have the next person go out ol the room to be blindfolded.

Alter a number ol kids have come in blindlolded and made their way to their seats, have them remove their blindfolds, then **ASK:**

» **Other than not being able to see, what was hard about this activity?**

Alter your teenagers respor1d, **SA Y: Blindness is an obvious limitation. But each one of us has**

**limitations-things that hamper us or challenge us.**

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**ASK:**

» What are sorne less obvious limitations that people have to face in life?

After kids respond, **SAY:** As we listen to a story about a blind man, remember we ali have things we wish we could change about ourselves. We ali have limitations. We're ali in need of God's grace.

Read aloud Mark 10:46-48, and then **ASK:**

» Bartimaeus asks Jesus for merey. What does "merey" mean to you?

Then **ASK:**

» Bartimaeus was determined to see Jesus. Why do many people decide to just live with their limitations instead of stopping at nothing to get whole or healed?

Read aloud Mark 10 49-51, then **ASK:**

» lt's obvious what Bartimaeus wants-so why does Jesus basically require him to state the obvious?

Read aloud Mark 10:51-52, then **ASK:**

» Bartimaeus is free to go, but he decides to follow Jesus instead-why?

**SAY:** Notice that Jesus heals him and tells him to "go"-no strings attached. Sometimes we think we have to earn Jesus' favor to get his merey, but

GRACE 141

instead he gives us undeserved kindness. We don't have to "pay him back" for what he's done for us­ his grace is a free gift, and he wants our response to be something we offer freely.

says, "Be gentle and ready to forgive; never hold grudges. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others."

**Jesus isn't asking just Bartimaeus, "What do you want me to do for you?" He's asking us** the

••••

**VIDEQ\TIME...**

**same question.**

Give each kid a piece of paper, an envelope, and a peri or pencil. Then ask everyone to write a letter to Jesus. answering the question he asked Bartimaeus: "What do you want me to do for you?" Have kids each put 1heir letters in an envelope, seal it, and pul their name on it. Reassure your teenagers that their letters will remain sealed, and that no one will read these letters. Collect the envelopes and hold on to them until the final meeting of The Landing-then give them back to your teenagers to open. At that time, you'II be inviting them to share any "answer" they've received.

**SAY:** Jesus wants to heal us, to give us the grace we need to experience a right relationship with him. He wants a relationship with us. However, his grace is a free gift-it isn't something we can earn. God loved you and me while we were still out there sinning. Romans 5:8 says, "God demonstrates his own !ove for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." We can, in turn, lave others because God first loved us. We can also forgive

others because God first forgave us. Colossians 3:13

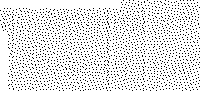
Set up a DVD player and TV in your meeting area. Ahead of time, cue up the video "Grace, We Just Don't Get

lt" from DVD 3 in the kit Play the video-this one is 15:25 long.

iM•• **SMALL GRQUPS**

Prior to begin:n1hg y ur small group; reád)h(OU?hithe follo,wing Small Group.Guidelines•withyourt em:rgers.

1. **F6cüs on yoúr ti\Nhthóúghts ahd fééiiri s wh'en**

**sharing with the gt6op.**

1. **Please ávoid ALL cross talk.**
2. **\_ We are heretp áupport óne á other.**
3. **Valoe an ¡:irotecfanonyn,ity nd onfh:leritiálity.**
4. **Avoid offensive language; ithasno place in •a Christ-,centered group.**

Rémember,. as a 1eaderyou are to modél these guidefines for yoUr group ás you leád fhe disSussioh.

After the whole group has watched the video, split into your smali groups, with a conversation leader in each one. Have your conversation leaders ask these

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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 rnay want to rnodel sorne of these answers for your group by sharing frorn your own experience,

**ASK:**

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

>> **What's something about grace that you "just don't gel"?**

» **When have you experienced grace from someone-something that made a big difference in your life?**

» **When have you offered grace to someone­ something that changed that person's life?**

» **When have you "tasted" God's grace-what happened, and how is it still impacting**

**you today?**

At the end of this discussion, the leader should clase in prayer, thanking God for his grace,

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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.

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Glose by reading the Serenity Prayer together (available on p, 3 of their Student Journal), Keep in rnind, sorne teenagers may not want to read aloud with the rest of the group. That's OK; encourage thern to /ocus 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 al 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 ali things right lf I surrender to your will; So that 1

may be reasonably happy in this life and supremely happy with you forever in the next. AMEN.

- Reinhold Niebuhr

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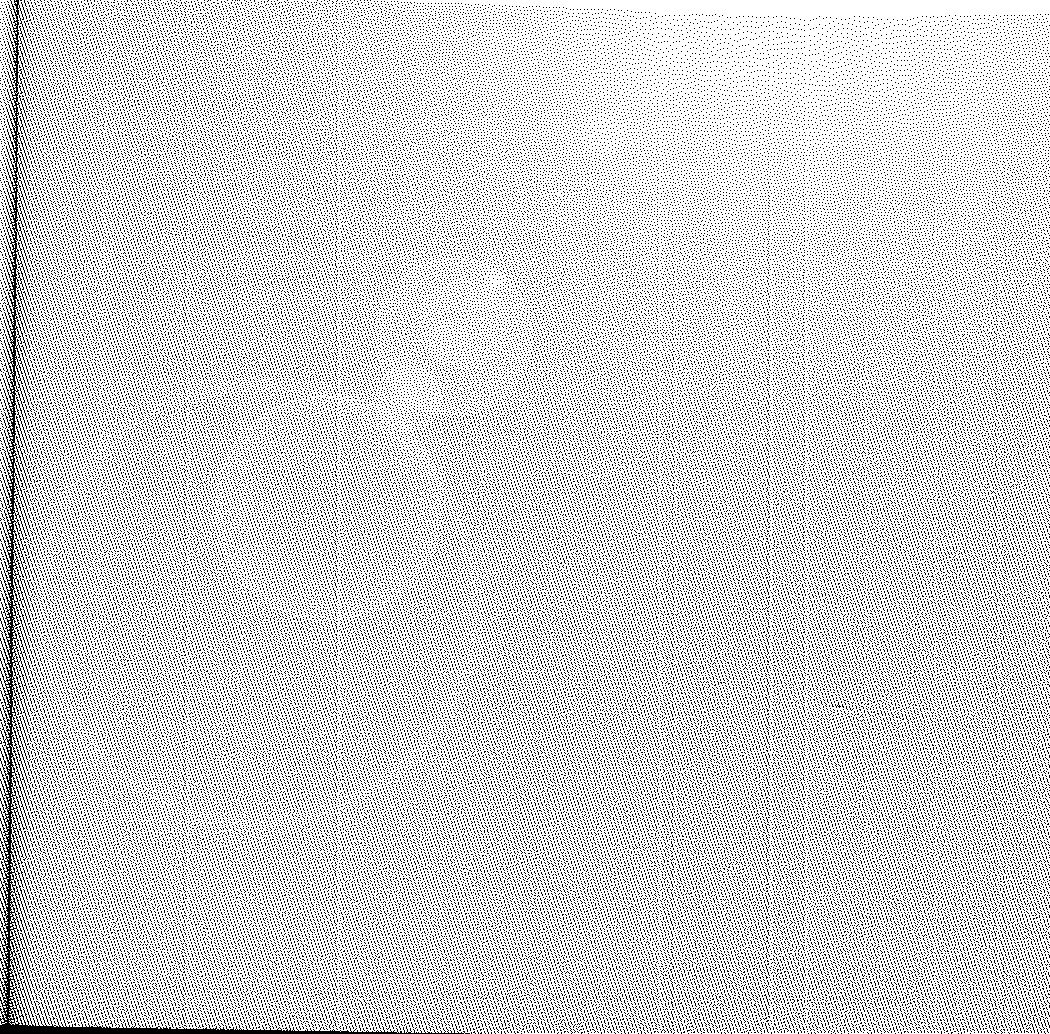
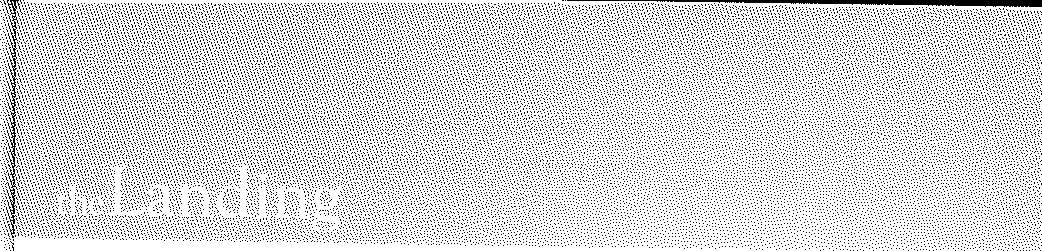
Serve refreshrnents of sorne kind so kids and leaders can hang out and connect Consider having sorne healthy options for those who may use food as a way of coping. A ping-pong table, foosball table, or even a few board games will give teenagers an excuse to connect

GRACE 145

P Rt\YE R STATI Oi\l S

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**PRAYER STATIONS** lesson rhirty-nine



**PRINCIPLE 6:**

Evaluate ali my relationships. O/fer forgiveness to those who have hurt me and make amends for harm l've done to others, except when to do so would harm them

or others.

**SCRIPTURAL TRUTHS:**

*"Happy are the mercíful" (Matthew 5'7 GNT}. "Happy are the peacemakers" (Matthew 5:9 GNT).*

*"Therefore, íf you are offeríng your gíft at the altar and there remember that your brother has somethíng agaínst you, leave your gíft there in front of the altar. Fírst go and be reconciled to your brother; then* come *and offer your gift" (Matthew 5.23-24 NIV).*

**SCHEDULE**

IJlill **PRAYER STATIONS** (90 minutes)

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**CONNECT TIME** (30 minutes)

PRAYER STATIONS 14

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**SUPPLIES NEEDED** 1

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* CD player (optional)
* CD with soft background music (optional) 1

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* Station lnstructions (one for each station) 1

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* Newsprint (or butcher papar) 1
* Tape 1

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* Markers 1

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* Pens ]
* Bread, cup, and juice for communion

**PREPARATION** j

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* Pray for your teenagers and your meeting
* Review this lesson " Gather supplies
* Set up each station
  + **PRAYER STATIONS.**

**SUPPLIES:** CD player, CD with soft background music; station instructions (one for each station): newsprint (or butcher papar); tape; markers; pens; and bread, cup, and Juice for communion.

As you play soft background music, warmly welcome everyone to the group.

**SAY:** This is going to be different from our typical gathering here at The Landing. We'II be spending the majority of our night in thought and prayer, as well as evaluating where we are in our personal

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journeys through The Landing. lf you look around the room, you'II see that we have set up three stations for you to work through. Each station has a printed instruction sheet nearby so make sure you read those instructions when you visit each station. Of course, if you have any questions, please ask!

1 want to point out the importance of Station 3. At that station, we'II be offering communion. lf you've been around the church for a while, you might have heard this word, or even participated in taking communion. Basically, communion is something that Christians do to remember the sacrifica that Jesus made for us on the cross.

At that station, you'II find a passage from the Bible that basically explains what communion is and how importan! it is. You'II also find bread, and sorne juice. The bread symbolizes Jesus' body. In 1 Corinthians 11, we are reminded that Jesus said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." The juice symbolizes Jesus' blood. He said, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

This station is here for those of you that want to participate in communion. lf you don't feel

comfortable, or you just don't want to, that's fine! This isn't something that should be forced, but for those of you who decide to partake, please focus on the enormity of Jesus' words.

PHAYEH SfATlON.S 151

**When you're done with all of the stations, feel free to hang out, chat with your friends, or if you want, write sorne thoughts down on your journal. However, please keep your voices down as others may still be working through the stations.**

**STATION 1**

**Printed lnstructions** (available on the CD-ROM)

**Journal Station**

Take your personal inventory and thank God for ali of t11e people that you've already made amends to or offered forgiveness to.

**STATION** 2

Take a large piece of newsprint (or butcher paper) and tape it on a wall near your station. Write the words "l'm thankful for... " at the top.

**Printed lnstructions** (available on the CD-ROM) Gratitude Líst

Spend sorne time thinking through what you're grateful for. Sorne of these things may include your friends, family, God's merey or grace, your teachers, sorne special possessions, or even your health. Alter you've thought through sorne of these things, grab a marker and write the reasons you're grateful on the paper taped to the board. lnclude as much oras little as you'd like.

**STATION 3**

**Printed lnstructions** (available on the CD-ROM)

*23For* / *received from the Lord what I a/so passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed,*

*took bread, 24and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do*

*this in remembrance of* me." *? 5 /n the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." 26For whenever you eat this bread*

*and drink this cup, you proc/aim the Lord's death until he comes.*

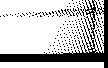
*27Th e refore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner wi/I be guifty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. 28A man ought to examine himself befare he eats of the bread and dnnks*

*of the cup (1 Corinthians 11.23-28).*

Take sorne time to read and think through this passage and what Jesus is saying. When you're ready, feel free to take part of the bread, remembering Jesus' syrnbolic words as you put it in your mouth. Next, take sorne of

the ¡uice, rernembering what it represents as you put it in your mouth.

Clase your time, by silently reading the Serenity Prayer (available on pp 3 of the Student Journal).



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PRAYER STATIONS 153

**•**•**•**•**e,..**e**ONNEC f TIME**

Serve refreshrnents of sorne kind so kids and leaders can hang out and connect Consider having sorne healthy options for those who rnay use food as a way of coping. A ping-pong table, foosbal! table, or even a few

board garnes will give teenagers an excuse to connect.

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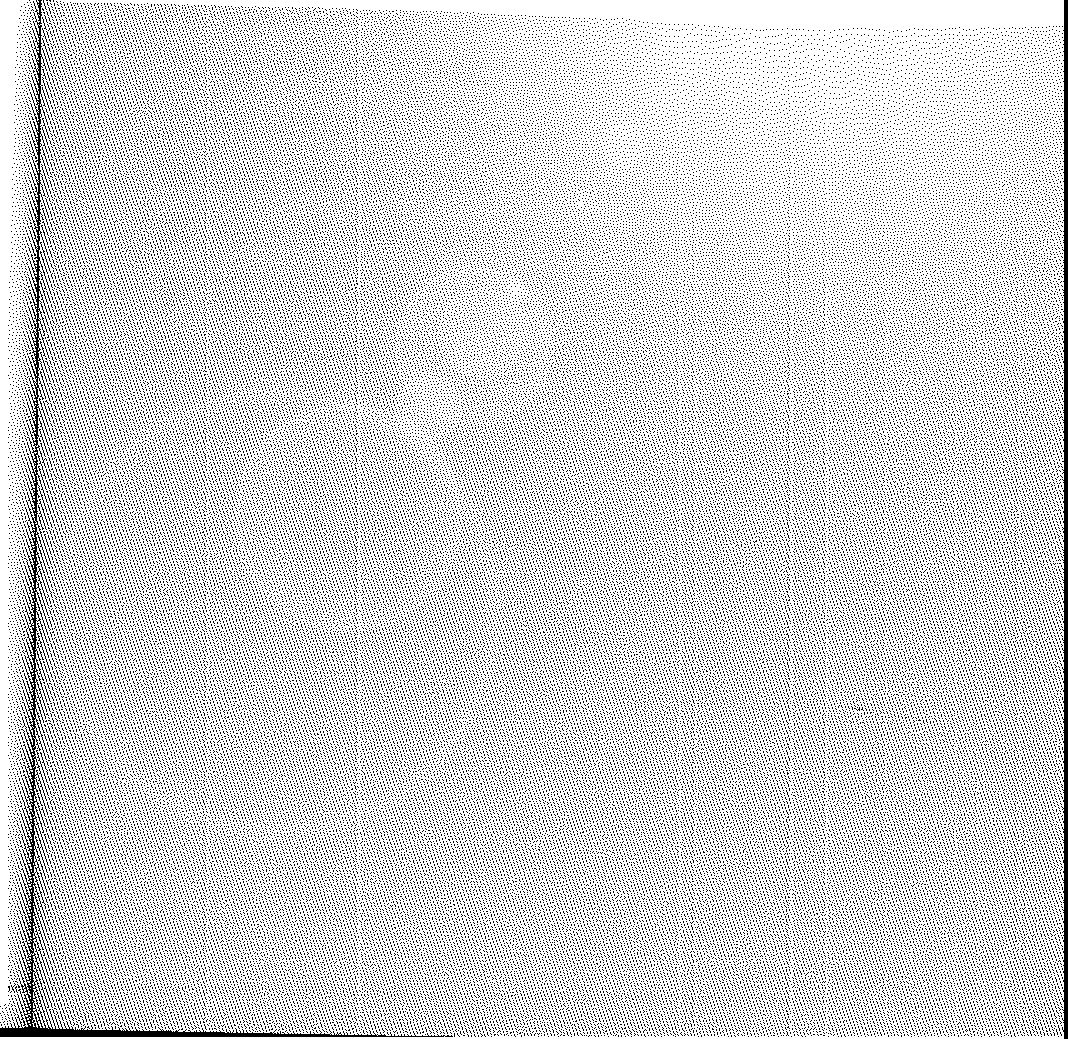
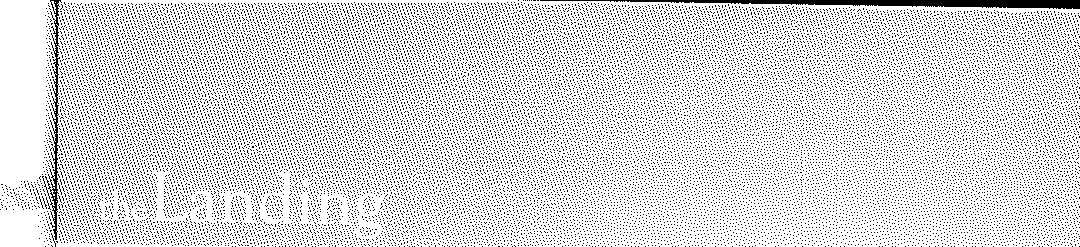
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**CROSSROADS** Iesson forty

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**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 lile and to gain the power to follow his will.

**SCRIPTURAL TRUTHS:**

"So, *if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don'/ fa//!" (1 Corinthians 10.12 NIV).*

**SCHEDULE**

*.•:.* **CONNECT TIME** (15 minutes)

**/'J WORSHIP** (15 minutes)

**111111 TEACHING TIME** (40 minutes)

**¡ii SMALL GROUPS** (30 minutes)

**Q CLOSING** (5 minutes)

*::.* **CONNECT TIME** (15 minutes)

CHOSSHO/J,,DS 157

**SUPPLIES NEEDED**

» CD player (optional)

» CD with worship music (optional)

» Bibles

» 3X5 cards

» Pens

**PREPARATION**

» Pray for your teenagers and your meeting

» Review this lesson

» Gather supplies

» Select songs for the Worship Time

» **What is the best prank that you've pulled on someone?**

» **What is the best prank that someone has pulled on you?**

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

***Jj* WORSli,lP**

Ask your teenagers to find a partner. Have them think about a big or small decision that they need to make. lt

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CONNECTTIME.

could be anything Then ask them to brainstorm for each other ali the pros and cons for the choices they could

make with that decision: "On the one hand," "but on the

Warmly welcome everyone to the group.

Here's one you've done befare. 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 befare responding the whole group should count in unison "One thousand one, one

thousand two" to count off the two seconds each person is allowed. lf someone cannot answer within the two­ second aliowance, they're out of the circíe. Create your own wacky questions, or use these as a starter:

» What are your hidden talents?

» Who was your favorite singer or band when you were in elementary school?

,, Have you broken any bones? lf so, how many? How?

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other hand." Have them continue until they've exhausted ali the possible pros and cons.

**SAY:** One way to worship God is to include him

**in our conversations rather than simply thinking through tough decisions on our own. Take a minute to talk about how your partner helped you with your decision. Then take a minute to pray, either together or silently by yourself, and ask fer the**

**courage to make the choice to include God in ali of your decisions.**

Then, lead kids iri two or three familiar worship songs. lf you have a youth band, invite the group to lead your teenagers in worship. Otherwise, play tl1e songs froma

CD and encourage kids to sing along or simply play the

Cf OSSRO/}.,DS 159

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'/ fa!/!" (1 Corinthians 1O: 12 N/VJ .*

* TEACHIN.G TIME

**SUPPLIES:** 3X5 cards and pens.

**SAY:** We're going to play a game you might have played as little children. lt's called "Red Light, Green Light." You remember that you're supposed to move forward when we yell out, "Green Light," and you're supposed to stop when we cal! out, "Red Light."

Let's make it a little more challenging and ask you to hop on one foot. Use the foot that is the opposite one from your dominan\ hand. (For example, if you are right-handed, hop on your left foot.) Sometimes we'II tell you to change the position of your bodies, and sometimes we'II ask you to move to the right orto theleft orto gobackward, so you'II have to listen carefully to the directions. {Glose your eyes.

Green Light. Red Light. Hop on the opposite foot. Red Light. Green Light. Red Light. Get down on your hands and knees. And so on.)

Let one teer1ager take a turn yelling out the directions while you have rest of the teenagers line up across the

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back of the room. Let a couple of teenagers take turns leading the game while asking different ways to make the garne challenging; eyes closed, getting on hands and knees, and so on.

**SA Y:** As you can see, you had to continually decide to "stop" or "go" and you had to keep changing directions. As much as this game rnight have made you feel like little kids again, you could see that sometimes it wasn't very easy to quickly figure out where you were going or if you had to go at ali!

That's a lot like life. Sornetimes it's hard for all of us to figure out if we're supposed to go forward, stay, or go backward.

In your journey here at the Landing, you've rnade a lot of changes. In Principie 1, you faced sorne of

the hurts, hang-ups, and habits in your life and got real about what's wrong and what's right in your life. In Principie 2, you started to believe that God has the power to help you change, and in Principie 3, you gave your lile to Jesus. Then carne Principie 4, where you took a good, thorough look at your

life-the good and the not so good-and carne clean about it. In Principie 5, you let go of sorne of the things keeping you back from being the person God wants you to be. In Principie 6, you looked at your relationships, said sorry for the things you did to hurt other people, and forgave people who have hurt you.

C'.HOSSHOADS 161

Now you're at a crossroads in your journey. When we reach this seventh principie, we're not done at all! We still have sorne major decisions to make.

We have been examining ourselves for weeks. But the self-examination continues! We have to start deciding if we want to continue on our journey and move forward, or if we're just too tired of doing the work and want to rest and stay at the same place. Or if this has all been too hard, maybe we're tempted to go backward to what has been comfortable for us, backward to our hurts, hang-ups, and habits.

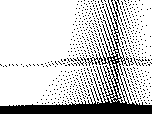
Read Luke 9:1-17.

**ASK:**

» When the disciples did not know how to feed the crowd, what did they do and why?

» How does this passage of Scripture relate to us?

» Have you made the decision to move forward on the journey, to rest for a while, or to go



backward? lf you're comfortable sharing with us, why have you made that choice?

» How will asking Jesus to guide us on this journey help us?

**SAY,** Now think about your current crossroad-the big decision or decisions you're facing right now. (Pass out the 3X5 cards) Write down on this card a big decision you are struggling with. Draw an arrow to the right to indicate if you like you've been going forward, a line without any arrow to indicate that

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you're staying the same, or an arrow *to* the left *to* indicate that you're moving backward. Take a few minutes *to* think about the pros and cons and to pray about this decision.

**¡i¡ SMALL GRQ.UPS**

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

1. **Focus on your own thoughts and. feeHngs 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 Ghrist-cehtered group.**

Remember, as a leader youare .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 faced a crossroads in their life. Then have groups eacr1 discuss these questions (available on the CD-ROM)

Remember, as the leader, you may want to model sorne of these answers for your group by sharing from your

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own experience.

CHOSSHO/\DS 1 63

**ASK:**

* What have you observed about the way most people make big decisions? What do you like and not like about that?
* Why do sorne people seem to change in life, while others seem stuck forever in their old patterns?
* Can you choose one time every day where you can connect with Jesus? What time of day works best for you and why?

» What's one way you feel like you're at a crossroad in your life right now? Explain.

» From your perspective, what are sorne of the strategies for sticking to the positive changes you want in your life?

U CLOSlN.G

SAY: We're ata crossroads at the Landing right now. We've got sorne choices to make with the direction we're going to take from this point on. But we're not alone; we're all together in this as a team. We have each other to help us move forward.

Glose tJy readir1g the Serenity Prayer together (available on p. 3 of their Student Journal). Keep in rnind, sorne teenagers rnay not want **to** read aloud wiH1 the rest of the group. That's OK; encourage thern 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 lf I surrender to your will; So that 1

may be reasonably happy in this lile 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.

e•••• CONNEC'.r. J:lM.E

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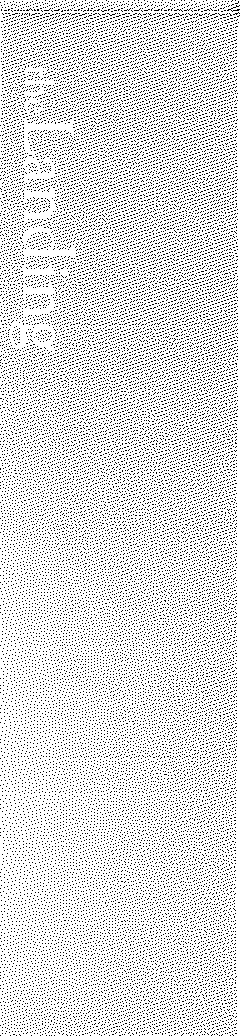
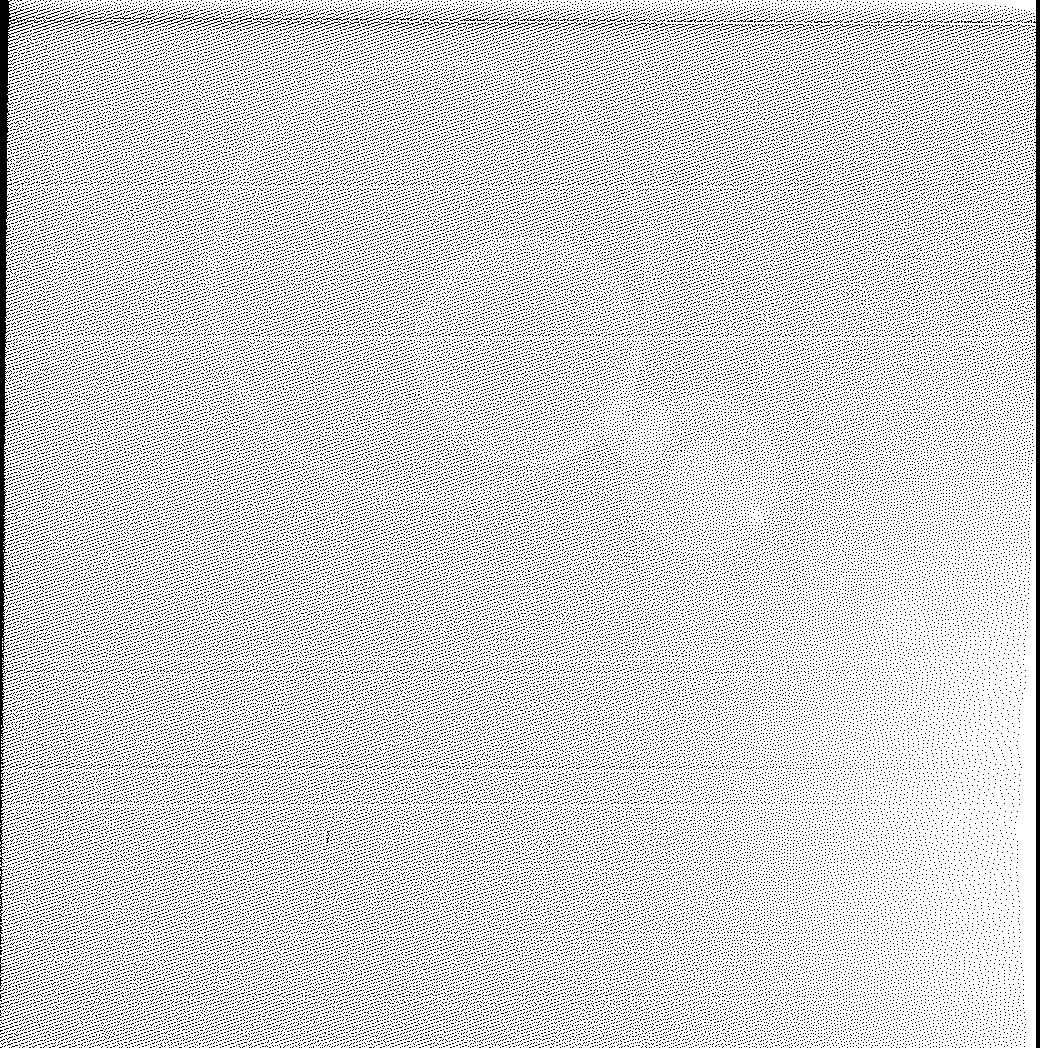
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**PRINCIPLE 7:**



**CROSSROADS** Iesson forty-one

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

**SCRIPTURAL TRUTHS:**

"So, *if you thrni< you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fa//1" (1 Corinthians 10.12 NIV)*

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**SCHEDULE**

••••• **CONNECT TIME** (15 minutes)

**fJ WORSHIP** (1O minutes)

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**8ilSI TEACHING TIME** (35 minutes)

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**111!1111• VIDEO TIME** ,12 minutes

**¡i¡ SMALL GROUPS** (30 minutes)

**U CLOSING** (3 minutes)

*::.* **CONNECT TIME** (15 minutes)

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CHOSSHO/J..DS 16

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**SUPPLIES NEEDED**

» CD player (optional)

» CD with worship music (optional)

» TV and DVD player

» The Landing DVD 3

» Bibles

» Paper

» Markers

**PREPARATION**

» Pray for your teenagers and your meeting

» Review this lesson

» Gather supplies

» Select songs for the Worship Time

**111111111 CONNECT TIME**

**111111**

Alter about five minutes, go around the group and have kids guess what each license plate says or means; then have that person explain the meaning behind the plate.

***Jl* WORSHIP**

Lead kids in three familiar worship songs. lf 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 carefu! that you don't fa!!!" (1 Corinthians 10.12 N!V)*

SUPPLIES: Paper and markers.

Warmly welcome everyone to the group.

Give each teenager a piece of paper and a marker. Have them draw the shape of a license plate on their paper.

**SAY:** You've ali seen personalized license plates on cars. Far example, "PowdrHd" shows that the car owner is an avid skier. Or 10SNE1 -"Tennis, anyone?" -shows that the person is really into tennis. Take a few minutes right now to create your own custom-made license plate that tells something about who you are.

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* **TEACHINO. 1'IME**

**SUPPLIES:** Bibles.

**SAY:** We're going to play a game tonight that you may not have played far a long time. lt's called "Telephone." lf you don't remember the game it works like this. We'II all get in a circle and 1'11 start by whispering something to the person on my left. He or she will then repeat what I said to the person to their

/eft and so on until it gets back to me. Then we'II see how clase we get. No one is allowed to repeat the sentence.

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CHOSSHOADS 17!

Try to make these hard; here are sorne suggested phrases:

» 1'11 take a large pizza with pepperoni and onions.

» You may think you know, but you don't know

» The last time I saw that guy, he wore a purple shirt with white jeans.

**ASK:**

» **How did we do?**

» **How confident were you that the listener heard your** statement **clearly?**

» **Is** that **an** effective form of communication?

**SAY:** 1 think if you and I could only communicate that way, we'd never really get to know each other. lsn't it so much easier to hear directly from the person we're talking to? Think about your best friend. lf you and your best friend never spent time talking-in person or on the phone-you'd never really know what they were like, what they were into. And when you did talk, if one of you spent ali of the time talking without listening to the other person, would you ever really know what they were like?

Many of us complain that we never get to hear from God. We hear stories like Moses in the Old Testament where God spoke audibly and we think, "lf I could hear from God like that, l'd do whatever he asked." And the truth is, most of us don't get to hear from

God in that way.

**ASK:**

» Does this mean we never get to hear from God?

» lf we agree that we can hear from God, how do you think he talks to us?

» Have you ever "heard" God? lf you feel comfortable, explain.

**SAY:** Just like in our friendships, if we don't spend time talking to and listening to God, how can we expect to hear from him? There are a couple of ways that we can practice hearing from God: prayer and Bible reading.

Prayer is simply talking to God. Jesus spent al! kinds of time talking to God, and he showed us how we can, too. In fact, Hebrews 4:16 says, "Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive merey and find grace to help us in our time of need."

**ASK:**

» How is prayer like "approaching the throne of grace"?

» Do you ever feel weírd about praying? Why or why not?

**SAY:** l'd like to give us all a chance to practice prayíng out loud. 1 know for sorne of you that feels strange. Sorne of you may not feel comfortable praying in front of other people. That's OK. We're

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CROSSHOADS '!

all going to pray out loud at the same time. lnstead of taking turns or going around the circle, we'II ali pray together. Talk to God about whatever you want. We'II only do it for a minute or so, and 1'11 get your attention when it's time to stop.

1'11 open us in prayer: Dear God, we are all here today because we want to know you better. You know our hearts. Sorne of us have a hard time praying to you. We don't always know what to say. But right now we're going to lift our voices to you in prayer.

Now you, go ahead and pray, out loud.

Alter a minute or so, olose the prayer. You may need to speak up to gel kids" attention over trie sound of the prayers.

**ASK:**

» How did that feel?

» Was it hard to pray while others prayed?

» Do you think God could hear each of our voices?

**SAY:** Another other way to learn to hear God's voice is by reading his Word, the Bible. People have described the Bible as God's lave letter to us, a road map, anda user's guide to life. Psalm 119:105 says, "Your word will be a guide to my feet and a light to my path." As we talked about last week, we're at this point where we can decide to move forward or we can stall and end up going backward into our old

hurts, hang-ups, and habits. Reading the Bible daily will help us move forward, as we allow God's Word to guide our feet and light our path.

**ASK:**

» Have you ever read anything in the Bible and felt like God was speaking directly to you? Explain.

» lf you've never read the Bible, are you unsure of where to start?

Hold upa Bible.

**SAY:** When we approach the Bible we can be intimidated. There are different books, chapters, and verses, not to mention two different Testaments. lt can be confusing.

Many people never start reading the Bible because they don't know where to start. l'd suggest you get started in the New Testament, which is the account of the lite of Jesus and his ministry and the work of his followers following his death and resurrection. The books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are called Gospels, because they have the "good news" of Jesus and his life.

But the main thing is, just start, and then keep reading. lf all of this is stuff you already know, just keep reading your Bibles. Make it a part of your everyday life. Set aside sorne time, everyday, for you and God. Spend time praying. Don't just do all

174 i\i)Lh l;1.\_: i 1) ·,>i,<-, CHOSSHOADS 17

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**of the talking, but give God sorne time to respond. That means listen. Stop and be quiet for a** while. lt **might feel strange at first, it might be hard to** fit it

**in to your schedule, but once you begin this healthy habit, you'II experience a closeness with God. That closeness will lead you to trust him more, and to know him more.**

•• **VIDEO TIME**

Set up a DVD player and TV in your meeting area. Ahead of time, cue up the video "What Keeps You From Following God?" from DVD 3 in the kit. Play the video­ this one is 11 38 minutes long.

**¡i¡ SMALL GRQlJP.S**

Pdorto,begint1ing yoyr srriall>groüp,Jt18d,through the following ,Sr11all Group Guiclelines withyour.teenagers.

1. **Focus on·.yoúr oJ t't,fuª'ht{;hdfé linªswhen**

**,s,haring withJhe grou .**

1. **Please avoid .ALL cross .talk.**

**3.. Vve á re her . t?•··!5upportpnéariother.**

**4..V lue,and protep,t .ancmyrnity and confidentiality. 5.,Av9id off ns,iv 1.8:rg9age; ifhas no pJace in a**

**0**

**Christ-centered>gr()up.**

Re,rriember, as,aJea,d,er,,yo (are t model·. these guidelines *for* yoor 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 sorne 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 have been sorne of your fears of fully trusting Jesus?

>> What have been sorne of the "costs" you've already paid to walk this journey in The Landing?

» What have you "gained" by paying these costs?

» How could reading your Bible and praying help keep you focused on following Jesus? Have you found a time of day that works for you to connect with God in this way?

» How could learning more about God help you trust him more?

» How could trusting God help you follow him more closely?

At the Emd **of this** discussion, tl1e leader shoulcJ elose ir, prayer, thanking God for his grace.

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**9 CLOSING**

**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.**

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

*.•:.* **CONNEC'.I '.ITM;\_E** !\il:lít

Serve refreshments of sorne kind so kids and leaders can hang out and connect. Consider having sorne 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.

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 ali things right lf I surrender to your will; So that 1

may be reasonably happy in this life and supremely happy with you forever in the next. AMEN.

- Reinhold Niebuhr

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