

WEEK 1

SMALL GROUP GUIDE



THIS SERIES

If you tried to define “friendship” based only on what you see on Instagram, you might think #friendship was all about group hugs, selfies with your bestie, or tagging each other in your favorite memes. But real friendship isn’t so picture perfect. In this 4-week series, you’ll challenge students to build the kind of friendships that go beyond the surface – the kinds of friendships you’ll need when times get tough. You’ll look at three key friendships as Scripture, as well as the friendship God offers us through Jesus, as you help teenagers see that Godly friendships can **shape us, heal us, and purify us** – especially during difficult times.

THIS WEEK

THE BIG IDEA

In the fire, true friendships can be forged.

THE BIBLE

I Samuel 18:1-11, 19:1-7, 20:1-42
Proverbs 18:24

- **What’s an example of a “fire” you or your friends might experience this year?**
- **How can “fires” make our friendships stronger?**
- **Why do “fires” sometimes destroy a friendship?**
- **What do you think the difference is between a fire that makes a friendship stronger and a fire that destroys a friendship?**
- **What’s so impressive about what Jonathan did for David in today’s story?**
- **Of all the stories that could have been told in the pages of Scripture, why do you think this one has been recorded? Why is it important to God?**
- **Name one person you know will stand with you during tough times.**
- **Tell us about a time a friend helped you through a difficult experience.**
- **Do you have any friends going through a tough time who you can stand with? Who?**
- **Read Proverbs 18:24. What’s one step you can take this week to avoid unreliable friendships and build truer friendships?**

WEEK 2

SMALL GROUP GUIDE



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THIS WEEK

THE BIG IDEA

In the fire, true friendships can be healing.

THE BIBLE

Ruth 1:1-22
Ecclesiastes 4:9-10

- **What's an example of a "fire" that could leave someone feeling broken?**
- **How can friendships help heal us in the midst of those fires?**
- **What's so impressive about what Ruth does for Naomi in today's story?**
- **Of all the stories that could have been told in the pages of Scripture, why do you think this one has been recorded? Why is it important to God?**
- **When has a friend helped you heal from a difficult experience?**
- **Do you know of any friends who need healing right now? If you don't, why do you think that is?**
- **How might a hurting friend need you to stick with them, even if they're pushing you away?**
- **Like Naomi, how can you better demonstrate the kind of faith (even on your worst days) that your friends will want to experience?**
- **Read Ecclesiastes 4:9-10. What's one step you can take this week to build more friendships like this passage describes?**

WEEK 3

SMALL GROUP GUIDE



THIS SERIES

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THIS WEEK

THE BIG IDEA

In the fire, true friendships can be purifying.

THE BIBLE

II Samuel 12:1-25; Proverbs 27:5-6
Galatians 6:1; Matthew 18:15-17

- **Have you ever confronted a friend about their bad behavior? What happened?**
- **Has a friend ever confronted you about your bad behavior? What happened?**
- **If Nathan went to your school or lived in your neighborhood, what are some of the bad behaviors he might confront you or your peers about?**
- **What can we learn from David about responding to correction?**
- **Who are your Nathans? Who can count on to tell you the truth, even when it's difficult?**
- **What can we learn from Nathan about giving correction to our friends?**
- **Read Galatians 6:1 and Matthew 18:15-17. What can these passages teach us about confronting a friend?**
- **Do any of your friends need a Nathan in their lives right now? If so, what's stopping you from being that kind of friend for them?**
- **Of all the stories that could have been told in the pages of Scripture, why do you think this one has been recorded?**