

SMALL GROUP LEADER GUIDE

Even If / Week 2

BEFORE GROUP

BOTTOM LINE

God is with you, even if...

SCRIPTURE

When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze (Isaiah 43:2 NIV).

I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world (John 16:33 NIV).

...it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you (John 16:7 NIV)

GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

To remind students that God is with them in change and to give them the space to be honest with Him (and others) about the way they feel about change.

THINK ABOUT THIS

At this phase, some of your students may be navigating really difficult circumstances that are life-changing while others may be facing small changes that feel really big. When they share something hard, don't brush past pain in order to get to hope. Acknowledge their pain and affirm their experience no matter how big or small the change is they are facing. Then help them name the ways God is with them in the middle of it.

Also remember, independence is the number one motivation at this phase, so students will often feel that they have to face tough times alone to be a "real adult." Use this as an opportunity to remind them that they are never truly alone. God is walking with them and so are you.

Create meaningful conversations. Adjust the questions as needed, and don't feel like you need to answer all of them.

DURING GROUP

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is one change you made that you thought would change your life more than it did? (for example: got a new haircut, got a driver's license, made the team, etc.)
2. What are the top three emotions or words you think of when I say the word "change?" (**Leader note:** We've included the Feelings Wheel on the last page of this Small Group Leader Guide to help make it a little easier to talk about complex emotions.)
3. What's a change you faced that you hoped would turn out differently, and didn't? How did it make you feel at the time?
4. How does it make you feel to know that Jesus also faced change He wished He could have avoided?
5. What do you hear or think of when we say "God is with you" or "God is for you, even if...?"
6. Read John 16:33: *"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."* What do you think about this?
7. What are some things that are true about God that is helpful to remember when facing change?
8. How do you remind yourself of these truths?

TRY THIS

Have students write out their own "even if" statements about changes they may be facing. For example, "Even if I don't make the team," "Even if my parents split up," "Even if I don't get asked to the dance," and then have them write down

one of the things that they said is true about God no matter what. Encourage students to keep that "Even if" statement in a place they can see it, so they can be reminded of what stays the same about God, even if other things change.
