



I Wonder...

LESSON 9: INTERMEDIATE SMALL GROUP

What should I do if my friends encourage me to do bad things?

MAIN IDEA

When friends tempt us to do bad things, God has made a way of escape for us. We can choose to walk away and make new friends rather than be pulled in a direction we do not want to go. We should choose good friends who will help us be the best we can be.

BIBLE PASSAGES

- 1 Corinthians 10:13
- 1 Thessalonians 5:11
- 1 Corinthians 15:33
- Proverbs 13:20
- Hebrews 2:14-18

BIBLE VERSE

So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son.

John 1:14, NLT



Prepare your heart to teach. Plan for the lesson.



Connect with the kids, and help them feel heard and cared for. (15 minutes)



Facilitate activity and study to help kids know and love Jesus. (20 – 25 minutes)



Lead kids to live out the mission of the Gospel. (5 – 10 minutes)

Prepare



Prepare your heart to teach.
Plan for the lesson.

QUESTIONS

- How can you be praying for the students this week?
- Are there any specific students or requests you can pray for?
- Are there any adaptations that you can make to the lesson this week to better serve the kids in your small group or make your small group more effective?

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Deflated (flat) soccer ball, basketball, or beach ball
- Air pump and needle (to put air in the ball)
- Bible Verse Cards, 1 per child

Connect



Connect with the kids, and help them feel heard and cared for.
(15 minutes)

Small Group Session 1

ICEBREAKER

Distribute name tags and snacks. Choose one of the following icebreaker activities to do together while children eat their snack:

- Option 1: Ask the children to share their highs and lows (the best and worst things that happened to them either today or from the past week).
- Option 2: Ask the children to take turns sharing how they're feeling today using the "How Are You Feeling?" chart (from the CKC Games Bag).

PRAY TOGETHER

Collect prayer requests from the students. The leader or a student can pray for the entire group, or a leader can pair up students and invite them to pray for one another.

INTRODUCTION

Ask each student to share with you who their best friends are.

Ask, **Why are you close to your best friends?** (things they have in common or do together) **Do you think God cares who your friends are?**

Say, **God cares very much who our friends are because they will influence us—helping us to be better or worse.**

(CHOOSE ONE)

ACTIVITY OPTION 1: TWO TRUTHS AND A LIE

In this game, players sit together and form a circle. Then, going around the circle, each player takes turns to tell three facts about themselves with one of the "facts" being a lie. The point of this activity is for listeners to figure out the lie among the three facts mentioned by a player.

ACTIVITY OPTION 2: HUMAN KNOT

This game is just as it sounds. Teammates come to an open space, form a circle facing inward, then join their left and right hands with someone else other than the person at their immediate right or left.

The goal of this activity is to unravel the knotted circle of joined hands while twisting, turning, and passing through each other's hands.

Say, **With this game we can see that the people around you can have an effect on you. Who you surround yourself with and keep close to you can either help you or hurt you.**

God cares who you let influence you, and you should care too. The people closest to you have the greatest influence on your life, either helping us get better or worse.

Heart



Facilitate activity and study to help kids know and love Jesus.
(20 – 25 minutes)

Small Group Session 2

OBJECT LESSON: DO YOUR FRIENDS PUMP YOU UP OR DRAG YOU DOWN?

Ask for two student volunteers to help with a demonstration.

Give the two students the deflated (flat) ball and ask them to demonstrate how they would pass and dribble the ball.

Obviously, they will have trouble doing these things since the ball is flat. Ask, **Why are you having so much trouble?** Say, **This ball is definitely not at its best. What could we do to make it better?** (Put air in it!)

Pump up the ball, and allow the students to try passing and dribbling again. Point out how much better it works when the ball is at its best.

Ask, **How do you think that the ball and pump might be like you and your friends?** (You are the ball, and your friends will either pump you up so that you are at your best, or they will drag you down and make you flat so that you are not at your best.)

Read 1 Corinthians 15:33 together.

Say, **There was nothing wrong with the ball at first or later. The ball was fine. It just needed air to make it be at its best. Bad friends will corrupt us. They will drag us in a direction we do not want to go and leave us deflated.**

CHARACTERISTICS OF GOOD FRIENDS

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:11.

Ask, **What is it that a good friend should be doing? How can you be a good friend?**

Discuss with the students specific ways that they can be a good friend to others—how can they build others up, encourage them, and help them to be their very best?

Say, **If we become the kind of friend who builds others up, then we will also attract the right kind of friends to us.**

Hands



Lead kids to live out the mission of the Gospel.
(5 – 10 minutes)

Small Group Session 2

WRAP IT UP

Say, **Think in your mind** (but don't say aloud) **whether you have a friend who makes you deflated. Think about how they are influencing your life. It may be hard, but consider adding more distance in that friendship so that you can make room for friends who can inflate you by encouraging you.**

Lead the students in prayer asking God for courage to walk away from these friends.

Say, **Think of someone who needs a friend—someone who you can encourage and build up. Pray for the Lord to give you the courage and strength to take action and to become a friend to that person this week.**

RESPONSE & REFLECTION

Take the students' other prayer requests and pray with them.

(Optional) If time permits, review the Bible verse with the students.