

SMALL  GROUP

SMALL GROUP LEADER GUIDE

Bright Lights, Big City / Week 2

BEFORE GROUP

BOTTOM LINE

God's light in you brings order to chaos.

SCRIPTURE

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and empty, and darkness covered the deep waters. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters (Genesis 1:1-2 NLT).

Then God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. And God saw that the light was good. Then he separated the light from the darkness. God called the light "day" and the darkness "night" (Genesis 1:3-5a NLT).

...fulfill the law of Christ (Galatians 6:2b NIV).

GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

To help students identify areas of life that feel chaotic and to empower students to see how God can use them to shine light into that chaos.

THINK ABOUT THIS

Middle school can be an incredibly chaotic and even hopeless time for students. That makes the need for a light that brings hope in the midst of chaos—a light like only Jesus carries—incredibly important. So, be sure to remind your middle schoolers that, even during what feels like never-ending chaos right now, Jesus' light can change the way they walk through it all. As you talk about the juxtaposition of light—peace and hope—and darkness—chaos and hopelessness—be aware of the way you use your words. While we're using figurative language from the Bible to talk about light and dark, in our context today those words "light" and "dark" can carry negative connotations. Be sure to distinguish for students that we don't mean, in that sense, that light is better or superior in any way. We're simply using these terms in a spiritual sense—terms that Jesus Himself used—to help us understand how Jesus brings hope and light to the places in our lives and world that need it the most.

This guide is a suggestion, not a formula. Adjust the content as needed, and don't feel like you need to complete everything listed.

DURING GROUP

JUST FOR FUN

Do you like superheroes? Who's your all-time favorite superhero?

DISCUSS THIS

1. In your own words, how would you define "chaos"?
2. What kinds of things might make a middle schooler's life feel chaotic?
3. How might that chaos make a middle schooler feel? *[Use the provided Feelings Wheel to help students identify their feelings around this topic.]*

4. When you experience chaos, where do you think God is?
5. How does knowing you are part of God's plan to bring order to chaos make you feel?
6. What could it look like for you to shine God's light into the chaos of...
 - a. The world?
 - b. The people closest to you? (Your friends, family, teammates, etc.)
 - c. Your own life?
7. This week, what's one step you can take to shine a little light into one of those areas?

DO THIS (EXPERIENCE 1)

Pass out a black sheet of paper and an invisible ink marker to each of your students. Ask your group to write down things that need light or hope. Explain that, like what they wrote on their paper, darkness in our world stays dark until we shine a light on it. Then, shine the black light to illuminate their writing and drive home your point.

