

MARVEL

ORDINARY PEOPLE, EXTRAORDINARY POTENTIAL

Leader Guide Week 3

THE WIN

Group members will demonstrate their understanding of encouragement in the body of Christ by communicating the value to others, selecting examples of encouragement, and receiving encouragement in return.

3-5
minutes

SERMON RECAP: WHAT DID THE TEXT MEAN? WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Review the message highlights as a group and discuss any highlights that challenged your thinking.

Leader Tip: If you have a group member who did not attend the Sunday service, you will have to summarize the highpoints yourself. They can watch the sermon online (rushcreek.org) this week to get caught up.

3-5
minutes

WARM UP

Would you prefer to receive encouraging words from your: a) spouse b) parents c) boss d) child(ren) e) coach? What guided your selection? Why not a different choice?

3-5
minutes

THE TEXT: WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR ME?

Introduction:

Review the text from Sunday's sermon: Acts 11:22-26

Group Activity:

1. Count the number of people in your group meeting.
2. Tear up paper into the number of people in your group. (12 people=12 pieces of paper)
3. Write a person's name on each sheet of paper.
4. Put the paper pieces in a hat and have everyone draw a name.
5. Have each member of the group finish these 2 sentences about the person they have been assigned:
_____ has made our group better because he/she _____. I appreciate this because_____.

ASK THIS:

- Examine this list of character traits: Kindness, Humility, Teachability, Forgiveness, Obedience, Purity, Responsibility, Courage, Servanthood, Contentment, Endurance, Discernment
- Which of these traits come easily for you? Hard for you? Why?
- How could these traits help you better encourage others?

SAY THIS:

v. 24 teaches the reader that encouragement is best received from a life of integrity.

ASK THIS:

- What did your parents teach you about integrity when you were a child? Did you feel you had a good example to follow?
- Our ability to be genuine with one another is limited by our desire to maintain our integrity. Agree or Disagree?
- How would you respond to someone who agreed/disagreed with the above statement?
- When we are found out in our hypocrisy do you feel you are above accountability? Why or why not?
- Sometimes people will respond to accountability with rejection and/or offense. How can you as a Jesus follower or someone interested in faith address a person like this?

Group Activity:

1. Have the group divide into teams (couples, by gender, sides of the room, color of shirt etc.)
2. Give them the task to surf their smartphone, tablet, or computer and look for 5 examples of someone encouraging another's character. (looks, clothes, athletic ability etc. are not character qualities)
3. After 5 minutes, have the teams report back to the group and share their findings and provide an opinion on how well they thought the encouragement was communicated.
4. The first team to reach 5 examples wins.

3-5
minutes

DIGGING DEEPER

Have group members redraw names from the hat and send an encouraging email or text to the person they drew during the week.

Leader Tip: Make sure to discern if this is an appropriate activity for your group. For married couples, some spouses might feel uncomfortable if someone else is sending their spouse email or texts. For Singles, consider simply praying for the person they drew instead of sending messages.

CLOSING THOUGHT

What is the answer to this riddle? (Hint: A life without encouragement.)

It cannot be seen, cannot be felt
cannot be heard, cannot be smelt.
It lies behind stars and under hills,
And empty holes it fills.
It comes first and follows after,
Ends life, kills laughter.
-The Hobbit by J.R.R. Tolkien

Leader Tip: The answer 'darkness'.