

IN THE KNOW
Wk 4 of 4: In The End...
October 26 & 27, 2019

LEADER PREP

GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

For students to know that Jesus is the ultimate Authority and Judge; our job is to grow closer in our relationship with Jesus, and not worry about judging others.

SCRIPTURE

James 4: 7-12

THINK ABOUT THIS

It's easy to get caught up looking around at what other people are doing and how they are living their lives. **We can fall into the trap of judging others** because we think we have it all together, or we judge others thinking that God not paying attention to how *other* people are living their life or not following the rules. **Sometimes we don't even recognize we're doing it! But it's not our place to judge.** Our responsibility is to be humble, focus on our own relationship with Jesus and how we are becoming more like Him, and to let Him be the ultimate Authority and Judge.

Note about gossip: You don't have to be talking about judgment for gossip to be shared in small group. **Today, start your group off** before you ask any questions to share about **how this is a safe place to share but we don't want to gossip, so when students share answers and stories not to share specific names.**

This guide is a suggestion, not a formula. Adjust the questions and activities as needed, and don't feel like you need to do or ask everything. Let your students and the Holy Spirit guide the conversation, too.



CONVERSATION GUIDE

MAIN POINT

Let Jesus be the ultimate Authority because He will be the final Judge.

GET THEM TALKING

What are some things that people judge others for?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

READ JAMES 4:7-10 and answer the following questions:

1. What are our first steps for recognizing Jesus is our ultimate Authority? (*HINT: Verses 7-8*)
2. What does it mean to humble yourself before God?
3. What do you think it means to "resist the devil?"
4. Why do you think James, the author, tells us to be sad (*HINT: Verse 9*)?

READ JAMES 4:11-12 and answer the following questions:

5. What are some ways middle schoolers use to judge other people? Why do you think that is?
6. If someone caught you being judgmental, would you want them to judge you for it or show you love?
7. What is the opposite of "criticizing and judging?" (*HINT: Verse 11*)
8. How can we keep ourselves from falling into the trap of judging others?
9. If someone is judging someone else, how should you respond? What can be hard about that?
10. What's the promised outcome God gives us if we humble ourselves before Him? (*HINT: Verse 11*)

NEXT STEP

Think of someone you have judged in the past. Without sharing names, what is a way you can show this person love this week?

PRAYER GUIDE

God, please forgive us for judging others. We acknowledge that You and You alone are the Ultimate Judge and Authority. Help clean and renew our hearts as we focus on loving others and growing closer to You. Thank you for your grace. Amen.

BONUS ACTIVITY (optional)

A few weeks ago when we started this lesson, we asked you all to list out words that you have heard describing God. Now that we've spent 4 weeks learning what the Bible has to say about, what words would you use to describe God?

SCRIPTURE

MS students are concrete thinkers, so opening your Bible to read the Scripture with them is a preferred visual cue.

James 4:7-10 (NLT)

“⁷ So humble yourselves before God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸ Come close to God, and God will come close to you. Wash your hands, you sinners; purify your hearts, for your loyalty is divided between God and the world. ⁹ Let there be tears for what you have done. Let there be sorrow and deep grief. Let there be sadness instead of laughter, and gloom instead of joy. ¹⁰ Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will lift you up in honor.”