



HEART STRINGS

LEADER PREP

MAIN POINT

God gives us the power to choose integrity even when it's not easy.

SCRIPTURE

Jeremiah 17:9 NLT
Genesis 39:6-23 NLT

GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

To help students see that instant gratification isn't the best long-term solution. We can settle for mediocre now or we can hold out for God's best overall.

THINK ABOUT THIS

Waiting is not something that our culture values. Our culture values instant. However, the best things do take time - that's why people stand in lines at theme parks - it's worth the wait. Helping your students see something they can't see, aka their spiritual growth and blessing, is worth the wait - that may be hard. Think of concrete ways you can help your students understand it's worth the wait (from mentioning the theme park line example to maybe an even more heartfelt example from your own life where you waited and later saw the fruit).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

THE CHECK IN

- How was everyone's week? Share Highs & Lows.
- Someone recap the main point of the message in your own words.
- Was there ever a time when you were so excited for something that waiting for it felt impossible?

THE WORD

NOTE TO THE LEADER: *This portion should take the most time. Be diligent about guiding your students through the Bible. Be patient with them and give them time to find it and ask as many questions along the way as they need to. The goal is not to do the work for them, but to teach them HOW to navigate, read, and think about the Bible on their own.*

- Do you think that sin is really that big of a deal? (You may need to define sin for your group first.)
- Assign three people to read the following Bible verses:
 - Matthew 6:13
 - 1 Corinthians 6:18
 - 1 Thessalonians 5:22.
- What do these three verses have in common?
- What do they teach us is the only right response to sin?
- We may know that we're supposed to avoid sin, but why is it so hard sometimes?

APPLICATION

- What is an area in the life of a middle schooler where having integrity can be tough?
- What are some practical ways to help us avoid sin and instead live the type of lives God wants us to live? Individually and as a group.

PRAY

Spend the last bit of your time together in prayer. Pray specifically for God to give you all self-control and integrity.

JEREMIAH 17:9

The human heart is the most deceitful of all things, and desperately wicked.
Who really knows how bad it is?

MATTHEW 6:13

And don't let us yield to temptation,
but rescue us from the evil one.

1 CORINTHIANS 6:18

Run from sexual sin! No other sin so clearly affects the body as this one does. For sexual immorality is a sin against your own body.

1 THESSALONIANS 5:22

Stay away from every kind of evil.
