



Thanks for checking out this Gospel of John small group guide. Before digging in, take the time to read over how these guides are set up:

- **These guides are very much discussion-based.** The purpose is to help students interact, not just hear you talk the whole time. Do your best to keep it that way.
- **These guides are designed so that anyone can pick them up and lead through them with minimal preparation.** Obviously, it helps to be prepared, but sometimes—especially if you’re working with volunteer group leaders—they just don’t have the time to thoroughly prepare for a lesson. These lessons are for those group leaders who are eager to help but lack the time to prepare.
- **These guides are written for students no matter where they are in their spiritual walk.** Whether your students are brand new to church or have been walking with the Lord for a long time, the discussion is meant to engage everyone.

The guides are broken down into five sections that are meant to take students on a journey through each week’s passage:

Section 1: Exploration (What do we think?)

This section is written to gauge the spiritual climate of the room. We want to introduce the topic without coming right out and saying it. For example, if the topic is humility, we wouldn’t open by saying, “Let’s talk about humility.” Instead, you’ll gauge the room with a non-threatening question that gets them thinking about humility without realizing it. For instance: “Who’s someone you really admire because they seem to always care about others more than themselves?” This gets them interested in the topic before they even open the Bible.

Section 2: Communion (Spending Time With God)

This section is meant for students to go through with a journal. If you don’t have the resources to give every student a journal, you can simply hand out a piece of paper to each student. We use a journal so that they can mark things down and take the journal with them when they graduate from high school. In any case, this section is simply meant to be a “quiet time” when students can read and meditate on the text on their own before

discussing it. For students who have been Christians for a while, this will come easy, but for unchurched students or new Christians, it might be awkward—but it will teach them how to read the bible.

Section 3: Story Time (What does the Bible say?)

This section is where we'll begin to read through the passage together and ask questions to really discover what the main message of the passage is.

Section 4: Lining Up With God (What does it mean for us today?)

This is where we “take it back home.” We'll begin discussing what it means for us to start living out what we talked and read about. We usually end this section with a YouTube video that helps encourage the students (they're always videos that work, even if you just play it on your phone and not every student can see the screen.)

Section 5: Tangible Takeaway

This is the final section. It's a measurable challenge that the students can do that week. It's the most difficult part of the lesson, but the most important part: actually living it out. Really make sure you challenge your group leaders to hold students accountable throughout the week.



John 1:35-51

Big Idea: To be content with life, we need to think on Jesus.

“Getting to Know You” Time

1. High/Low: Have the students share the best part of their week, as well as the least-fun part of their week (this is a good way to get prayer requests and praises). Make this a fun time, as well, by asking follow-up questions or making a comment to show that you’re listening.
2. After getting the highs and lows (prayers and praises), have a student pray. If nobody volunteers, choose someone.

Ice Breaker

Game: Person, Place, Thing. One person is chosen to be “it.” They will think of a person, place, or thing. The rest of the group has to ask “yes or no” questions to figure out what the person is thinking of.

Catching Up

1. Last week, we began looking at the book of John. It’s a bit of a longer book, but it explains the life of Jesus to us. At your age, there’s nothing more important for your faith than to look at the life of Jesus and try to see how He dealt with some of the issues you are currently facing.

Exploration (What do we think?)

1. If you could have one wish fulfilled right here and now (obviously, no cheating like asking for more free wishes), what would it be? Why?
2. What about this one: if you could stand in front of Jesus right now and tell Him one thing you’d like him to fix, what would it be? Why?
3. Were your answers different? Why?

Communion (One-on-one Time With God)

Have the students take a short time to read through John 1:35–51 on their own. Give them their journal, and have them title the section “John 1:35-51” and put the date on there. As they read through it, tell them to write down any truth they read about how we should treat one another. Then, have them write down the verse they read it in. For instance, if they read verse 35, they can write, “Jesus is the Lamb of God (1:35).”

1. What are some of the things you wrote down as you read? (Take this time to explain some of the truths as they read what they wrote or ask questions about what they think that means.)
2. Was there anything in here that was confusing to you?
3. What does this passage tell you about what God expects of us?
4. What does this passage tell you about who God is?

Story Time (What does the Bible say?)

1. In verse 36, John the Baptist calls Jesus “the Lamb of God.” What do you think he meant by that? (Lambs were sacrificed as a ritual to symbolize that the penalty of sin is death. Jesus is a lamb in that He was sacrificed not as a symbol, but because He actually did pay the penalty of death for us.)
2. In verse 37, after John calls Jesus the Lamb of God, two of his own disciples leave him and basically say, “Oh, really? He’s the lamb of God? I’m going to follow him instead of you now.” Do you think John cared? Why or why not? (He didn’t care. He knew that Jesus is more important than him. His whole job was to point people to Jesus, not himself.)
3. In verse 38, Jesus asked the two disciples, “What do you want?” That’s like the question we asked earlier: “What would you ask Jesus if you could ask Him for one thing?” What’s interesting is, they didn’t answer. How would you have answered him?
4. In verse 46, Nathanael makes fun of Jesus for being from a small town in the middle of nowhere (Nazareth). He didn’t think anything special could be found there. Clearly, it’s OK to doubt. Like Nathanael, what doubts do you have about Jesus or the Bible?
5. Which one do you feel you are most like: Andrew and Philip—you believe easily; Peter—someone who Jesus changed from weak to strong; or Nathanael—someone who doubts?

Lining Up With God (What does it mean for us today?)

1. All of us are on a different part of our path. Some of us are seeking because we’re not sure we really believe this stuff. Even if you’ve grown up in the church, it’s OK to have doubts. Others of us believe, but we’re not really sure how to live it out practically. Others of us are pretty strong in our faith and feel like we’re doing a decent job at behaving the way God wants us to behave, but we’re hoping that some day Jesus can really use us. That’s what Jesus did with all of

these men, even Nathanael, who didn't believe it all. It doesn't matter where you're at right now—Jesus can turn you into a world changer. Just be open to learning more.

2. Watch this video:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4H93KSW2u0U&ab_channel=Simon&SchusterBooks

3. When we read Jesus say, "Follow me," it's easy to think, "What in the world does that even mean?" Or it's easy to think, "I'd like to do that, but I have no idea how." What if we followed the "10-second rule," and just did the next thing we felt Jesus might want us to do? Just be faithful in the little things. All Nathanael did was sit under a fig tree and pray to God, and Jesus showed up and rocked his world.

Tangible Takeaway

1. In your journal, write down at the bottom of the section you just wrote: **"It's OK to doubt. Just be open to doing the next thing Jesus might want me to do."**
2. Your takeaway is to ask yourself, "Am I a seeker, a believer, or a doer?" Who is an adult you will talk to about that today? (Have them share who ... a parent? A mentor? Sunday school teacher? Etc.)