



## FACILITATOR'S GUIDE—YOUTH

*Year 3—The God Who Pursues Relationship: A Story of God's People*

*Module 4: God Leads His People*

*Lesson 1: The Promise Land—Joshua 1-4; 24*

### ENCOUNTER 1—Community Discussion

Read Joshua 1 together out loud as a group. Encourage each person to journal through the passage using these questions. After allowing sufficient time for reflection, invite the group to share their thoughts.

*How is this God's story?*

*How is this others' story?*

*How is this my story?*

*How is this the world's story?*

### ENCOUNTER 2—Community Discussion

(Read the biblical reflection included with this lesson. The questions are designed for your group to enter into a meaningful dialogue about the Word. The bulleted teaching points are taken from the reflection and correspond to the questions.)

#### **GOD'S STORY**

*How do you think God works in your life in such a way that is helpful to others?*

- Consider how you have inspired both Christians and non-Christians to look at life differently. The Lord often places us into conversations where our words tell His story in ways others can understand.
- God is like a loving father who wants to involve His children in on His projects so everyone can bond together.

*How have things that have happened to you in your life been useful to the story of God?*

- Sometimes the greatest person to help another person through a tough time is someone who's been through that tough time, too.

*Why do you think some people don't step up and take part in God's story?*

- Many people like the comfort of having God all figured out, even though this is impossible. It's as if their religion becomes a place they can hide out in versus stepping through the waters to see something fresh.
- Not everyone who calls themselves a Christian is where you're at spiritually, so what seems like a non-Christian to you may be a believer who isn't mature in an area that you have overcome.

*Why might it have been important for the Israelites to cross over the water?*

- This same river was the one Jesus was later baptized in.

## OUR STORY

*When in your life has God done something amazing and you've been tempted to ask for the exact same experience?*

- Christians often have their favorite teachers, authors, retreats, conferences and experiences that they try to connect with God through. He may continue to speak through those sources, but he also may need to get your attention in a different way.
- Jesus said "a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks" (John 4:23).

*Why do you imagine God involves you in something so important as bringing other people back to Him once you've set your own heart right with Him?*

- Living the first part of Matthew 5 enables you to joyfully live out the second part of Matthew 5. Following this pattern can enable you to see the task of sharing your faith as something you're excited to do versus something you feel responsible to do.
- God is pleased with your great work and sacrifice for Him, and even more pleased with when you do it with a heart full of praise and thanksgiving.

## OTHERS' STORY

*Think about someone whose choices you have learned from. In what ways have they helped shape your life?*

- Cooperative or collaborative learning is a process where you intentionally meet with others for support and resources to achieve an agreed-upon goal. Companies and classrooms alike use it to let the hindsight and experiences of others create foresight and insights for them. As Christians, we're invited to do the same by paying attention to the faith of others (Hebrews 11) and learning from their outstanding choices as well as where they fell short.

*What is something the previous generation before you has done that you find honorable and want to reclaim in your generation?*

- "One generation will commend your works to another; they will tell of your mighty acts. They will speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty, and I will meditate on your wonderful works." (Psalm 145:4-5)

## THE WORLD'S STORY

*How do you see the world taking a stand against Christianity?*

- There are certain phrases that people try to use to silence Christians, including "hypocrite," "judgmental" and "religious."

*When have you seen someone stand for Christ and in doing so push back against the ways things usually are?*

- Jesus said, "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you" (Matthew 5:11-12).
- When we get into such a rush to impress people we don't need to, we often skip over those who matter most... including God.

## PRAYER

(Lead your group in corporate prayer)

*Praise the LORD.*

*Praise the LORD, my soul.*

*I will praise the Lord all my life;*

*I will sing praise to my God as long as I live.*

*Do not put your trust in princes,  
in human beings, who cannot save.*

*When their spirit departs, they return to the ground;  
on that very day their plans come to nothing.*

*Blessed are those whose help is the God of Jacob,  
whose hope is in the Lord their God.*

*He is the Maker of heaven and earth,  
the sea, and everything in them—*

*he remains faithful forever.*

*He upholds the cause of the oppressed  
and gives food to the hungry.*

*The LORD sets prisoners free,  
the LORD gives sight to the blind,  
the LORD lifts up those who are bowed down,  
the LORD loves the righteous.*

*The LORD watches over the foreigner  
and sustains the fatherless and the widow,  
but he frustrates the ways of the wicked.*

*The LORD reigns forever,  
your God, O Zion, for all generations.*

*Praise the LORD.*

(Psalm 146:1-10)

## WEEKLY PRACTICE

(Read the weekly practice out loud, and challenge your group to practice *missio* beyond today.)

Find five items in your closet that you haven't worn much and are willing to get rid of. The catch is you have to do this in less than five minutes. Put the items in a bag so you can take them to a local second-hand clothing store as a donation. The purpose for the five-minute time limit is it's an exhilarating way to help you gain momentum in your decision making.

Next, take out a pen and paper and repeat this exercise in regards to what doesn't belong in your life because it's hurting you spiritually. Like before, give yourself a five-minute time limit to write down five things, habits or people you need to turn away from. Chances are you already know what should be weaned out of your life spiritually, but you may need a prompting like this to articulate it.

## BECOMING MY STORY

(Encourage the group to spend time this week in God's Word, allowing it to penetrate their heart and life.)

*Joshua 6*

*Acts 1*

Spend time this week reading and journaling through the above Scriptures. In the context of Joshua 1-4 and 24, consider the following questions:

*What are the key decisions you see people in these Scriptures making to better trust and follow the Lord?*

*What decisions have you made that have most shaped your relationship with God?*

Consider other passages you might know related to Joshua 1-4 and 24 and read them this week, journaling as you go.