

The Great Divide

Small Group Leader Guide

Purpose

Help students process how offense, rejection, gossip, betrayal, and unforgiveness can create distance between people and God, while pointing them to Jesus' example of love and forgiveness.

Icebreaker

Share about a time when you misunderstood someone's intentions. What happened, and how was it resolved?

Read Together

Luke 9:51–56

Discuss why James and John wanted revenge and how Jesus responded.

John 13:35

Discuss how love identifies followers of Jesus.

Discussion Questions

1. What stood out most from tonight's message?
2. Why do you think James and John felt justified?
3. Have you ever allowed hurt to change how you viewed someone?
4. Which is hardest for you: rejection, gossip, comparison, betrayal, or unforgiveness? Why?
5. How did Jesus respond differently than the disciples?
6. What would choosing forgiveness look like this week?

Leader Notes

Create a safe environment. Don't pressure students to share personal details. Listen well, affirm honesty, and consistently point students back to Jesus rather than simply 'trying harder.'

Prayer Time

Invite students to silently name an offense they are carrying. Pray that Jesus would heal wounds, soften hearts, and help each student become known by love instead of offense.

Weekly Challenge

Reach out to one person this week with encouragement, forgiveness, or kindness. Memorize John 13:35 and ask God each day to help you carry Jesus instead of offense.