

Jesus Must Increase I Must Decrease

Older Elementary Small Group Guide
Week 1 • Feb 28/March 1/2
Side 1 • Small Group # 1 • 10 minutes



PRO TIP

kZones are a great time to assess how the kids in your Group are feeling. If you notice that a kid seems to be feeling down or not quite themselves, you can intentionally try to create a safe environment for them. Offer to listen if they would like to share how they are feeling, and ask them what they may need to help them to feel more comfortable.



WELCOME

Welcome each kid by name.

Ask:

- *Would you rather eat a snack upside down or read a book upside down?*
- *Last week your challenge was to work on your Devotional every day. How did it go?*



PRAY

Say: *Has anyone made a s'more before? They are ooey and gooey and delicious! Let's make a pretend s'more to help us pray. Let's start with the graham cracker and say, "Dear God, thank you for loving us even when things are hard." Then comes the sweet chocolate, "God thank you for the sweet moments and people who bring joy to our days." Now the gooey warm marshmallow, "God help us spread your love to others." Last, lets add that last graham cracker, "God, thank you for helping us be strong and full of love. Amen."*

Give each kid a Bible.

Say:

- *Have you ever had a moment where you did something awesome, and then someone else got all the attention?*
- *Well, that happened to a guy named John the Baptist, let's see how he responded.*

Read:

- John 3:22-36

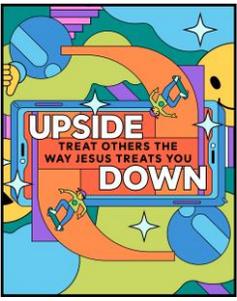
Review:

- *How does it feel when someone else gets picked, wins, or gets noticed instead of you?*
- *What do you think Jesus wants us to do when we feel that way?*
- *What does it look like to choose Jesus instead of choosing yourself?*



BIBLE

Continue to review and discuss until Large Group.



Jesus Must Increase I Must Decrease

Older Elementary Small Group Guide
Week 1 • Feb 28/March 1/2
Side 2 • Small Group # 2 • 15 minutes



ACTIVITY

Take out the Butcher Block Paper, Snowballs, and Bible Story Questions. On the butcher block paper, draw two circles, each taking up one half of the paper. Write YES in the middle of one and NO in the middle of the other.

- Give each kid a Snowball.
- Using the Bible Story Questions, you will ask one question at a time.
- Instruct kids to toss their Snowball landing it in the circle that is their answer.
- Give them one point per correct answer.
- Determine winner and celebrate!



CHALLENGE

This week, you have a Less Me, More Jesus Challenge! I want you each to do one thing every day to make Jesus bigger. This could look like you letting someone else go first, or helping before you are asked, or praying before you react. I know God created each of you to love and follow Jesus in BIG WAYS! You got this!



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Share with kids who is on your personal prayer list.

- Review the Bottom Line
- Review the Memory Verse

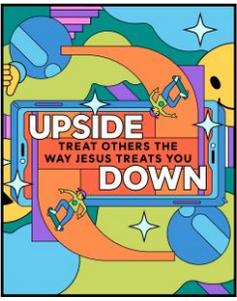
Remain in Small Group until Parent Pick Up.



TAKE HOME

As they leave, remind kids to share the Bottom Line with their grown-ups.

Don't do anything only to get ahead. Don't do it because you are proud. Instead, be humble. Value others more than yourselves. Philippians 2:3



Remember God Is Most Important

Older Elementary Small Group Guide
Week 2 • March 7/8/9
Side 1 • Small Group # 1 • 10 minutes



PRO TIP

Prayer is a concept that can be uncomfortable for some kids and adults. When challenging your group, don't force a kid to pray if they are not ready. Instead, pray for them and then share with them the different ways to pray: praying aloud, praying with your eyes shut, prayer by writing in a journal, and more.



WELCOME

Welcome each kid by name.

Ask:

- *Would you rather slide down a slide upside down or hang from monkey bars upside down?*
- *Last week you had a Less Me, More Jesus Challenge. How did it go?*



PRAY

Pray: *Dear God, thank You for loving me and always being with me. Help me remember that you are the most important part of my life. When I get distracted by games, friends, or worries, help me put you first. I want to learn how to love you, trust you, and follow you every day. Thank you for loving me before I ever loved you. Amen.*

Give each kid a Bible.

Say:

- *Have you ever had someone in charge of you? A teacher, a coach, or a parent? They don't have to be in the room for you to listen to what they have said, right?*
- *Today's story is about a man who was a BIG boss...but he believed Jesus was the BIGGEST.*

Read:

- Matthew 8:5-13

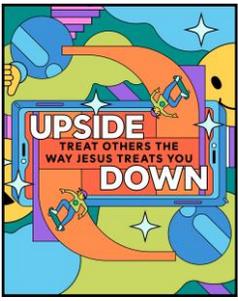
Review:

- *Why do you think the centurion trusted Jesus so much?*
- *Do we have to see Jesus to believe he can help us?*
- *What is something you could ask Jesus to help you with this week?*

Continue to review and discuss until Large Group.



BIBLE



Remember God Is Most Important

Older Elementary Small Group Guide

Week 2 • March 7/8/9

Side 2 • Small Group # 2 • 15 minutes



ACTIVITY

Take out the Aluminum Foil Sheets, Tape, Pom Poms, and Pipe Cleaners. Explain to your Group that they will be making a Centurion Helmet on your head.

- As they build the helmet on your head, prompt them to practice the Memory Verse.
- Let your Group know that if every person in your Group can correctly share the Memory Verse, you will wear the helmet they made next week for the entire gathering.
- Give them extra tries, help, and coaching as they work to share the Memory Verse.
- If everyone in your Group is able to say the Memory Verse, put your helmet in a safe place so you can wear it next week.



CHALLENGE

Say: *This week, you have a God First Challenge. I want everyone to find one way to put God first, every day! You can pray as soon as you wake up in the morning, before you do anything else. You can pray before taking your first bite of food at each meal. Or think of one nice thing to do for someone every morning and then do it that day! Remember, when God is first, everything else falls into place. You got this!*



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Share an age-appropriate way you try to remember that God is the most important.

- Example: *It's easy for me to try and control everything in my life. But this story reminds me that I need to be more like the commander and just say, 'God, I trust your authority. Just say the word.' It's a good reminder for me to be humble and remember God is in charge, not me.*
- Review the Bottom Line
- Review the Memory Verse

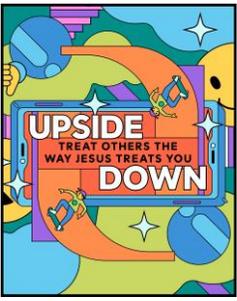
Remain in Small Group until Parent Pick Up.



TAKE HOME

Easter Invites (a few per kid, at the door)

Don't do anything only to get ahead. Don't do it because you are proud. Instead, be humble. Value others more than yourselves. Philippians 2:3



Love Like Jesus Even When It's Hard

Older Elementary Small Group Guide
Week 3 • March 14/15/16
Side 1 • Small Group # 1 • 10 minutes



PRO TIP

Remind kids that your Group is a safe place. Let them know they should share only if they feel comfortable. When someone does share, model listening fully by looking at them when they speak, acknowledging what you hear, and thanking them for sharing. Encourage others in the group to listen and encourage each other as they share.



WELCOME

Welcome each kid by name.

Leaders: Make sure you are wearing your centurion helmet if your group completed the challenge last week!

Ask:

- *Would you rather wear your shoes on your hands or your hat on your feet while upside down?*
- *Last week was our God First Challenge, how did it go?*



PRAY

Pray: *Dear Jesus, thank you for loving me all the time, even when I mess up. Sometimes it's hard to be kind, or forgive, or love people who hurt my feelings. But you did that for us. Please help me love like you—with patience, kindness, and a brave heart. When I want to be mean or give up, remind me to choose to love instead. Help me show your love to everyone I meet. Amen.*

Give each kid a Bible.

Say:

- *I'm going to give you some silly situations. If you would get mad, stomp your feet. If you would stay kind, give me a thumbs up!*
 - *Someone says something mean about your shoes!*
 - *Someone takes your favorite marker!*
 - *Someone cuts in front of you in line!*
- *Most of us want to get even... but Jesus teaches something totally upside down!*

Read:

- Matthew 5:38-48

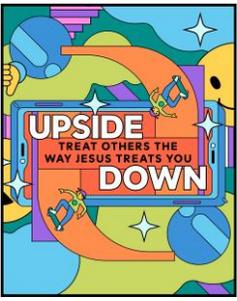
Review:

- *What does it mean to "love your enemies"?*
- *How does it feel when someone hurts your feelings or is unfair?*
- *How is Jesus' way of loving different from the world's way?*



BIBLE

Continue to review and discuss until Large Group.



Love Like Jesus Even When It's Hard

Older Elementary Small Group Guide
Week 3 • March 14/15/16
Side 2 • Small Group # 2 • 15 minutes

Say: *It can be tricky to get messages right. Especially when they sound upside down. Like when Jesus said to love your enemies.*



ACTIVITY

Make sure everyone is sitting in a circle. You will play a game of Whisper Down The Lane or Telephone using today's story and concepts. Whisper a statement to the kid sitting next to you. That kid will then whisper what they heard to the person next to them. They should only say it once. Keep whispering around the circle. At the end, have the last kid share out loud what they heard.

Start with these statements:

- *Jesus said, "Love your enemies."*
- *Be kind to people who are mean.*
- *Pray for people who hurt you.*
- *This shows you are children of your father in heaven.*



CHALLENGE

Say: *You are going to have the same challenge for the next three weeks- it's that important! Your challenge is to invite people to LCBC this Easter. Now sometimes, before you invite someone, you need to let them know that you go to church! So, this week, if you have people to invite, share with them about your church! If you are not sure who to invite, find ways to talk about LCBC to others. Share your favorite things to do here, what you are learning, and any fun memories or stories. You got this! Give each kid a few Easter Invites*

Share an age-appropriate example of how you showed Jesus' love, even though it was really hard.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- *Example: There was a time someone at work was really unfair to me, and my first instinct was to take revenge and complain about them to everyone. But I remembered this teaching from Jesus. Instead of complaining, I chose to pray for them and even did something nice for them. It was really hard, but it totally changed how I felt, and eventually, our relationship got better.*
- Review the Bottom Line
- Review the Memory Verse

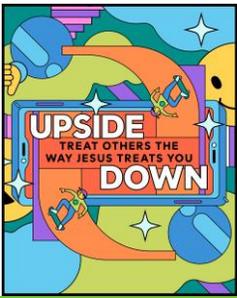
Remain in Small Group until Parent Pick Up.



TAKE HOME

Easter Invites (a few per kid, in Small Group)

Don't do anything only to get ahead. Don't do it because you are proud. Instead, be humble. Value others more than yourselves. Philippians 2:3



Make Time For Jesus

Older Elementary Small Group Guide
Week 4 • March 21/22/23
Side 1 • Small Group # 1 • 10 minutes



PRO TIP

The best thing we can do to help someone battling difficult emotions is to share truths about God. Here are a few examples:

- *God is bigger than any problem you might have.*
- *God can give you the strength to face any problem you might have.*
- *God loves you so much more than you can imagine.*
- *God is with you in everything you face.*
- *God is always working for good in your life.*



WELCOME

Welcome each kid by name.

Ask:

- *Would you rather drink water upside down or try to brush your teeth upside down?*
- *Last week you were challenged to invite someone or talk about Jesus with others. How did it go?*



PRAY

Pray: *Dear Jesus, thank you for always being with me. Sometimes my days get really busy with school, games, and fun things. Help me remember to make time for you. Help me listen when you want to talk to me and help me talk to you when I pray. I want you to be part of everything I do. Thank you for loving me. Amen.*

Give each kid a Bible.

Say:

- *Have you ever had a day where you knew your grown up had SO MUCH to do but they spent time with you instead?*
- *That kind of awesome feeling is what today's story is about!*

Read:

- Luke 10:38-42

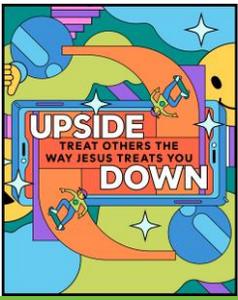
Review:

- *What was Martha doing? What was Mary doing?*
- *How did Jesus respond to Martha?*
- *Why did Jesus say Mary made the better choice?*
- *Have you ever felt like you didn't have time to listen to God or pray?*
- *How does it feel to slow down and spend time with Jesus?*



BIBLE

Continue to review and discuss until Large Group.



Make Time For Jesus

Older Elementary Small Group Guide
Week 4 • March 21/22/23
Side 2 • Small Group # 2 • 15 minutes



ACTIVITY

Give everyone a Memory Verse Activity Sheet. Let them color it in. As they color, discuss how the part of the Verse that says to value others more than yourselves can be applied to inviting people to LCBC for Easter.



CHALLENGE

Give everyone as many Easter Invites as they would like.

Say: *It is week two of your challenge to invite people to LCBC this Easter. And thinking about this week's theme- we need to make time for this! So, let's think strategy here. Who will we invite and what is the best TIME to invite them? Are you inviting someone from your sport team? Invite them before or after practice! Inviting a family member? Call them up on the phone! Let's make the time for Jesus this week by inviting!*



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Share an age-appropriate example of how you make time for Jesus first.

- Example: *My week can get super-crazy, and if I don't decide ahead of time when I'm going to connect with God, it often doesn't happen. For me, the best time is right in the morning before everyone else gets up. I schedule it just like any other appointment, because Jesus said only one thing is needed, and that time with him is the most important thing I can do.*
- Review the Bottom Line
- Review the Memory Verse

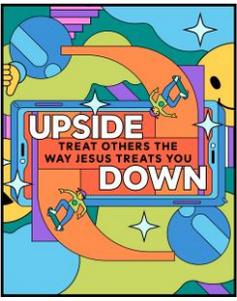
Remain in Small Group until Parent Pick Up.



TAKE HOME

- Easter Invites (a few per kid, in Small Group)
- Memory Verse Activity Sheet (1 per kid, in Small Group)

Don't do anything only to get ahead. Don't do it because you are proud. Instead, be humble. Value others more than yourselves. Philippians 2:3



Jesus Showed Us How To Be Humble

Older Elementary Small Group Guide
Week 5 • March 28/29/30
Side 1 • Small Group # 1 • 10 minutes



PRO TIP

Talking about inviting is easy but doing it can be much more difficult. Make it real for your Small Group by naming the people they want to invite. During kZones, talk to them about how they can personalize the Easter invitations. This helps kids feel confident to invite others and introduce them to Jesus.



WELCOME

Welcome each kid by name.

Ask:

- *Would you rather watch a movie upside down or draw a picture upside down?*
- *Last week you were challenged to make time for Jesus and invite others to Easter at LCBC. How did it go?*



PRAY

Pray: *Dear Jesus, thank you for showing us how to be humble. You were kind and gentle, even though you are the Son of God. You helped others, listened to people, and put others first. Help me not to brag or try to be the best, but to be kind, helpful, and loving like you. Teach me to have a humble heart that wants to serve others. Thank you for being my perfect example. Amen.*

Give each kid a Bible.

Say:

- *Imagine someone super important is coming to town... like a king or a superhero! People get excited—they want to see them and celebrate!*

Read:

- John 12:9-16

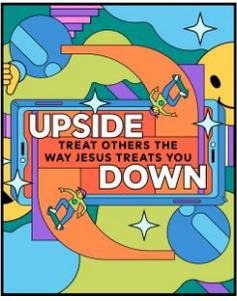
Review:

- *How did the people show that they were excited to see Jesus?*
- *How would you feel if a hero or king came to your town?*
- *How can we celebrate Jesus today without palm branches?*
- *How do you think Jesus felt seeing the people celebrate Him?*



BIBLE

Continue to review and discuss until Large Group.



Jesus Showed Us How To Be Humble

Older Elementary Small Group Guide

Week 5 • March 28/29/30

Side 2 • Small Group # 2 • 15 minutes



ACTIVITY

Take out the Easter Invites and give everyone as many as they would like to hand out.

- Have them fill out at least one invite and place it face down in the center of the Group.
- You will mix up the invites.
- Let kids, one at a time, select an invite, and then guess whose invite they selected.
- When they guess the owner, encourage the owner to get out there and invite!



CHALLENGE

Say: *It is the last week we can invite people to Easter at LCBC! And let's be real, most of the time, when we invite others, it ends up falling through. However, that's not the point! You have the chance to set an example at LCBC and show grown ups AND even older students how it is done! Show them what kids can do and how you can make a difference just by inviting. Who knows what might happen after you invite. That person you invite might feel so loved that they say yes in a couple of weeks. Let's do this!*



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Share who and how you will be inviting others to LCBC this Easter.

- Review the Bottom Line
- Review the Memory Verse

Remain in Small Group until Parent Pick Up.



TAKE HOME

Easter Invites (a few per kid, in Small Group)

Don't do anything only to get ahead. Don't do it because you are proud. Instead, be humble. Value others more than yourselves. Philippians 2:3