



SMALL GROUP LEADER GUIDE

Explained / Week 2

BEFORE GROUP

BOTTOM LINE

Context creates clarity.

SCRIPTURE

Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. With this in mind, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught (Luke 1:1-4 NIV).

GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

To help students understand that reading Scripture can be less confusing when we take time to discover its context, including history, authorship, geography, etc. and how to discover the context of the passages of Scripture they are reading.

THINK ABOUT THIS

Small group leaders, don't feel like you have to know all of the answers to the questions context creates. Don't put undue pressure on yourself to be an "expert" here and if you have your own questions ask your ministry leader and look for answers as well. Your willingness to be a learner alongside your students as they also learn can be an encouragement to them. Participate in the process with them. In addition, keep in mind, we all bring a bit of baggage to the conversation about the Bible. A lot of us have inherited a certain understanding that may feel confusing now, or even contradicting what we are hearing in this series. The ultimate goal for our students, and for us, as leaders, is to grow more curious and take more ownership in our learning and understanding of the Bible.

Create meaningful conversation. Adjust the questions as needed, and don't feel like you need to answer all of them.

DURING GROUP

BEFORE starting the video, discuss questions 1 and 2

1. Has someone misunderstood a situation you were in because they didn't know the whole story?
2. Read out loud these three news headlines. "Hawaiian Monk Seal Gets Eel Student Up Its Nose;" "Parents Turn To Craigslist After Son Forgets Location of Parking Garage;" "Canada Man Flew 1,400 Miles in the Wrong Direction After Boarding the Wrong Flight to the Arctic." Brainstorm the questions you would ask to try to figure out what happened.

After the first pause, discuss question 3

3. Have you ever read a story in the Bible that doesn't seem like it could happen now?

After the second pause, discuss questions 4-6

4. When you learned about the context of the story, did it make it seem more real?
5. How does knowing context help you understand the story you are reading better or change how you see it?
6. Read Philippians 4:13. How does knowing the context of this verse change what you have always thought about it?

After the third pause, discuss question 7

7. Why do you think it's important to include others in your learning of Scripture and what Scripture means for your life? Who are a few people you can learn the context of Scripture alongside, and who can help you see Scripture more clearly and also how to apply it to your life?

Finish the video and help students try to understand context by doing the following activity:

Hand out the Explained bookmarks. This XP is designed to help students explore the context of Scripture and how it is applicable to them. Using the questions located on the bookmark, go through a passage of Scripture together answering each question together. Try **Luke 5:17-26**. (Option: break students into pairs or threes to work together and then reconvene as a whole group) Share the benefits of a study Bible if you have one to show/use.

TRY THIS

Leaders, **follow up** with your students this week and encourage them to take what they learned in the XP during your small group time to their personal reading of Scripture. These bookmarks can be used as a reminder for your students to process the context of Scripture as they read.