

## Ninth Grade- Why do we Read the Bible?

*Before we begin talking about ways to read the Bible, we want to give students time to understand why we read it in the first place. We don't want students merely reading out of a sense of moral obligation, but instead, we want them to approach God's word with a sense of genuine expectation. We want them to know where they can turn when they need direction, comfort, and transformation.*

### Introducing the Topic

*We want to give students time to discuss what they already know about this topic! Let students discuss and ask each other follow up questions. Welcome all honest thoughts and opinions!*

-Have you ever found yourself in need of direction in life? Would you care to share that story?

-Have you heard it taught that you should have a "quiet time"? What do you think that looks like? Why do you think people recommend it?

-Why do you think we read the Bible? What's the reason behind it?

-Have you ever tried reading your Bible on your own? What was that like for you? Do you feel like you got anything out of it?

### Scripture Study

*As you transition to the Scripture Study portion of this session, remind students that Scripture is where we turn for truth. We want to continually reiterate that we study Scripture not just for the "Christian take" on a matter, but God's revealed word, given to us out of love for our good.*

-Explain to your students that though there are many personal reasons we may read the Bible, today we are going to talk about three general reasons we read Scripture- emphasize that these are three things that we can be sure to find when we consistently turn to Scripture.

1) DIRECTION: When we turn to Scripture, we find unchanging truths we can confidently navigate out life by. There are wisdoms scriptures, there are stories of people lives we can learn from, and there are commands that God gave us for our flourishing.

-Read Psalm 119:97-112 together.

-What stuck out to you?

-Look back over the passage, what are all the things the author says God's law allowed him to do?

2) COMFORT: When we turn to Scripture, we will find comfort in the midst of our pain, hope in the middle of our despair, encouragement in the midst of our doubt, and confidence in the midst of our trials. There are stories that remind us of God's faithfulness, passages that explain His great love for us, endless reminders that God never leaves our side.

-Read Psalm 119: 41-56 together.

-What stuck out to you?

-Look back over the passage, what are all the things the author says Scripture does for him? Why do you think he feels that way?

3) TRANSFORMATION: When we meditate on Scripture, it's truth and it's power work to remind and renew our minds to see the world truthfully. We understand more of who God is, and the glory of who He is transforms us. We understand more of who we are, and we find the strength to become who we were created to be.

-Read Isaiah 55:10-11 and John 17:17.

-What stuck out to you about these verses?

-What does the metaphor of the rain and the snow mean about Scripture?

-What does it mean to be sanctified?

### Practical Application

*We want to give students space to apply the truths they just read in God's word to their own lives, and ponder together where their walk would be strengthened by greater reliance on God's word! Encourage as much honesty and openness as your group is willing to give!*

-How often do you turn to the Bible for direction? What do you find yourself turning to instead? *(You may need to rephrase this question, try asking, "how do you make big decisions in your life?" or "when you plan what classes you're going to take, what teams you'll join, or what events you'll go to, do you ever think about what God would advise?")*

-How often do you turn to the Bible for comfort? What do you find yourself turning to instead?

-When you find yourself wanting to work on yourself, how often do you turn to Scripture? What do you turn to instead? *(Encourage your students that even simple answers like, "working out" count!)*

-Remind your students that this isn't a guilt trip, this is a time to stop down and remind ourselves that God loves us so much that He gave us a clear way to hear from Him, He gave us a sure place to find direction, comfort, and transformation when we need it.