

## **BiG IDEA SMALL GROUP DiSCUSSiON GiDE**

Small groups that focus on the Big Idea for the week can use this guide to apply the message to life and take action. Feel free to use whatever parts of this guide best fit your group personality and time frame. All verses, unless otherwise noted, are from the New International Version (NIV).

### **10.11/12.08 // OUT OF CONTROL SELF? LET CHRIST HAVE CONTROL**

#### **// Ice Breaker** \_\_\_\_\_

Option 1: Is there a situation you lost control of this past week?

Option 2: What are you "addicted" to right now, or were addicted to in the past? It can be serious or fun. What "-aholics" group would you like to start?

#### **// Questions for Discussion** \_\_\_\_\_

Do you believe that nearly every human problem has a "spiritual element" to it? Why? When a person has an affliction or addiction, what key issues are psychologists and pharmaceuticals unable to deal with adequately?

In whatever way addiction can be called a "disease", human responsibility is always involved...so how do you think addictions begin?

Read Ephesians 2:2-3 (NLT):

2 You used to live in sin, just like the rest of the world, obeying the devil—the commander of the powers in the unseen world. He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God. 3 All of us used to live that way, following the passionate desires and inclinations of our sinful nature.

Where do temptations come from? What is the relationship between our own sinful nature and the devil?

How accurate do you think the popular depiction is of having a little angel on one shoulder and a little demon on the other, trying to get you to do good or evil? What tools or resources does Satan exploit to influence our thinking?

Living for Christ is impossible without the power of the Holy Spirit. Read Galatians 5:19-24 (NLT):

19 When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, the results are very clear: sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division, 21 envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other sins like these. Let me tell you again, as I have before, that anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the Kingdom of God. 22 But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things! 24 Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there.

Why do you think these Christ-like qualities are called "fruit"?

In practical terms, what tools or resources does the Spirit use to help us become more like Christ?

What does it mean to “nail to his cross” those things in verse 24?

Read James 4:7 (NIV).

Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Read Ephesians 6:10-18 (NLT) about “spiritual warfare”:

10 A final word: Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. 11 Put on all of God's armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil. 12 For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore, put on every piece of God's armor so you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil. Then after the battle you will still be standing firm. 14 Stand your ground, putting on the belt of truth and the body armor of God's righteousness. 15 For shoes, put on the peace that comes from the Good News so that you will be fully prepared. 16 In addition to all of these, hold up the shield of faith to stop the fiery arrows of the devil. 17 Put on salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. 18 Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere.

According to verses 14 & 16, what are some defensive tools or resources we can use to resist the devil? How does this work in practical ways?

According to verses 15, 17-18, what are some offensive tools or resources?

**// Prayer** \_\_\_\_\_

Pray about areas where you need to let Christ have control.

Pray for one another's battles you're facing.