



DISCUSSION GUIDE JANUARY 2008

- THE GREAT RESCUE
- YOUR QUEST
- DRAGONS
- SOJOURNERS

HOW TO USE THE DISCUSSION GUIDE

EACH TOPIC IN THE *YW DISCUSSION GUIDE* INCLUDES:

- **THE BOTTOM LINE**
contains the purpose of each week's meeting. Read this section first. Knowing the goal will help you adapt the material to meet the needs of your group.
- **CONNECT**
an optional way to break the ice and introduce the topic.
- **READ**
reveals the biblical perspective on the topic.
- **THINK**
gives some thought-provoking questions and activities.
- **LIVE**
recommends ways to apply the lesson.
- **OPTION**
gives additional ideas to enhance your discussion with students through activities, music, movie clips, etc.

Have students read the appropriate *YW* topic during the week after the meeting. To prepare yourself for questions about the material in the magazine read the topic in *YW* before your group time.

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THE GREAT RESCUE

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the bottom line God loves us so completely that nothing would keep Him from His rescue mission.

connect Divide your students into two teams of equal size, team A and team B. Write the scenes below onto slips of paper. Fold up those slips of paper up so they can't be read and put them into a container. Have a player from team A draw a slip of paper containing a scene to act out for team B. Explain that each of the scenes are great rescues—some are from movies, some are from real life. When acting out the scenes, the names of the main characters in the rescue can't be said. Have a member from team A act for team B and vice versa until all of the scenes have been acted out. During each round, time each team and keep track of the time taken (in seconds). Once all of the scenes have been acted out, add up the total seconds it took for each team to identify the scenes. The team with the lowest score wins.

Here are the scenes:

- Superman rescuing Lois Lane.
- Harriet Tubman helping slaves escape in the Underground Railroad
- Mario rescuing the Princess in Super Mario Brothers
- Shrek rescuing Fiona
- Sam rescuing Frodo at the end of the *Lord of the Rings*
- Corrie ten Boom hiding Jews from the Nazis in World War II
- Picking up a “get out of jail free” card in Monopoly

Once the game is completed, have your students brainstorm some more great rescues—it could be anything from a movie to something that is historically accurate. Introduce this week's topic by saying: “There have been many great rescues in human history. And our stories and legends tell of great rescues of princes and princesses pointing to the greatest rescue of human history—our rescue by Jesus Christ.”

read As a group, read the following verses out loud and answer this question: “What does this say about God's rescue of His people?”

- Luke 4:18-19
- Luke 19:10
- Romans 6:23
- Galatians 4:3-5
- 2 Timothy 4:18
- Hebrews 9:15

think Use the following discussion questions however you wish—have one big group discussion, or break into smaller groups and use these questions as a guide, etc.

- What does it mean to have a mission?
- What does it mean to be rescued?
- What, then, is a rescue mission?
- Why did we need to be rescued? (As a group, consider reading Romans 6:23.)
- Why couldn't we rescue ourselves?
- What were we rescued from?
- What does it say about Jesus that He came to earth and gave His life to rescue us?
- Since Jesus died to rescue us, what does it say about how He feels about us?
- What happens once someone becomes “rescued” by God?
- How do you think someone should live once they have been rescued? (The same as before? Forget about it? Always aware of what has happened?)



THE GREAT RESCUE

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live Explain that when we received Jesus' payment for our sins, we became citizens of heaven. As a group, read Colossians 1:13-14. Point out that when we made that decision we were transferred into God's Kingdom, which is here and now as well as eternal.

As a group, read Romans 8:16-17. Point out that when we accepted Jesus' rescue, we became God's children, sons and daughters of the King.

Then as a group, read Romans 6:23. Point out that the end of the verse says: *the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus*. Once we accepted Jesus' payment of death for our sins, we received eternal life with Him, which will be phenomenal. It will be the perfection of everything that's good, true, and beautiful.

We were rescued from our sin, and now we'll spend forever with our Rescuer. Ask your group: "How are you living? Are you living as a rescued citizen of heaven? Do you believe the things God has declared to be true about you, rescued one?" Explain that once we realize how much we are loved and how highly God thinks of us because of who we are in Jesus, we will live differently. We will live as sons and daughters of the King.

Close your group in prayer; here is a sample: "Dear God, thank You for coming to save us. You have rescued us from being separated from You eternally. Thank You for Your mission to recapture our hearts. In this new year, please help us understand on a deeper level what You rescued us from, how good You are, and how much You love us. We pray this in the rescuing name of Jesus, amen."

option (live) Here are some songs you can use this week:

"Rescue Is Coming" from the David Crowder Band CD *A Collision* (SixSteps/EMI)

"Rescued Ones" from the Robbie Seay Band CD *Better Days* (Sparrow/EMI)

"Rescue" from the Newsong CD *Rescue—Live Worship* (Integrity)



YOUR QUEST JANUARY.08

the bottom line We have been given a quest by Jesus Himself—to continue what He started.

connect Say: “Last summer was the summer of the movie sequel—*Pirates of the Caribbean*, *Spiderman*, *Shrek*, and even *High School Musical* all had sequels. Why do you think there are so many sequels being made now? What do you think about sequels? If you could make a sequel to any movie—what would it be?”

Explain that one reason we love sequels is because people get connected with the story and the characters and want more of them. We want to hear more about their adventures, and the quests of their lives.

Say: “We are all living in the massive global story that God is telling about His glory. We’ve been given a part. It might seem like a small part to you, but God has always worked through the lives of people to bring His great rescue.

“We have been invited into the great adventure of continuing the work of Jesus throughout our lives. As Jesus walked on the earth, He brought the ways of the Kingdom—love, beauty, life, health, healing—into our fallen brokenness. Like lighting a match in a dark room, Jesus shined the light of the Kingdom wherever He went. We are called to continue what He started—to show the world the ways of God and His Kingdom. Are you ready for the adventure?”

read As a group, read the following verses out loud and discuss the answer to this question: “What does this say about the challenge we’ve been given by God?”

- 2 Corinthians 2:14
- 2 Corinthians 5:18-20
- Luke 17:20-21
- John 20:21

think Use the following discussion questions however you wish—have one big group discussion, or break into smaller groups and use these questions as a guide, etc.

- Luke 17:20-21 says that God’s Kingdom is among us. How can it be among us?
- What is God’s Kingdom? (God’s Kingdom is anywhere that God reigns as King and where the goodness of who He is explodes into reality. In God’s Kingdom, God’s attributes—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, and goodness—are seen, felt, and lived in. God’s Kingdom is where the pure goodness of who God is takes over. God’s Kingdom is both invisible and visible, spiritual and physical.)
- What in your world does not look like God’s Kingdom?
- How can you make your world look more like God’s Kingdom?
- Second Corinthians 5:20 says that we are Jesus’ ambassadors. What is an ambassador?
- How do you think you are doing as a representative of the Kingdom of God?

live God’s Kingdom is not just heaven. It is wherever God reigns, wherever He is seen. That means you can make the world look more like God’s Kingdom everywhere you go—your church, home, school, wherever.

Say: “Today’s challenge is about how we live in this world. We have been a part of a great rescue and are ambassadors for the One who has rescued us. Satan is still trying to keep people captive even though Jesus died to set people free. Everywhere sin and Satan are keeping people captive, we’re supposed to help break the chains. Every millimeter of ground—spiritually, mentally, physically—we’re supposed to claim for God’s Kingdom. We are called to show people the goodness of God and His Kingdom and to let them know that the Enemy has been defeated. We, as Jesus’ followers, take on His mission to put a stake in the ground and claim our lives for God’s Kingdom.”

As a group, read YOUR QUEST.03 out loud.



YOUR QUEST

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After you've read the devo, say: "This adventure is to be lived. This is not a movie or a story to sit back and reflect on. This is a quest that is changing the world."

Then say: "So where are you today? Are you sitting around just happy to be rescued? Are you watching others drown while still reflecting on your rescue? Are you drowning yourself because you're not living out what's true? It's time to join the quest that Jesus has given us. It's time for us to understand our life has a purpose far bigger than just living and dying. Our quest is to live the adventure of making Him and His Kingdom known by getting to know Him and then living out His ways until He comes back."

As a group, brainstorm about each others' gifts and abilities. Then ask: "How can we leverage those gifts, talents, and resources that God has given us to help make Him and His Kingdom known and seen in the world?"

Close your group in prayer; here is a sample: "Dear God, thank You so much for giving our lives purpose. Thank You for being good and for wanting the world to see and experience Your goodness. Thank You for letting us be involved in something so important as making You known to all the world. Lord, we want Your Kingdom to come. Give us eyes to see when we can help make our world look more like Your Kingdom by what we say and do. We love You, Lord. And we ask these things in Jesus' name, amen."

option (live) Here are some songs you can use this week:

"You Said" from the Shane and Shane CD *Psalms* (Inpop/EMI)

"Tell The World" from the Hillsong United CD *Look To You* (Word)

"Lifesong" from the Casting Crowns CD *Lifesong* (Beach Street/Provident)

"The Great Adventure" from the Steven Curtis Chapman CD *The Great Adventure* (Sparrow/EMI)

option (live) Challenge your students to think of some ways to creatively share about the quest that's ahead of us. They can film a video, write a song, draw a picture—something to express how they feel about the quest Jesus has given us.



DRAGONS JANUARY.08

the bottom line God promises us hardship and attacks on our journey—they are all part of the adventure.

connect This week's group time gets a more serious start. To start your group, say: "The adventure of our life will not always be easy. In fact, we've been promised that there will be bumps in the road." Give each student a piece of paper and a pen. Then ask: "What are some tough times you've faced lately? Think about the past year and some of the hard circumstances you've faced." Encourage students just to review the past year, they don't have to share their hard times out loud.

After a few minutes, say: "Once we've been rescued by the King, we don't relax and calmly await the end of the story. We start the long, treacherous journey home. Since we live in a fallen world, hard things happen. And since we're fighting to know God more and fighting for those who do not know they can be free, we get a target on our backs. We step into the fray because the ultimate Dragon, the Devil, wants to kill us by taking us away from the life that can only be found in God. He uses all other dragons to that end. He is the Dragon behind all dragons."

read As a group, read the following verses out loud and discuss the answers to this question: "What does this say about how we should handle hardships and dragons throughout our lives?"

- Psalm 16:8
- Psalm 55:22
- Proverbs 3:5-6
- 1 Peter 5:8
- John 16:33
- Hebrews 12:1
- Romans 8:28

think As a group read DRAGONS.02 out loud. Then use the following discussion questions however you wish—have one big group discussion, or break into smaller groups and use these questions as a guide, etc.

- When you went through the situations you thought about before, did Satan pull a similar trick on you that he pulled on Eve and plant a seed of doubt about God's goodness?
- What can we do to remind ourselves of the truth when our circumstances are hard and we're starting to wonder whether God can really be good?
- What do you think it looks like to trust God when you're facing a hard time?

live Explain: "As we follow Jesus, there will be trouble and there will be battles to fight. But as Romans 8:28 promises, God is always working for good.

"If you've read any stories where the hero must fight a dragon, you know that a dragon is always defending something he doesn't want the hero to find. We've got to be willing to stand in the ring and fight the dragons that come during our journey—as we do, God uses the strength we gain in the fight to grow deep character and faith in us. Even Satan's most vicious attacks in this fallen world can be used for good if we turn to God to help us."

As a group, read Exodus 14:13-14 out loud. Then ask: "What does it look like to be still and have the Lord fight for you?"

Say: "One way is to run to God in prayer. There we can lay our burdens at God's feet and ask Him to fight for us. There is a great chance that everyone walked in the door today already engaged in a fight. We can help each other fight as we pray for one another."

Ask your students to choose a partner and have them share with each other about any dragons they might be fighting right now. If they can't think of any, have them share any potential challenges or "dragons"



DRAGONS

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they see coming in the future. Have them pray for each other and encourage each other to fight the dragons that God allows in their path.

Close your group in prayer; here is a sample: “Dear God, thank You for this chance to talk about You. We pray that we would be wise and be aware of the potential dragons coming our way. Help us to lean on You and not to run away from You in the midst of whatever comes our way. We know that You are always with us and will never leave us. Help us experience Your love when life gets hard. Thank You for leading us, we pray this in Jesus’ name, amen.”

option (live) Here are some songs you can use this week:

“Trouble” from the Caedmon’s Call CD *Overdressed* (INO/Provident)

“Storm” from the Lifehouse CD *Who We Are* (Geffen)

“Good Fight” from the Hyper Static Union CD *Lifegiver* (RKT/Provident)



SOJOURNERS

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the bottom line Your life isn't a solo journey and you must choose your sojourners wisely.

connect Have you ever heard the term “buddy movie”? It's a term for a movie that's about people who go on a trip together—like Shrek and Donkey, Frodo and Sam, etc.

Break your group into smaller groups. Give each group something to write with. Give them some time to create a “buddy movie” idea that they're going to pitch to the rest of the group. Their pitch needs to include at least two main characters, a destination, the journey, and any challenges along the way.

Have your groups share their ideas and then have the rest of the group give them feedback. (If you want, give a prize to the group that gets the most positive feedback.)

Say: “Like our buddy movie plotlines, the journey you're on is not for solo travelers. The question isn't, ‘Will I walk alongside someone?’ The real question is who you'll walk with. Who will the sojourners be? Who will you choose to be a part of the adventure of your life?”

read As a group, read the following verses out loud and discuss the answers to this question: “What does this passage say about what I should consider when picking my sojourners on the journey?”

- Proverbs 13:20
- Proverbs 27:17
- Ecclesiastes 4:12
- John 15:13
- 1 Corinthians 15:33
- Ephesians 4:15

think Use the following discussion questions however you wish—have one big group discussion, or break into smaller groups and use these questions as a guide, etc.

- What does it mean to you to be a friend?
- What do you look for in a friend?
- What makes someone a “good friend” to you?
- What do you want your life to be about? At the end of your life, what would you want to be said about what kind of person you were? What direction do you want your life to head?
- What kind of friends do you think will aid you in getting where you want to go? What kind of friends will encourage and challenge you to know God more? What kind of friends will remind you of the importance of your life and what God has entrusted you with? What kind of friends will help you impact this world and even eternity?
- How can our relationship with God help us choose who we go on life's journey with?

live Say: “Do you choose your friends or do your friends choose you? The reality is that you have a large say in the people that you choose as friends. Chances are there's a good reason why you're friends with the people you're friends with. You can choose who you're influenced by.”

As a group, read SOJOURNERS.04 out loud as a group. Then say: “Our friends will have an effect on the quality and direction of our life's journey. So we need to be very wise about who we choose to be close friends with. So what's the next step for you? Is it seeking to have better and truer friends? Is it to take stock of the quality of your friendships and really think about who you are journeying with? Is it to start asking God to help you choose friends wisely?” Give your students a moment of quiet time to think and reflect on the wise thing for them to do as a result of today's conversation. Be sure to make yourself and other leaders available to help them think/talk through any action steps that might need some help.

Close your group in prayer; here is a sample: “Heavenly Father, thank You for what an amazing God and friend You are. Thank You for creating us the way that You have. You have made us to not only need You, but



SOJOURNERS

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to need other people to help us navigate through life. Help us to make wise choices with the people we choose to go on the journey of life with. Would You use those friendships for Your glory? We pray this in Jesus' name, amen."

option (live) Here are some songs you could use this week:

"Come Together" from the Third Day CD *Come Together* (Essential/Provident)

"Stand" from the Rascal Flatts CD *Me and My Gang* (Lyric Street)

"You Know Where to Find Me" from the Matthew West CD *Happy* (Universal South/EMI)