



leader's guide

named by

God

kasey
van norman

overcoming your past, transforming your present, embracing your future

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Leader's Guide

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Named by God Leader's Guide: Overcoming Your Past, Transforming Your Present, Embracing Your Future

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Group Session 1

A Note From Kasey

Dearest group leader,

Welcome to week 1! You are getting ready to meet with your group for the first time on your *Named by God* journey, and I am thrilled for you and for your fellow travelers as you embark on this adventure.

This week, I encourage you to have fun with your group as you start getting to know one another. Remember that the desire to know and be known is found in each of us as human beings. When we sense we are valued and respected by another person, we instantly feel more comfortable and at home with him or her. Make sure you take time this week to show your fellow group participants that they have worth. Pray that the Lord will fill you with supernatural love for all the members, regardless of who they are or where they have been. It is only through the power of the Holy Spirit that you will be capable of seeing these people through the filter of Jesus Christ. Do not attempt to love them through your own human ability—you will most certainly fall short.

Do your best to develop a foundation of trust in your group this week. Regardless of your age or experience level, set yourself apart as a confident yet humble leader, keeping in mind Christ's example of servant leadership. One of the primary goals of your leadership role should be to help the members of your group feel surrounded by the grace and mercy of Christ. To do this effectively, you need to be vulnerable about your own weaknesses and genuinely interested in each member. Welcome others for who they are in Christ, acknowledging that all of us are in need of his grace. As Jesus says, "I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners" (Matthew 9:13, NIV).

Although you will not be leading an in-depth discussion about the DVD session this week, you might consider preparing your group members for the intense subject matter they will encounter in the coming week during their individual Bible study time. Participants will be asked to take a look into their family lives and the particular traits (good and bad) that have impacted who they are today. They will begin to understand their corrupted nature at birth and how the sins they witnessed throughout childhood and adolescence impact the choices they make as adults.

I encourage you to be sensitive to the fact that your group members bring unique family histories to the table. Group sessions are not the time to replay traumatic childhood events or to uncover hidden issues participants might be harboring toward their family members. However, this group time is ideal for preparing members' hearts to receive a revelation from God in the weeks to come. Make it clear to your participants that the real work with God will be done during their personal time with him each day. Assure the members of your group that there is victory in store for them if they stay surrendered to what God is doing. He desires to transform each and every person, but that transformation can only take place from the inside out.

Finally, the most important thing you can do for your group is to pray specifically for the members. If they have voiced specific needs, concerns, or struggles, make sure you bring them before the throne of God.

Walking every step of this journey with you,

Kasey

Session 1

Schedule

1. Group members arrive, sign in, and socialize with one another (approximately 10 minutes).
You should take this time to make sure all materials and the DVD are set up in the meeting room.
2. Bring the group to attention. Introduce yourself and the Bible study, and open with a word of prayer (approximately 10 minutes).
3. Have group members introduce themselves (approximately 30 minutes). If your group is small and its members are relatively comfortable with one another, you might have people share where they currently are in their spiritual journeys. If you have a large group, simply ask each member to state her name, family information, and perhaps one interesting thing about herself.
4. Ask group participants to turn to page 5 in *Named by God Bible Study*—Group Session 1. Watch session 1 on the DVD (approximately 40 minutes).
5. Discuss what members can expect during their personal time of study this week. If you have a small group, ask members to share prayer requests as they feel comfortable; have a volunteer write down requests each week and e-mail them to the group. Offer a closing prayer and dismiss the group (10-15 minutes). If you have a large group, you simply may want to close in prayer and dismiss, or you may invite members to write their prayer requests on note cards before they leave. Encourage participants to do the Bible study and to return the following week.

