

FOR KING AND COUNTRY

Artist:

FOR KING AND COUNTRY
 FORKINGANDCOUNTRY.COM

Album Title & Record Company:

BURN THE SHIPS
 WORD ENTERTAINMENT

Video Title:

GOD ONLY KNOWS

Study By:

DOUG RANCK
 FREE METHODIST CHURCH
 SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA
 DRANCK@FMCSB.ORG



Theme

Suicide

Objective

Suicide is the result of someone's choice to end his or her own life. Suicide is not a mental illness in itself, but a serious potential consequence of treatable mental disorders. Someone in your group may have known someone who ended their life. Someone in your group may have known of someone who ended his or her life. Someone in your group may have contemplated it. Someone in your group may have actually tried. Suicide affects everybody in one way or another. In this lesson, your group will discover that God calls us to choose life, not death.

Warm Up

Hand out the Student Guides. Have the students find a partner and follow the directions and complete the *Suicide Profile* section.

Transition

Survey your group for their responses. Follow with these questions:

- What is most difficult in thinking about this topic?
- What is the source of some of the myths we hear?

- How do well-known stories help or hurt in our efforts to understand the impact and causes of suicide?
- How many of you have been impacted by suicide more than two times?

Say something like, "Suicide is the result of someone's choice to end his or her own life. You may have known someone who ended his or her life. You may have known of someone who ended his or her life. You may have contemplated it. You may have actually tried. Suicide affects everybody in one way or another. In this lesson, we will discover suicide is a human choice for death, but God calls us to choose life."

The Video

Ask your group to turn to the *Choices* section in their Student Guides. Use the band's website to give a little background on For KING & COUNTRY. Plan to play the video twice so that participants can take in the story and then respond the second time through on their Student Guides.

When the video has ended, let different people share their list. Follow by discussing these questions together:

- What surprised you about this video?
- What did you find confusing or affirming to what you know about suicide and its impact?

- What does this video say about choices?
- Why do we need to be aware of our choices but know it was someone else's choice to take their own life?

Transition

Say something like, "The Bible does not use the word 'suicide' though it does give us stories of those who did choose to end their life like Judas, King Saul, and Samson. Those stories are sad, and we can easily trace the path of choices which led to the action. God's Word reminds us we never *have* to make a choice to end our life. He has something better through His great and unconditional love. He offers us life now and for eternity. We are going to study a Bible passage that declares how much God loves us and how His choice to love us can influence our decision for life."

Bible Study

Read **Psalm 139:1-18** together as a group. Have each person read a verse and complete the entire chapter. Give everyone about ten minutes to complete the *God's Choice* exercise on their own. When everybody is done, give them the opportunity to share what they discovered. Follow with these questions:

- Which of these verses was most "moving" to you?

- What does it mean to be "fearfully and wonderfully made?"
- Why is it also important to know God is everywhere we go? How is that a comfort?
- How would these words be useful to you or someone you know in helping them to choose life?

Wrap Up

Finish off your time with a short talk. Direct participants to take notes in the *Caring* section of the Student Guide as you talk. Explain this list:

How Do We Take Care of Ourselves?

- Rest – take naps, get plenty of sleep
- Play – games, sports, exercise
- Connect – find community with others
- Reach out – don't expect others to know what you are feeling
- Pray
- Remember, God loves you – **Psalm 139**
- Remember, we (youth group, church) love you
- Remember, life here is only a little of all of eternity – this life is flawed, but God's love is always with us.

Pray for each member of your group, ask them if they have any specific prayer requests on this topic and be sure everybody knows "what is said in the group stays in the group."