



# God the Provider

## OBJECTIVE

To help groups understand and experience God as the source of their lives and all things that sustain them.

## FOCUS THIS WEEK

Nothing we have is really ours. It is all a gift. In a world that tells us that we can provide for ourselves and challenges us to take control of our own lives, it's humbling and difficult to grasp that food, clothing, home, family, work and all we need from day to day come to us as a gift. These gifts are given to those who say thanks, and to those who don't. The sun shines both on those who acknowledge the giver of the gifts and on those who just keep on taking and taking. Which one are you?

## FAITH5 SMALL GROUP TIME



**SHARE** highs and lows to set the stage for a more open and meaningful discussion. Pair group members up one-on-one to share the best and worst things that happened this week. After a short while, return to small group and invite each person to share their partner's highs and lows. Encourage youth to write their personal highs and lows, those of their partner, and a short prayer on their FAITH5 Small Group Time Handout.



**READ** and highlight the theme verse, Colossians 1:16-17, in your Bibles and circle key words. A musical version of this Scripture verse can be found at [www.faithink.com](http://www.faithink.com), FINKlink AC02.



**TALK** about how the Bible reading might relate to today's highs and lows. Supplement your discussion with some of the following.

### A. IMAGES IN WORDS AND ART

Take a look at the theme art and cartoons. What do you see in the art? Ask youth where they are in the art. How might the art and the theme verse apply to your group highs and lows today?

### B. CATECHISM ENCOUNTER

Read Luther's explanation of the First Article of the Apostles' Creed in your Small Catechism. Circle five things God provides. List them here: Accept and affirm all thoughtful answers.

## C. QUESTIONS TO PONDER

**1. What is the difference between a want and need? Does God always provide for both?** A “want” is something we think we need to have, but is really not vital, like designer clothes, gizmos (iPad®, anyone?), fancy cars, etc. A “need” is something we must have. In our country, we’re very blessed to even be able to ask a question like this!

**2. Brainstorm a list of five things you need to survive.** Accept and affirm all thoughtful answers. Make sure your kids are beginning to grasp the difference between “wants” and “needs.”

**3. How does God provide for each of these needs?** Accept and affirm all thoughtful answers. The Small Catechism reminds us to be confident God will provide food, clothing, home and family, daily work and all we need from day to day.

**4. How can you show God you are thankful?** Accept and affirm all thoughtful answers. Encourage your kids to thank God in prayer.

**D. QUOTATIONS** Ask youth to choose a quotation and share their thoughts and questions about it.

**E. TERMS OF THE WEEK** Review these key terms and write definitions.

**Apostles’ Creed:** An early statement of faith recognizing God as Father, Son and Spirit. This was written by the early church to summarize the basic teachings of the apostles. It was not written directly by the apostles.

**Needs:** Things required for survival.

**Provide:** To supply means of subsistence.

**Providence:** A name for God that acknowledges God as the provider of all our needs.

**Wants:** Things wished for or desired.

## F. GROUP BUSINESS

**1. Servant Event Idea:** Many communities have an organization called Meals On Wheels. This is a program that provides hot meals for those unable to prepare a hot, healthy meal for themselves. Meals On Wheels relies completely on volunteers for all their food delivery. Have your small group plan on a day or week to help deliver meals. This would be a good event to invite families to participate in. Afterwards, share a meal together remembering to thank God for using your group to help provide. If you don’t have Meals On Wheels, ask your pastor to suggest someone in the congregation who needs meals prepared and provided. For another option, host a church cookout and have small groups bring food items to pass. Open this to the community as a gift.

**2. FAITH5 Home Huddle:** Encourage youth to take a few minutes for FAITH5 with their families each night at home, using the FAITH5 Journals or the Home Huddle Handout.

**G. WRAP UP** Summarize the event with your group, assigning someone to share what you learned at closing.

- One new thing we learned today
- One thing we already knew that is worth repeating
- One thing we would like to know more about
- The highest highs and lowest lows which our group will bring to the closing prayer



**PRAY** for one another. Praise and thank God for your highs. Ask the Holy Spirit to be with you in your lows. Include your friend’s highs and lows in your prayers. Toss a newspaper into the center of the group or invite youth to think of something going on in the world that calls for prayer. **Tip:** Gather in a circle. Hold hands, lock arms or go shoulder-to-shoulder to bond your group!



**BLESS** one another by name. Trace a cross on each hand or forehead. Look them in the eyes and give them a smile. As for their blessing as well!

