

## Best for Last

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### *Before the Session*

Facilitator: In advance of the session

- Review today's scripture text and the session activities to help better facilitate the discussion.
- Have the Bible Background Video ready to view.
- Have any selected video or music clips ready to show
- Encourage your group to listen to the podcast for this session (Share the link via email or social media)

### *Intro*

Watch together the tournament scene from the original "The Karate Kid" movie. Before showing the clip, setup the scene by saying something like, "In the original Karate Kid movie, we meet Daniel, a new-to-town teen who had become a target for bullies. Daniel's landlord, Mr. Miyagi, befriends him, and trains him in the art of karate. Along the way, Daniel grows in character and confidence. In the final scene of the movie, Daniel is competing in a karate tournament against those who had bullied him. They intentionally injure Daniel's knee early in the fight. Against the odds, Daniel stays in the contest." Show the scene.

Then, ask questions like:

- What are your immediate emotional reactions to this film clip and why?
- In what ways does being or unable to empathize with the characters in the scene affect your reaction to it?
- How does your exposure to similar scenes (underdog overcomes odds to win) in other works affect the way you see this one?
- What do you think led Daniel to stay in the contest?
- When you find yourself or someone close to you in a seemingly desperate situation, what usually motivates you to keep going and why?

### *Content*

Read together Ezekiel 17:22–24 and watch the Bible Background Video. Ask questions like:

- What do you think might have been the "gut reaction" experienced by the original hearers of this message and why?
- If you had to share a similar message in the light of current events, what might you say and why?
- In what ways might our faith give us more or less hope in the face of what goes on in the world in general and our lives within that world?
- What makes it harder to find such hope these days?
- Where does today's news seem darkest and how might you envision it working out in a positive fashion? What can we do that might help that along?

## □ *Closure*

Continue by asking the group to pretend that they are a focus group for a new agency that is seeking to help young people deal with their problems. Because you want to get off on the right track, you need to know how people like them typically respond to the following questions:

- What is the worst large scale (global or regional) and small scale (interpersonal) problem that their peers face today and why?
- What do people want and expect to happen regarding these issues?
- What role can faith-based groups play in addressing issues like these?
- What do they think their typical peers would be willing to do in order to address these issues, given a chance?

Ask the group what they learn from discussing such issues, then encourage volunteers to state one thing that discourages them and one hope that they have for the future.

Close with a prayer that you will be able to see to the other side of life's difficulties and that you might become a light to others by doing so.

***By David Adams***