

## PREFACE

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One of the most difficult things for people to realize, even when it comes to ourselves, is that there is much more to us beyond the surface. To others and maybe even to ourselves, our lives may look worthless, tainted, bruised, and scarred. We must all realize that each person is a unique and beautiful work of art. Beautiful artwork is often misinterpreted and misunderstood in art galleries and museums. Likewise, on the streets of communities, the walls, buildings, trains, and automobiles are the canvas in which beautiful and unique hidden messages and meaning are painted by the art form of graffiti. “Graffiti was once considered something that could not be understood.” Not only was graffiti perceived to have no value, in most instances the perception was that it needed to be painted over. Many graffiti skeptics do not realize that graffiti, like any other form of art work, is the conveying of a person's thoughts and emotions. Each ounce of paint helps capture the essence of a place or thing and graffiti can make the viewer feel at one with the work and the artist.

We are all graffiti; beautiful pieces of art, created as a masterpiece. On the surface, we may not see the beauty in ourselves or our situations because of our shortcomings and times of confusion. We need to see that things can be better in order to believe it. One of the things that makes believing you can achieve what you once thought was impossible are real testimonies of success. Throughout sacred text we find real life examples of people who have faced similar struggles to what we face today. Though the context may be different, the feelings of fear and hopelessness are the same. If we look deeply into the lives of people in sacred text and within our own community, we can see examples of others that have overcome insurmountable odds. These champions realized that they are bright, beautiful, talented and powerful. God's Graffiti seeks to empower readers that face challenges such as identity, self-esteem, difficult relationships (family and dating), addictive behaviors, abuse, and much more. God's Graffiti highlights leaders that overcame personal challenges.

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This Discussion Guide intends to show people that they have purpose and that what may look distorted can often be beautiful. After reading and studying this book, you will change the way you look at yourself and others. The intent is to assist you with teaching the principals in “God’s Graffiti: Inspiring Stories for Teens”. Through visual, auditory, and active learning the content gives you practical lessons from the book to overcome many of life’s challenges.

Each session will integrate writing, arts and crafts, small group discussions, video clips, questionnaires, and more. Each chapter will provide options for the facilitator to utilize in teaching each chapter. We encourage you to cater the lessons to your audience. The information and strategies in this guide are not intended to limit your creativity or teaching and learning method, but to serve as a platform for your own genius, innovation, and creativity. This guide can be used for large and small groups, as well as mentors and parents. In this guide there are teaching moments for teenagers, parents, mentors, and leaders.

This guide can be used for a one day session or as long as eight weeks. Because of the brevity of the book, we would not recommend any longer than eight weeks (one chapter per week). God’s Graffiti can be taught by a team or by an individual.

### **Items needed to use this guide**

- Writing utensils
- Colorful construction paper
- Art tools (Colored pencils, paper, markers, paint, etc...)
- Internet
- PowerPoint capability (PC, projector, screen) (OPTIONAL)
- DVD and CD player (OPTIONAL)
- Snacks (OPTIONAL)