pass, but also encourage everyone to share at least one experience since the class is a safe space and others may be encouraged by their experiences.

In sharing, remind the group of the 3C Covenant that guides the study session and that we honor confidentiality.

When Trouble Comes (20 minutes)
Explain that there are some things families experience based on their race or culture about which others may be unaware. Explain that for some young people the experiences may be real or may be part of some of their friends’ lives. State specifically that this video discusses how many parents of African-American boys are concerned about their sons’ safety in encounters with police officers. Many of these parents are having “the talk” with their sons about what to do WHEN (not if) they are stopped by the police when they have done nothing wrong.

Be mindful that the video could be a trigger of painful and negative emotions for black or brown youth; it is possible they may have faced this experience or have experienced ramifications from a negative encounter with a police officer. Or youth may have relatives who are officers and may feel that officers are targeted in some way. During the reflection stage, make sure everyone’s voice is heard; however, do not allow youth to attack each other verbally or to negate one another’s experiences.

Show the group this video clip of parents’ concerns, “A Conversation with My Black Son” (5:05 minutes) by entering this search phrase online: “a conversation with my black son.”

After playing the video, allow for one to two minutes of quiet introspection. Divide the larger group into smaller groups of two to three people and ask them to talk about what they heard for ten minutes. Ask: What bothered them? What raised questions for them? Ask them to talk about their experiences with police officers—is there anything comparable to what has been identified in the video?


NOTE: As study leaders it is important to be able to identify some similarities for youth if they are unable to do so. For example, this might be necessary if the entire group is of another race or culture. Also, if there are only a couple of black or brown youth in the group, be sure that they do not become the main focus for the exercise.

After the small groups have had time to talk, ask them to list five things that they recall from the video or five things that stand out for them. Ask each group to make a report. Note similarities and distinctions in the information that is shared. In conclusion, ask the group to observe a time for silent prayer for the safety and well-being of anyone who is unjustly accused, who is harassed or bullied, or who lives in fear of their lives being destroyed.

Read the Scripture (10 minutes)
Read aloud Luke 9:51–56 from two or three different translations of the Bible. After hearing the scripture, do a recap of the Bible story by saying this is when Jesus was rejected by a Samaritan village, a place where he was to stop on his way to Jerusalem. Some of Jesus’ disciples were angry that he was not welcomed. Perhaps others were anxious about what it was like to travel with Jesus; would it always be like that? Some disciples wanted to use their powers to destroy the village—in other words, to get revenge on the people. Jesus said no and had them move on to another town.

Ask the youth what phrase sticks with them or what pictures came to mind as the scripture was read. Ask if they see any similarities with this story and what they have heard about happening in their town or country, either currently or from a historical perspective: Rejection? Being ignored? Being dismissed?

Remind participants that emotional reactions (anxiety, anger, frustration) are a part of our lives and our job is to learn to understand when it is happening but not let these emotions take over our lives. If time permits, the leader could ask youth to use their smartphones, tablets, or laptops to research stories about people being rejected from schools, meetings, churches, sports teams, etc.