

"Acts" of Being A Disciple

30 Week
Bible Story Set





The ACTS of a Disciple

This study will be life-transforming as we take a journey into discovering what it means to live a life of a disciple.

What is a disciple?

A disciple is one who is committed to **following** Christ, and has made Jesus Lord of their life. (Luke 9:23) One who is committed to being **changed** by Christ and is becoming like Him in attitude and action. (John 15:8; Romans 8:29) A disciple is one who is committed to the **mission** of Christ. (Mathew 4:19; 2 Cor.5:19-20)

The book of Acts will be challenging to study, as we examine how the early church lived out their faith in relational environments for the purpose of discipleship. Over the course of this year we want you to consider not how church is being done today but rather to look at how Jesus modeled building relationships and how they did life together.

Acts 2:42-47

“They devoted themselves to the apostles teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and the apostles did many wonders and miraculous signs. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily to those who were being saved.”

Questions to consider as we work through this study?

What things in my life need to change for me to move forward in becoming a disciple?

What level am I in the discipleship process?

How am I living out in my personal life the intentional process of making disciples?

In what area in ministry are you currently serving?

This study will help us to understand that Christ's mandate to every believer is to "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations". In order to be effective we must look at the kind of environments we are creating in our church.

Disciples can only be made through building intentional relationships in a safe environment where individuals can be honest and transparent.

Our prayer is that this study would become so personal that God would change our heart and lives to the point that we would never be the same again.

Join us as we take this journey together to see how God moves each of us to become true disciples.

Curriculum Notes

At the top of the first page you will see the story's passage location, the story's main theme that we will be exploring, and the corresponding week number.

Here is the layout for the curriculum and therefore for your home group.



Leader Reminders: This area will have special notes for you as the home leader. Ideas, upcoming events, and things you need to know, etc... We also have a page on our Small Group website where leaders can download needed materials.



Pre-Story Hook: Use the hook question or statement before telling the story. This is a tool to get your people thinking about the theme of the story before it is told. It is helpful to answer the hook question yourself in the group by telling a story to your group, then asking them to think about the question or statement themselves before telling them the story from the Bible.



Transition: This is the compass for determining where we are in God's Story. Briefly summarize last week's story and what has happened leading into this week's story.



Tell the Story: The story is the nuts and bolts, or the cogs, of our entire group. Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, JUST TELL THE STORY. Again, the objective is not to memorize it, but to learn it and be able to share it.

Rebuild: Chronologically rebuild the story or passage by asking questions, have the group look for what was added or left out.



Head, Heart and Hand Questions: These questions are used to understand how the Word of God is shaping our lives. We use these “Head, Heart and Hand Questions” to help you clearly identify who God is and who we are in relationship with Him.

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STORY

ACTS of a Disciple

Salvation – John 3:1-21

Week 1



LEADER'S GUIDE:

You will end this week by modeling how to share your testimony with someone and how to include the Gospel message in your testimony. Remember, the group will only share things as deep as the leader is willing to share.

Your group needs to come prepared to share their testimony next week (allow people to “pass.” Do not make it mandatory). They should be able to do it in 3-5 minutes each for this exercise. It is easier to expand your story when time is appropriate.



HOOK:

What barriers stand in the way of people believing in Christ today?



TRANSITION:

A Jewish religious leader comes to Jesus in the evening asking questions about what it really means to be saved. Listen to the story as Jesus shares how we too can have eternal life.



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story, as best as you can, don't stop and teach, don't make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.

SALVATION – John 3:1-21

Rebuild the story by going back through the story with Bibles open. Have the group look for what was added or left out. Ask questions to help the group rebuild the story.

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**Head:**

What do you learn about Jesus?

What do I learn about human nature?

What is the difference between being religious and being born again?

Heart:

Have you accepted Christ as your Savior?

Why did you put your faith in Him?

Hands:

Prepare to tell us next week your story (your testimony) of how Jesus saved you and is active in your life today.

PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

ACTS of a Disciple

Salvation – John 3:1-21

Week 2



LEADER'S GUIDE:

Re-cap the story from last week at the beginning of group and review what being a witness looks like. It may be difficult, but we recommend having everyone give their testimony in 3-5 minutes each before you start deeply discussing them. This will give everyone an opportunity to share first.

This should be a time when people learn a lot more about each other and are coached on telling their story. Obviously, you will need to use discernment. Again, allow people to “pass” on this activity.



TRANSITION:

Last week we told the story of Nicodemus as he asked Jesus how to be saved. Tonight we want to share the story of Christ's activity in our lives. We tell stories all the time, and tonight we want to share with each other the greatest story we know, our testimony. Our testimony is who we were before Christ, how we met Christ, and what has happened since meeting Christ.



TELL THE STORY:

Tell us your story of your walk with Christ.

Head questions deal with what we need to know. Heart questions deal with attitudes or beliefs that either need to be challenged or strengthened. The goal here is life transformation. Hand questions take what we have learned and our changed heart and apply it to our behavior.

PRAYER REQUEST:

STORY

ACTS of a Disciple

Baptism – Acts 8:26-40

Week 3



LEADER'S GUIDE:

This week we are talking about baptism. This is a great opportunity to ask your group if they have followed Christ in baptism. If they have not and would like to, please let your small group coach know so that we can schedule it.

*Special note: Ask someone of the opposite gender to learn the story for next week. See leader's note for next week for further explanation.



HOOK:

Tell of an occasion when you know God used you in someone else's life.



TRANSITION:

The past two weeks we have talked about salvation. What is the first step of obedience in the life of a believer as a result of their salvation? Listen to this story from the book of Acts:



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop and teach, don't make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.

Rebuild the Story:

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Head:

What did I learn from this story?

Why is baptism important?

Is it important that you accept Christ as your Savior before you are baptized? Why?

Heart:

Have you followed Christ in baptism following your salvation experience?

Why was your baptism special to you?

Hands:

What does God expect me to do as a result of this story?

PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

ACTS of a Disciple

Small Groups – Acts 2:42-47

Week 4



LEADER'S GUIDE:

We are four weeks into our story set. You should not be telling the story every week from this point forward.

Option 1: Stay with the entire group for the story this week.

Option 2: Break into men's and women's groups for the week.



HOOK:

What are characteristics of a good / healthy small group?



TRANSITION:

Jesus has ascended into heaven and the Holy Spirit has come to the world through the hearts of the believers. Jesus disciples began to share the story of the promised Messiah and how Jesus fulfilled all the prophecies and was that Messiah. The church began to explode with growth. Listen to this story of what the church looked like when it was birthed.



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop and teach, don't make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.

Rebuild the Story

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Head:

How does the early church look different from what we have made church to be today?
What is the significance of small groups in churches today?

Heart:

How does small groups aid in your ability to grow in your faith?
What challenges me as a result of the story?

Hands:

What does our small group need to do differently to look more like the early church?

PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

ACTS of a Disciple

Solitude – 1 Cor. 11:27-34

Week 5



LEADER'S GUIDE:

Next week we will celebrate the Lord's Supper together as a small group. Remember to purchase, or have someone else purchase, pita bread and grape juice.



HOOK:

Why does a boss take time to evaluate his company and his worker's performance? Or why does a teacher give report cards?



TRANSITION:

Communion is a very serious time in a believer's life. It is a time when the believer looks inwardly and reflects on the condition of their heart in light of who God is in their life. Listen to this story:



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop and teach, don't make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it, but to learn it and be able to just share it.

Rebuild the Story

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Head:

Why does God take communion so seriously?
What challenges me as a result of hearing this story?

Heart:

Why is the Lord’s Supper important to you?
Have you ever been convicted that you should not take communion? Did you anyway?

Hands:

This week spend time alone with God preparing to take communion here in small group next week.

PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

ACTS of a Disciple

Lord's Supper – 1 Cor. 11:17-26

Week 6



LEADER'S GUIDE:

If you have any questions about how to give the Lord's Supper, contact your coach or one of the pastors.



TRANSITION:

Last week we heard the story of how seriously God takes our attitude when it comes to taking the Lord's Supper. Tonight we will take communion together but before we do let's read the story again.



Read: 1 Corinthians 11:17-34

Give time for silent personal prayer. Leader closes in a prayer of blessing.

Distribute the bread and the juice and take them.

WEEK 6



Reaching the World for Christ One Person at a Time...
Creating Biblical Disciples in Relational Environments.

NOTES:

PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

ACTS of a Disciple

Bible Study – Acts 17:10-15

Week 7



LEADER'S GUIDE:

Remind your group that this is a safe place to share their lives. And what is shared in this group must stay here unless you have permission to share it with others. Nothing will destroy trust in a group faster than gossip.



HOOK:

Why is it important for people to know how to study the Bible?



TRANSITION:

It is important to know biblical truth. Listen to this story of how important the believers in one city understood Scripture to be.



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop and teach, don't make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it, but to learn it and be able to just share it.

Rebuild the Story

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Head:

What did I learn from this story?

Do you search the Bible to see if what your pastor says is true or do you just accept his word for it? If you take his word for it, what are the dangers in that?

How do you study your bible?

Heart:

What struggle or tension becomes apparent in your life as a result of this story? Why?

What hopes and dreams does this evoke in you?

Hands:

What are you going to do differently as a result of this story?

PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

ACTS of a Disciple

Prayer – Mark 13:32-41

Week 8



LEADER'S GUIDE:

Don't forget to take a break from these studies for times of pure fellowship. Please schedule a get together with another small group and do something fun. Be sure to set something up at least every other month. This is also a good opportunity to invite new people to your group! Is it time to get something scheduled?



HOOK:

Why is communication important in relationships?



TRANSITION:

Jesus is talking to his disciples about his second coming and what the disciples should be doing before He returns. Listen to Jesus instruction:



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop and teach, don't make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.

Rebuild the Story

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Head:

What was Jesus teaching his disciples?
What part of the story is hard to understand?

Heart:

What attitude in me does this challenge? Why?
Is your life characterized by prayer? Why or why not?

Hands:

How do you intend to live the truth of this story out in your life? How can we as your small group help you in that commitment?

PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

ACTS of a Disciple

Prayer – Matt. 6:5-15

Week 9



LEADER'S GUIDE:

Remind your small group to be praying for each other this week. Maybe even draw names out of a hat making sure everyone in the group is praying for someone else.



HOOK:

Why do you pray?



TRANSITION:

Jesus is preaching his most famous sermon on the mount. In the midst of his sermon he speaks about prayer. Listen to the words Jesus spoke:



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop and teach, don't make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.

Rebuild the Story

Rebuild the story by going back through the story with Bibles open. Have the group look for what was added or left out. Ask questions to help the group rebuild the story.



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Head:

What are some examples of common vain repetitious prayers that we pray?
What makes a prayer vain or repetitious?
What does this passage teach us of how Jesus views prayer?

Heart:

What struggle or tension becomes apparent in your life as a result of this story?

Hands:

How will this change your prayer life?

PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

ACTS of a Disciple

Fasting – Matt. 6:16-18

Week 10



LEADER'S GUIDE:

This week you will story about fasting. We want to challenge you and your small group to fast one day between this week and next praying for: 1. Our church and its leaders. 2. Our group – each other AND those we would like to invite. Make sure they know that next week you will be talking about the fasting experience in-group.



HOOK:

What do you think fasting is?



TRANSITION:

Jesus just finished warning not to do anything for show or vain repetition, and he continues with that same message when you fast. Fasting is a spiritual discipline that we as believers are commanded to do. Listen to Jesus words concerning fasting:



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop and teach, don't make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.

Rebuild the Story

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Head:

Why does God expect you to fast?
What happens when you fast?

Heart:

What keeps you from fasting?
Are you willing to give up food (or TV, hobby time, etc...) in order to know God better? Why or why not?

Hands:

As a private action of our small group, not to be showy, take 24 hours to fast and pray for God to move in our church and our small groups. If you medically cannot fast from food, fast from something else that is important to you.

PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

ACTS of a Disciple

Fasting Debrief

Week 11



LEADER'S GUIDE:

Remind your small group that next week is Thanksgiving. We will not meet as a small group next week. We will meet as a larger church body though – see the November calendar.



TRANSITION:

Last week we challenged you to spend 24 hours in a time of praying and fasting.



TELL THE STORY:

Tell us what your time of fasting meant to you. What did you learn?

STORY

ACTS of a Disciple

Spiritual Gifts – Romans 12:1-8

Week 12



LEADER'S GUIDE:

Remember that there are many different beliefs about spiritual gifts. Cover the ground rules well and hold everyone accountable so that there is no fixing or other ground rules being broken by your group. Make it a safe and respectful environment for all who are there.



HOOK:

What is the best gift you have ever received?



TRANSITION:

The Holy Spirit indwells every believer at the moment of salvation and gives them supernatural gifts. The Scriptures tonight deal with 8 spiritual gifts. Listen to this passage from Romans:



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop and teach, don't make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.

Rebuild the Story

Rebuild the story by going back through the story with Bibles open. Have the group look for what was added or left out. Ask questions to help the group rebuild the story.



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Head:

What do I learn about God?

Why does God give spiritual gifts to the church?

What are the possible results of people not knowing or not using their spiritual gifts?

Heart:

Which of these gifts do you think you might have? Why?

What hopes and dreams does this evoke in you?

Hands:

How do you intend to live the truth of this passage out within the life of your church?

PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

ACTS of a Disciple

Missions/Evangelism – Acts 1:1-11

Week 13



LEADER'S GUIDE:

This is a good time to remind your group that this is a place where we can be open, honest and transparent with ourselves and each other. Above all we seek to protect the unity of the group.



HOOK:

If you were about to leave your family and friends for an extended period of time, what would you say to them before you left?



TRANSITION:

After Jesus has risen, he appeared to his disciples and many others over the period of forty days. The last words Jesus spoke to his disciples face to face, before ascending to heaven, were these:



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop and teach, don't make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.

Rebuild the Story

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Head:

What was Jesus teaching his disciples?

What is the role of the Holy Spirit in evangelism / missions?

Heart:

Do you share your faith with others?

What struggle or tension becomes apparent in your life as a result of this story? Why?

What hopes and dreams does this evoke in you? Why?

Hands:

Who does God expect you to talk with about Christ as a result of this story?

PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

ACTS of a Disciple

Missions/Evangelism – 2 Cor. 5:11-21

Week 14



LEADER'S GUIDE:

Ask your group to do self-evaluation during the group. Have your small group members ask themselves: 'How is what I am saying affecting others in the group?' OR 'How does how I am acting affect others in the group?'



HOOK:

What are some emotions or reasons that keep people from sharing their faith?



TRANSITION:

Paul is writing to the church in Corinth that was struggling to understand what Christ has called them to be and do in this world. Listen as Paul challenges the church at Corinth to share their faith.



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop and teach, don't make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.

Rebuild the Story

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Head:

What do I learn about Jesus in this story?
What do I learn about human nature from this story?
What does it mean to be Christ’s ambassador?

Heart:

God is active in your life. What can you celebrate that He is doing in you that this story brings to mind?
Do you share your faith intentionally with others? Why or why not?

Hands:

What does God expect you to do as a result of this story?

PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

ACTS of a Disciple

Fellowship – Acts 4:32-5:11

Week 15



LEADER'S GUIDE:

Remind your small group: If you are an over talker, remember to let others speak. If you are an under talker, speak up. As a leader feel free to cut people off and pull other people into the conversation by asking them their opinion specifically.



HOOK:

Name some of the characteristics necessary to have good relationships with others.



TRANSITION:

Jesus has ascended back to heaven. His disciples gathered to pray for several days as they waited for the Holy Spirit whom Jesus had promised. When the Holy Spirit came, the disciples began to share the Good News of Christ's life, death and resurrection with many people. Thousands were coming to faith and into the church. Listen to this story from God's word:



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop and teach, don't make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.

Rebuild the Story

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Head:

Who do you identify with more, the disciples who shared with others or Ananias and Sapphira in their selfishness? Why?

Why were Ananias and Sapphira judged so harshly?

How do a person’s actions or attitudes affect a small group?

Heart:

Have your personal actions or attitudes over the course of the year helped foster better relationships in your small group or damaged them? Why?

Hands:

How do you intend to live the truth of this story out in your life?

PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

ACTS of a Disciple

Fellowship – Matt. 18:15-20

Week 16



LEADER'S GUIDE:

Consider making some plans for your group to serve somewhere together soon. Call the church office or find a project near you – is there a family you know who could use some help with something? Assign someone in your group to organize this (?)



HOOK:

When someone wrongs you, what do you personally do to begin to restore the relationship? Or do you walk away and not give the person another chance?



TRANSITION:

Jesus said the greatest thing you can do to please God in your life is to love Him above everything else and to love others as much as you love yourself. Jesus, who valued relationships over everything else we do, knew that sometimes in our relationships we would be hurt by those closest to us. So, he gave us guidelines on restoring friendships gone awry. Listen to this story from God's word:



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop and teach, don't make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.

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Head:

What do you learn from this story?

Why does Jesus take our relationships so seriously?

What does Jesus mean to treat them like tax collectors or unbelievers should they not repent?

Heart:

What do you struggle with in this story?

THINK ABOUT THIS QUESTION. DO NOT ANSWER ALOUD. Is there a relationship right now in your life that you need to attempt to restore?

ANSWER THIS: What is your role in attempting to restore those relationships?

Hands:

What does God expect me to do as a result of this story?

PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

ACTS of a Disciple

Service – Acts 6:1-7

Week 17



LEADER'S GUIDE:

Share final plans on how your group can do a service project together for next week. Make certain everyone knows where you are going next week and what, if anything, they need to bring.



HOOK:

Are you personally known more for what you do (your occupation) or your character? What is the difference?



TRANSITION:

As the church continued to explode with new people coming to Christ daily, the disciples could not keep up with all of the work that had to be done by themselves. They found themselves incapable of being everywhere for everyone. Listen to this story from God's word:



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop and teach, don't make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.

Rebuild the Story

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Head:

What was the problem the early church was facing?

What issues does our church face in service areas (i.e. nursery, youth, small groups, greeting, etc...)?

Based on this story, what characteristics do you think we should look for in a small group apprentice?

Heart:

What areas of the church do you serve in? How do you think your service affects others?

Why do some people choose not to serve anywhere in church? What are some answers you would have for them to their issues?

Hands:

In which area or ministry of the church can you serve?

Next week we will do a service project together as a small group!

PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

ACTS of a Disciple

Service Project

Week 18



LEADER'S Guide:

This is the week to get your group serving together. Make plans, execute, and document the results, both tangible results and spiritual results that you observe in your group. Use the space provided below to make notes of significant events that take place and send in a copy to Midway so we can all celebrate together!



STORY

ACTS of a Disciple

Hardship – 1 Peter 3:13-22

Week 19



LEADER'S GUIDE:

Remind your group that this is a safe place to share their lives. And what is shared in this group must stay here unless you have permission to share it with others. Nothing will destroy trust in a group faster than gossip.



HOOK:

We say, 'No good deed goes unpunished.' Can you remember a time when you did the right thing but got in trouble for it?



TRANSITION:

As you hear the story this week from God's Word, know that Peter, one of Jesus best friends and the writer of this book, is honest enough to tell you that life is seldom easy. In fact, as you live out your Christian faith in this world, you should expect to be mistreated. Where, then, is our hope? Listen to what Peter tells us:



PRAYER

TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop and teach, don't make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.

Rebuild the Story

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Head:

What do you learn about Jesus in this passage?

What part of this passage do you struggle with? Why?

Why is suffering a part of the Christian life? Why doesn't God act so we don't have to suffer?

Heart:

In what ways have you suffered on account of your faith in Christ?

Where did you get encouragement during those difficult days?

Hands:

What are you going to do as a result of hearing this passage to stand up for Christ despite the difficult position it could put you in?

PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

ACTS of a Disciple

Salvation – Acts 10:1-48

Week 20



LEADER'S GUIDE:

Ask someone of the opposite gender to learn the story for next week. See leader's note for next week for further explanation.



HOOK:

What is your reaction when you hear that people such as serial killer Ted Bundy have given their lives to Christ and will be with you eternally in heaven?



TRANSITION:

The church is continuing to grow in the Jewish communities around the Roman Empire, but Jesus intended for the Good News of His Salvation to go farther than even His disciples realized. Jesus intended His salvation to be sent to even the non-Jewish, or Gentile, people. This intention of our Lord sent shockwaves through the disciple Peter in this story from God's Word:



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop and teach, don't make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.

Rebuild the Story

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Head:

What was God teaching Peter?

Do you believe God is serious about the entire world hearing the news of His Son, Jesus?

Why?

What challenges me as a result of hearing this story?

Heart:

What do you learn about yourself in this story?

What attitude in me does this challenge? Why?

Hands:

What person in your life needs to hear the story of Christ? What needs to happen for you to tell them the Good News?

Can we as a small group hold you accountable to speak with them this week?

PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

ACTS of a Disciple

Bible Study – Neh. 8:1-12

Week 21



LEADER'S GUIDE:

If you are still telling the story and facilitating every week, STOP! We want to reproduce you as a leader! Let someone else, an apprentice, share the task.

Option 1: Stay with the entire group for the story this week.

Option 2: Break into men and women's groups for the week.



HOOK:

How would you describe your effort and desire in studying God's Word?



TRANSITION:

Nehemiah was a called and determined man. God placed a vision in Nehemiah's heart to restore the city of Jerusalem. Nehemiah didn't push the responsibility off on anyone else. He got to work. As the city walls neared completion the Jews were excited about what God was doing in their city and through Nehemiah, they began to seek God's word for what He wanted from their lives. Listen to this story from God's Word:



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop and teach, don't make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.

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Head:

Is there a need for Bible Study today? What are some of those needs?
How did the people respond to the reading of God’s Word?
How is the way we respond to the Word different today?

Heart:

What struggle or tension becomes apparent in your life as a result of this story? Why?
God is a God who wants to speak to you. Why is that significant?

Hands:

How do you intend to live the truth of this story out in your life?

PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

ACTS of a Disciple

Obedience – Acts 4:13-22

Week 22



LEADER'S GUIDE:

Challenge you small group to be faithful to come to group and to continue to make it a priority in your family.



HOOK:

Obedience isn't always easy. What would you say are some of the reasons we sacrifice being obedient to the Lord?



TRANSITION:

As Peter and John were headed to the Temple one day they met a beggar who was lame from birth. Peter and John explained to the man they had no money, but something so much better. They healed the man in the name of Jesus who was just recently crucified. This stirred up anger with the Jewish religious leaders and who have had Peter and John arrested. Listen to this story from God's Word as Peter and John are questioned by the Jewish religious elite:



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop and teach, don't make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.

Rebuild the Story

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Head:

What are the attributes of Peter and John’s lives described in vs. 13? Which one most speaks to you and why?

What were the results of Peter and John’s obedience to Christ?

Do you think the Peter and John had a hard time doing what God (Jesus) asked them to do?

Heart:

How do people nearest to you know that you have been ‘with Christ?’

God is active in your life. What can you celebrate that He is doing in you that this story brings to mind?

Tell a time when you obeyed something you knew God was telling you to do and the results of that obedience.

Hands:

How will you honor Christ by obeying Him this week?

PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

ACTS of a Disciple

Solitude – Luke 4:1-13

Week 23



LEADER'S GUIDE:

Challenge your small group to make the time - between this week and next - to spend time alone with God without any distractions. Inform them that we will spend next week debriefing on how we practice this weeks story during the upcoming week.



HOOK:

What distractions interrupt opportunities for solitude? Can we potentially prepare ourselves for some of these distractions?



TRANSITION:

The Old Testament foretold of a Messiah that was coming. The New Testament opens with John the Baptist is proclaiming that same message. Soon after John proclaims Jesus to be this awaited Messiah and baptizes Him, Jesus begins His ministry by going alone into the wilderness for several days. Listen to this story from Scripture:



TELL THE STORY:

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Rebuild the Story

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Head:

What do you learn about Jesus in this story?

What do you learn about Satan in this story?

How does it encourage you to know that Jesus was tempted to sin (even though He did not do so)?

Heart:

Before He began His ministry, Jesus went to be alone; to pray and fast. When do you make time to get alone with God in your life?

When you do spend time with God, what do you do?

How does Satan attempt to interrupt your times with God? What is your response to him?

Hands:

This may take planning on your part. This week set aside 30 minutes, an hour, the time duration does not matter. But get alone with God this week. Use this time to get out of your routine. Take a walk; go to a park, a garden, the lake, the mountains, anywhere. Spend time talking and listening to God. Focus your thoughts on your Heavenly Father’s love for you and your love for Him. Thank Him for His expressions of His love to you. Be specific. Take time to worship and adore Him.

Next week we will discuss the solitude time you spent with Christ.

PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

ACTS of a Disciple

Solitude Debrief

Week 24



LEADER'S GUIDE:

Have everyone in your small group learn the story for next week, because you as a leader will call on someone to tell the story next week. Please don't tell them who it is until your next meeting time. This will give everyone an opportunity to get involved.



Last week: We told the story of Jesus getting alone with God before He started His ministry. We talked about why spending time alone with God was important and then I challenged you to get alone with God for a period of time one day during the week. Let's talk about that time:



Leaders: Allow one person to answer these questions (or other questions you would like to ask) before moving on to someone else and asking them to answer. We want people to have opportunity to share of their experience with God.



Solitude Questions:

Did you spend time alone with God this past week? Where did you go?
What did you do in your time alone with Him?
How did your time alone encourage you?
What did you learn from the experience?

STORY Small Groups – Exodus 11:1-10, 12:12-31

ACTS of a Disciple

Week 25



LEADER'S GUIDE:

Next week will be on the subject of FAITH... As your group discusses the impact of small groups this week, challenge your group to consider how the group could collectively take a leap of faith together during the upcoming week so you can discuss it next week.



HOOK:

What's your greatest concern in what is being passed on to the generations behind us?



TRANSITION:

The Israelites have been held as slaves in Egypt for four hundred years. But God has not forgotten His people. He called to Moses from a burning bush and told him to go back and tell the Pharaoh to let the Israelites go. Pharaoh did not. God then sent a series of plagues. Nine have passed. This is the story of the final plague and the command God gives His people in what to do to remember His actions:



TELL THE STORY:

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Rebuild the Story

Rebuild the story by going back through the story with Bibles open. Have the group look for what was added or left out. Ask questions to help the group rebuild the story.



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Head:

What do you learn about God in this story?

Why do you think God went to such specifics of how to remember His actions?

What part of the story do you struggle with?

Is it significant that Jesus died (and was resurrected) during the week of Passover? Why?

How do Easter and the Passover show us the picture of God’s salvation?

Heart:

As Easter approaches, in what ways do you prepare yourself to celebrate it? If you don’t, why not?

Hands:

This week spend time alone with God preparing to take communion here in small group next week.

PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

ACTS of a Disciple

Faith – Exodus 14:5-31

Week 26



LEADER'S GUIDE:

Remind your small group to be praying for each other this week. Maybe even draw names out of a hat making sure everyone in the group is praying for someone else.



HOOK:

What is the most daring thing you have done?



TRANSITION:

The Israelites were God's chosen people. Just before our story begins they had been enslaved to the Egyptians and Pharaoh. Through Moses, God provided a way for them out of that bondage. It only took a series of plagues and miracles, but they were finally free. Listen to this story as the Israelites were fleeing from Egypt:



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop and teach, don't make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it, but to learn it and be able to just share it.

Rebuild the Story

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Head:

Do you think Moses in this story struggled doing what God asked him to do?

What do you learn about human nature in this story?

Who do you identify with most in this story; Moses having faith or the Israelites doubting? Why?

Heart:

What makes trusting God (faith) difficult for you?

Hands:

How do you intend to live the truth of this story out in your life?

PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

ACTS of a Disciple

Faith – Mark 2:1-12

Week 27



LEADER'S GUIDE:

This is a good time to remind your group that this is a place where we can be open, honest and transparent with ourselves and each other. Above all we seek to protect the unity of the group.



HOOK:

What does it to you mean to “have faith?”



TRANSITION:

Jesus had just been baptized by John and was walking in Galilee when he came upon Simon Peter and Andrew. He called them to be his first disciples. They were with Jesus when this story happened:



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop and teach, don't make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.

Rebuild the Story

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Head:

What did you learn from this story?

What do you think Jesus was teaching His disciples (and us)?

What were the struggles of the men who carried the paralytic in coming to Jesus? What was their reward for bringing their friend to Jesus?

Heart:

Can you tell of a time when you did place your faith in what you knew God was telling you to do? What were the results of acting out your faith?

Hands:

What does God expect me to do as a result of this story?

PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

Missions/Evangelism – Matt. 13:1-9

ACTS of a Disciple

Week 28



LEADER'S GUIDE:

Ask your small group members to write down their answer to this question, “What does small group mean to me?” Have them bring their answer to small group and ask if you can share it with the church staff. Send a list of your group's answers in to the church.



HOOK:

What is your parents' favorite story to tell about you?



TRANSITION:

Jesus was a master storyteller. In our story tonight, Jesus tells a group of people a parable but he only explains the parable to his disciples. Listen to what Jesus himself taught:



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop and teach, don't make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.

Rebuild the Story

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Head:

What was Jesus teaching His disciples (and us)?
What do you learn about human nature in this story?
What part of the story is difficult to understand?

Heart:

What attitude in me does this challenge? Why?
Have you invited people to church, small group or to a relationship with Christ this year? What was their response? Based on this story from Jesus, what should your next step be with them?

Hands:

As a small group, create a list of names of people you know whom you feel compelled to share the Good News of Christ with. Then spend time praying for those people and for your courage as you go!

PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

ACTS of a Disciple

Making Disciples – Deut. 31:1-8

Week 29



LEADER'S GUIDE:

This week is all about making disciples. This would be a great time to remind the group of the definition of disciple that we use at Midway using Matthew 4:19. A disciple is one who is following Jesus (“Come, follow Me”), being changed by Jesus (“and I will make you”), and committed to the mission of Jesus (“fishers of men”).



HOOK:

Tell of a moment when you realized, “I sound just like my parents?” Or, tell of how you see your kids doing or saying the things you say and do.



TRANSITION:

A great hero of the Old Testament, Moses, is about to die. Because he did not obey the Lord earlier in his life, God did not allow him to enter into the land God had promised to the Israelites. Just before his death, Moses called an assembly and passed his leadership on to the person whom he had invested heavily:



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop and teach, don't make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.

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Head:

What did you learn from this story?

What challenges me as a result of hearing this story?

What role does relationship play in passing the work of your life on to someone?

Heart:

What hopes and dreams does this evoke in you? Why?

What scares you the most in trying to help other's grow in their faith?

Hands:

Who are you intentionally helping to grow in their faith? In what ways are you modeling for them what being a disciple is?

PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

ACTS of a Disciple

Making Disciples – Matt. 28:16-20

Week 30



LEADER'S GUIDE:

Spend time this week planning a group celebration over the next month or so. Join with another small group for twice the fun! Making disciples together with other groups not only doubles the fun, it also teaches disciples to work in unity along other followers of Jesus.



HOOK:

Thinking back over the entire set of this small group study, what are some things, attitudes or actions, that should characterize our lives as disciples of Christ?



TRANSITION:

Jesus has raised himself from the grave. Over the course of the next forty days Jesus gave his disciples further instruction on what He expects of them. In perhaps one of the most well known passages in the Bible, Jesus lays out his instruction clearly. Listen to Jesus command to his disciples then, and as we are his disciples as well, he speaks this to us as well:



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop and teach, don't make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.

Rebuild the Story

Rebuild the story by going back through the story with Bibles open. Have the group look for what was added or left out. Ask questions to help the group rebuild the story.



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Head:

What do you understand this passage to mean?

Do you think the disciples in this story had a hard time understanding what Jesus asked them to do? Why or why not?

How much trust did Jesus put in His disciples (and continues to put in us today)?

How did Jesus make disciples and how should we?

Hearts:

What attitude in me does this passage challenge? Why?

What hopes and dreams does this evoke in you? Why?

Hands:

All year we have looked at the acts of a disciple. We cannot reproduce what we are not being.

So our last question for this small group year is: What does God expect you to do as a result of this year’s small group story set? What is your first step to accomplish His will?

PRAYER REQUEST: _____



Family Connection

ACTS of a Disciple

Ways you can use these studies for your family...

As this story set comes to an end, consider how you can translate this within the scope of children/youth ministry and especially your own family and children. On the next page, we have listed some additional questions that are broad, general in nature, and simple enough to use with any of these stories with your family.

Thank you for allowing God to use you to “reach the lost and equip the saved across the street and around the world for God’s glory.”



BLACKHAWK
ministries

Children's Breakout Questions

Head:

What happened in this story?

Can you retell the story in your own words?

Who were the people in this story?

What did Jesus/God teach the people in this story?

How do you think the people in this story felt?

How do you think God felt about his people in this story?

Did the people in this story listen to God?

Do you think the people in this story had or will have a hard time doing what Jesus has asked them to do?
Why

Was there a part of the story that was hard for you to understand? Why

Heart:

What is Jesus/God trying to teach us from this story?

How could we apply this story to our life today?

Which person are you the most like from this story?

Would you have a hard time doing what Jesus asked the people to do? Why?

Hands:

What could you change in your own life after hearing this story?

What could you do for God after hearing this story?

What is God doing in your life?

Could you share this story with a friend or family member?

**FOLLOWING
JESUS
TOGETHER**

**Bible Storying
Curriculum**

HOW TO USE THIS STORY GUIDE

At the top of the first page for each week you will see the Story number, Story title, and Scripture reference. For each story, we will give you an idea for the transition, the location of the story, the memory verse for each week, possible questions to consider, and Leader Tips.

Below is an explanation of the icons and different sections of the group guide that they represent.

Story

The *hands holding seed icon* represents scattering the seed of God's Word during the storying time of the group. This is when the seed of the Word of God is learned through storying and allowed to penetrate the hearts of God's people.



The storying time of the group will consist of 3 parts:

1. **Transition:** briefly summarize last week's story and ask if it had any impact in their lives over the past week.
2. **Tell the story:** as best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it, but to learn it and be able to just share it.
3. **Rebuild:** Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions, have the group look for what was added or left out. After rebuilding is done, read the story directly from the Bible.



Discipleship Questions

The *hands holding water icon* signifies our interaction with God's Word. As we connect the Bible to our lives through looking at Jesus, we are watering the seed in a way that will lead to growth.

You will have four discipleship questions you will use to start the conversation time each week. Be willing to ask multiple questions within each question. You may find that as you start to become adept at asking follow-up questions that you only get through one or two of these in your group time and that is great! This question time is the primary method of finding out where our people are in their journey with Christ.

Here are the four discipleship questions to ask after you have told the story:

1. What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
2. What is Jesus teaching the disciples?
3. What is Jesus teaching you personally?
4. How can you disciple people as Jesus did in this story?

Life Application Questions

The *hands holding tree icon* points to our application of God's Word. As the seed and water interact, growth starts to take place as we apply the principles we have learned from God's Word into our lives.

You may not always have time to ask these application questions in your group time, so we suggest that you use them in your personal growth time. You can treat them, and this entire guide, as you would a personal study guide.



Discipleship Tips for Leaders

Use these questions and tips as you prepare to lead your group. Ask yourself how you can apply these when you facilitate and ask questions.

When you wrap up your lesson each week, be sure to take time to recruit someone to tell the story for the following week. This will include others, giving them ownership in the leadership of the group and give them time to prepare so they feel comfortable participating.

1. Discovering Jesus

John 1:19-51

Transition: After the births of John the Baptist and Jesus, we hear little about either of them except a brief visit to the temple by Jesus when he was twelve years of age. John began his ministry by attracting large crowds to the Jordan River to hear him preach. We join the story when Jesus comes back to ask John to baptize Him. Here is the story from God's Word:

Tell the Story (Plant the Seed)

Tell the story: Don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story.

Read: Read the story directly from God's word.



Discipleship Questions (Water the Seed)

Here are the four discipleship questions to ask after you have told the story:

1. What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
2. What is Jesus teaching the disciples?
3. What is Jesus teaching you personally?
4. How can you disciple people as Jesus did in this story?



Life Application Questions (Let it Grow)

1. What evidence do you have that Jesus is the Son of God?
2. How do you feel about leaving all the other teachers and following Jesus?
3. Who should you invite to come follow Jesus with you?

Discipleship Tips for Leaders:

As a leader, how does seeing John release his disciples to Jesus apply to you?

At first, people may want to follow you, but you need to introduce them to Jesus and release them to follow Him. They need to know that they are not going to stay in this home group forever. We are to grow and create room for others to come to know Him, by creating more groups.



2. Call to Discipleship

Luke 5:1-11

Transition: Jesus left Judea to return to Galilee. John's disciples continued to discover who Jesus was as he taught and did miracles in His home area. Jesus was rejected by the people at Nazareth and moved to Capernaum on the Sea of Galilee. Then Jesus began to call his disciples to go with Him and become fishers of men. Here is the story from God's Word:

Tell the Story (Plant the Seed)

Tell the story: Don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story.

Read: Read the story directly from God's word.



Discipleship Questions (Water the Seed)

Here are the four discipleship questions to ask after you have told the story:

1. What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
2. What is Jesus teaching the disciples?
3. What is Jesus teaching you personally?
4. How can you disciple people as Jesus did in this story?



Life Application Questions (Let it Grow)

1. What boat in your life does Jesus want to get in?
2. What is Jesus asking you to do to launch out into the deep?
3. What is the next level of following Jesus that he challenges you to?

Discipleship Tips for Leaders:

Questions to consider...

As a leader, how do you get involved in your disciples' lives?

Can you get together for dinner, or visit them at work?

Ask yourself "Are they going to know how to do what I do?"

Do they understand that home group is for making disciples?



3. Jesus Casts out and Evil Spirit

Mark 1:21-39

Transition: Jesus continued to show His power by teaching with authority and doing miracles. The disciples were amazed as much as the people! Jesus visited Peter's mother in law and healed her. In this story we also see Jesus worshipping in two very different places. Here is the story from God's Word:

Tell the Story (Plant the Seed)

Tell the story: Don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story.

Read: Read the story directly from God's word.



Discipleship Questions (Water the Seed)

Here are the four discipleship questions to ask after you have told the story:

1. What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
2. What is Jesus teaching the disciples?
3. What is Jesus teaching you personally?
4. How can you disciple people as Jesus did in this story?



Life Application Questions (Let it Grow)

1. What two practices of worship does Jesus model in this story?
2. What commitments have you made about public and private worship?
3. What is a Quiet Time? What should one do during a Quiet Time to ensure a real meeting with God?
4. What has God communicated to you about your Quiet Time?

Discipleship Tips for Leaders:

As a leader, you need to find some time to be alone with God. Time with God = Revelation. Talk about what God teaches you in your quiet time.

Some key components of a Quiet Time include finding a place, making the time, preparing yourself spiritually, and intentionally using the time you make. What can you do this week to grow spiritually as a child of God?



4. Jesus Chooses the Twelve

Luke 6:12-23

Transition: Many people begin to follow Jesus. He called others like Mathew, the tax collector, to follow Him. Then Jesus developed the relationships where He could make disciples. Out of all the people that were following Him, Jesus chose the twelve to show them who His twelve disciples should be. Here is the story from God's Word:

Tell the Story (Plant the Seed)

Tell the story: Don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story.

Read: Read the story directly from God's word.



Discipleship Questions (Water the Seed)

Here are the four discipleship questions to ask after you have told the story:

1. What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
2. What is Jesus teaching the disciples?
3. What is Jesus teaching you personally?
4. How can you disciple people as Jesus did in this story?



Life Application Questions (Let it Grow)

1. Why do you think Jesus Prayed all night? (John 17:5)
2. What was Jesus' purpose in choosing these twelve?
3. What does the story reveal about your attitude as a disciple?

Discipleship Tips for Leaders:

As a leader you need to know who to spend the most time with in your group. Who does God want you to spend more time with? Ask Him.

Leading a group can be draining. People require time, energy, and effort. Who have you asked to intentionally pour into you as you pour yourself out leading your group every week? Who are you discipling and who is discipling you? Maybe you need to ask someone this week to be a part of your life in these vital ways.



5. Sermon on the Mount (Part 1)

Luke 6:27-36

Transition: Immediately after choosing the twelve, Jesus began to teach them about the Kingdom of God. They needed to understand His teaching and apply it to their lives. Matthew records His teaching as the Sermon on the Mount. Luke records a similar sermon called The Sermon on the Plains that has basically the same teaching but in a simpler form. The teaching rocked the disciple's world. It shocked the people who heard it and even today we can hardly believe Jesus' teaching about Kingdom Living. Here is the first part of the Sermon on the Plains from God's Word:

Tell the Story (Plant the Seed)

Tell the story: Don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story.

Read: Read the story directly from God's word.



Discipleship Questions (Water the Seed)

Here are the four discipleship questions to ask after you have told the story:

1. What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
2. What is Jesus teaching the disciples?
3. What is Jesus teaching you personally?
4. How can you disciple people as Jesus did in this story?



Life Application Questions (Let it Grow)

1. What does it mean for the disciples to follow Jesus' teachings in this story?
2. How can we do what Jesus teaches?
3. What will you do differently this week because of Jesus' teaching in this part of The Sermon on the Plains?

Discipleship Tips for Leaders:

As a leader, how do you respond to evil persons or acts?

Love is an aggressive response that is opposite to our flesh; we need to rely on God to help us love people when they wrong us. Doing this will really model for your people how they can respond in their own lives in loving ways to people who wrong them.



6. Sermon on the Mount (Part 2)

Luke 6:37-49

Transition: In the second part of Jesus' sermon He gets even more practical. Instead of making it easier, Jesus raised their expectations. He applied his teachings with a story about the importance of obedience. Here is the rest of the story from God's Word:

Tell the Story (Plant the Seed)

Tell the story: Don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story.

Read: Read the story directly from God's word.



Discipleship Questions (Water the Seed)

Here are the four discipleship questions to ask after you have told the story:

1. What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
2. What is Jesus teaching the disciples?
3. What is Jesus teaching you personally?
4. How can you disciple people as Jesus did in this story?



Life Application Questions (Let it Grow)

1. Think of times when people did to you what you did to them?
2. What is the test of a disciple who follows Jesus as his teacher? Are you following Jesus this way?
3. How can you know if your fruit is good or bad? If your fruit and actions aren't good, how do you correct the problem?
4. What is the key to building a good foundation?
5. What life changes will you make because of Jesus' teaching this week?



Discipleship Tips for Leaders:

As leaders, we are to help people become like Christ. They will learn much of that from how they see you act.

This needs to be shown more frequently than just at small group. Try to think of ways to touch base with your people throughout the week. Make calls, email, or get together with them.

7. Farmer Scattering Seed

Matthew 13:1-23

Transition: Jesus was always teaching the difference in God's view of things and the people's view. He didn't teach them anything without telling them a story. He loved to use parables that spoke to people on different levels. In Matt. 13 He tells seven parables that gave light to the believers and confused those who rejected His teaching. Here is the first parable from God's Word:

Tell the Story (Plant the Seed)

Tell the story: Don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story.

Read: Read the story directly from God's word.



Discipleship Questions (Water the Seed)

Here are the four discipleship questions to ask after you have told the story:

1. What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
2. What is Jesus teaching the disciples?
3. What is Jesus teaching you personally?
4. How can you disciple people as Jesus did in this story?



Life Application Questions (Let it Grow)

1. Why did Jesus tell stories?
2. How does the Word/Seed multiply?
3. What are the rocks or thorns in your life that choke the Word?
4. What does this story tell you about telling stories?

Discipleship Tips for Leaders:

As a leader, you need to take steps to insure that these stories become applicable to your people's lives. Challenge them to tell them to others during the week.

You should model them by doing this and then sharing with the group some stories of how you were able to do this in your life, and what happened.



8. Jesus Heals

Mark 5:21-43

Transition: Jesus taught through sermons and parables but He loved to teach through miracles also. He applied the teaching and power of God to all kinds of sick, demon possessed persons and even the dead. Here are three stories from God's Word that show His power and love:

Tell the Story (Plant the Seed)

Tell the story: Don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story.

Read: Read the story directly from God's word.



Discipleship Questions (Water the Seed)

Here are the four discipleship questions to ask after you have told the story:

1. What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
2. What is Jesus teaching the disciples?
3. What is Jesus teaching you personally?
4. How can you disciple people as Jesus did in this story?



Life Application Questions (Let it Grow)

1. How does Jesus' power over demons, disease, and death relate to you problems?
2. How do Jesus' instructions to each of the persons in this story apply to your life? (woman, disciples, Jarius, mourners, dead girl, parents)
3. What does the response of each of these persons say to you about your response to Jesus?



Discipleship Tips for Leaders:

How does a discipler decide on competing priorities? (Look to where God is at work! Where someone has faith.)

As a discipler, consider those in your group that are demonstrating faith on a consistent basis. How could you help them this week to build on and continue that momentum?

9. Jesus Sends out the Twelve

Matthew 9:35-10:22

Transition: For more than a year Jesus proclaimed the Kingdom of God and healed people with all kinds of diseases in Galilee. Then He asked His disciples to pray for workers because the multitudes were milling around like sheep without a shepherd. So He gave the disciples the authority over unclean spirits and every kind of sickness. Then He sent them to the cities of Israel that he planned to visit. Here is the story of what He told them to do:

Tell the Story (Plant the Seed)

Tell the story: Don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story.

Read: Read the story directly from God's word.



Discipleship Questions (Water the Seed)

Here are the four discipleship questions to ask after you have told the story:

1. What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
2. What is Jesus teaching the disciples?
3. What is Jesus teaching you personally?
4. How can you disciple people as Jesus did in this story?



Life Application Questions (Let it Grow)

1. Why should you respond to Jesus' compassion and command to pray for laborers for the harvest?
2. How do Jesus' instructions to His disciples apply to us today? What doesn't apply to us today?
3. What have you been sent to do?
4. Who is a person of peace, and how does that relate to us witnessing today?

Discipleship Tips for Leaders:

Since the harvest is plentiful, yet the workers are few, you can help by praying for and intentionally looking for people in your group that are ready to start apprenticing with you and looking ahead to forming future groups. Who can you start this with today?



10. Jesus Feeds the 5000, Walks on Water

Matthew 14:13-33

Transition: Up until now Jesus has ministered publically to the multitudes but now His strategy changes to more of a private one. He withdrew from His home area several times and for different reasons. Herod had just beheaded John the Baptist, the Scribes and Pharisees were planning Jesus' death, some of the crowds wanted to make Him a king and His disciples needed time for more teaching and preparation for the last half of Jesus' time on Earth. Here is the story of Jesus' first withdrawal after John's death when the people followed Him anyway:

Tell the Story (Plant the Seed)

Tell the story: Don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story.

Read: Read the story directly from God's word.



Discipleship Questions (Water the Seed)

Here are the four discipleship questions to ask after you have told the story:

1. What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
2. What is Jesus teaching the disciples?
3. What is Jesus teaching you personally?
4. How can you disciple people as Jesus did in this story?



Life Application Questions (Let it Grow)

1. How should we react when things go wrong, yet people keep looking to us for answers?
2. What are the implications for us today when Jesus said, "You feed them"?
3. What are you asking Jesus to do for you that would be similar to Peter asking Jesus to tell Him to walk on the water?
4. What if you ask for things that are not according to God's will?

Discipleship Tips for Leaders:

Create a culture where failure is ok, because people need to try and fail so that they can learn. They need to learn that we can fail in leadership and get up and try again. It takes a lot of practice! Are you modeling failure for your people? Are you allowing people to fail by supporting them and helping them try again?



11. Jesus, The Bread of Life

John 6:22-69

Transition: After Jesus fed the 5000 men and their families they pursued Him to the other side of the lake wanting more food. Jesus challenged them to move from seeking physical bread to seeking the bread of Life. He asks them to do something that separated the true disciples from just followers who had the wrong motivation. Here is the story from God's Word:

Tell the Story (Plant the Seed)

Tell the story: Don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story.

Read: Read the story directly from God's word.



Discipleship Questions (Water the Seed)

Here are the four discipleship questions to ask after you have told the story:

1. What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
2. What is Jesus teaching the disciples?
3. What is Jesus teaching you personally?
4. How can you disciple people as Jesus did in this story?



Life Application Questions (Let it Grow)

1. After looking at the Jews' motivations for seeking Jesus, what are your motivations and what would Jesus say about them?
2. How can we "eat Jesus' flesh and drink His blood?"
3. If you were in the crowd that day, what would your response be to Jesus' teaching and why?

Discipleship Tips for Leaders:

Who in your group is hungry for spiritual things and who waits for you to feed them? Do you think you have a grasp on where the individuals in your group are spiritually? What is the balance between spiritual infants, children, young adults, parents?

Challenge those who wait to learn how to feed themselves. Show them how to do this by being a "self-feeding leader" that models the way for them.



12. Peter's Confession of Christ

Matthew 16:13-27

Transition: At the halfway point in Jesus' earthly ministry He took His disciples on a retreat to settle their questions about who He was and to explain His coming death and resurrection and its meaning for them. This was a real turning point in the disciples' growth and preparation for their future ministry. Here is the story from God's Word:

Tell the Story (Plant the Seed)

Tell the story: Don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story.

Read: Read the story directly from God's word.



Discipleship Questions (Water the Seed)

Here are the four discipleship questions to ask after you have told the story:

1. What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
2. What is Jesus teaching the disciples?
3. What is Jesus teaching you personally?
4. How can you disciple people as Jesus did in this story?



Life Application Questions (Let it Grow)

1. How do disciples then and now come to believe Jesus is the Messiah?
2. What does it mean to you for Jesus to give you the Key's of the Kingdom?
3. What does it mean to you to lose your life for Christ's sake?
4. What are you exchanging your life in Christ for?
5. Now that you know the cost of following Jesus, what will you do differently?

Discipleship Tips for Leaders:

As a leader, do you tell your disciples/small group when they are right or wrong? How can this be done in a way like Jesus would have done it? How does having these one-on-one conversations help the health of your LIFE Group?



13. The Transfiguration

Matthew 17:1-21

Transition: After Christ's revelation about who He was and what was going to happen to Him, Jesus gave three disciples the opportunity to see Him in His glory on the Mount of Transfiguration. Meanwhile the disciples down in the valley faced another revelation- that they could do nothing without faith in Christ. Here is the story from God's Word:

Tell the Story (Plant the Seed)

Tell the story: Don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story.

Read: Read the story directly from God's word.



Discipleship Questions (Water the Seed)

Here are the four discipleship questions to ask after you have told the story:

1. What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
2. What is Jesus teaching the disciples?
3. What is Jesus teaching you personally?
4. How can you disciple people as Jesus did in this story?



Life Application Questions (Let it Grow)

1. Tell about a time when you had a mountain top experience followed by a valley experience?
2. What was the significance of the Mount of Transfiguration for Jesus? The disciples? You?
3. What mountains do you have that need to be moved and how can you have faith enough to move them?



Discipleship Tips for Leaders:

How can you introduce your people to the realities of life?

How can you help them have an encounter with God?

Do you allow them to struggle with things or do you try to answer everything for them?

14. Forgiving a Brother

Matthew 18:15-35

Transition: Jesus had just told the disciples that He would be killed and talked to Moses and Elijah about it on the Mount of Transfiguration. Then He taught the disciples how to deal with people that sin against them. It was a shock to them to learn that they needed to forgive people time after time. Here is the story from God's Word:

Tell the Story (Plant the Seed)

Tell the story: Don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story.

Read: Read the story directly from God's word.



Discipleship Questions (Water the Seed)

Here are the four discipleship questions to ask after you have told the story:

1. What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
2. What is Jesus teaching the disciples?
3. What is Jesus teaching you personally?
4. How can you disciple people as Jesus did in this story?



Life Application Questions (Let it Grow)

1. Is there anyone you have had a hard time forgiving? Who and why?
2. What does God's forgiveness of your many sins say to you about forgiving others?
3. What is the process of forgiving those who wrong you or have something against you?

Discipleship Tips for Leaders:

As a leader, are you modeling forgiveness in your group?

Are you allowing problems to fester in your group or are you working to resolve them?

What can you do to resolve conflict in your group this week? What about in your own family?



15. The Cost of Following Jesus

Luke 9:57-10:1

Transition: Just before Jesus started for Jerusalem He told the disciples that excuses did not work for true disciples. He then expanded the workers by seeding out the seventy on His mission. Here is the story from God's Word:

Tell the Story (Plant the Seed)

Tell the story: Don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story.

Read: Read the story directly from God's word.



Discipleship Questions (Water the Seed)

Here are the four discipleship questions to ask after you have told the story:

1. What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
2. What is Jesus teaching the disciples?
3. What is Jesus teaching you personally?
4. How can you disciple people as Jesus did in this story?



Life Application Questions (Let it Grow)

1. Why doesn't Jesus accept these three excuses?
2. What is your excuse for not going where Jesus sends you?
3. Why should you keep on doing what Jesus asks you to do?

Discipleship Tips for Leaders:

How do you deal with excuses in your group?

Are you modeling not having excuses for not doing what the Lord wants you to do?

What excuses are holding you back as a leader? As a family member? As a Child of God?



16. The Lord's Prayer

Luke 11:1-13

Transition: Jesus went to the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem and faced opposition. In the middle of this situation the disciples saw Jesus praying and asked them to teach them to pray. He gave them what is popularly called The Lord's Prayer. Jesus emphasized His teaching by giving another story. Here is the story from God's Word:

Tell the Story (Plant the Seed)

Tell the story: Don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story.

Read: Read the story directly from God's word.



Discipleship Questions (Water the Seed)

Here are the four discipleship questions to ask after you have told the story:

1. What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
2. What is Jesus teaching the disciples?
3. What is Jesus teaching you personally?
4. How can you disciple people as Jesus did in this story?



Life Application Questions (Let it Grow)

1. Explain each of the requests in The Lord's Prayer?
2. What should you do when you have a need?
3. When you don't get an answer to your prayer, what should you do?
What do you do?

Discipleship Tips for Leaders:

Make time at the end of group for someone to retell the story from your group that night.

It helps them to know it and prepares them to be able to use it this week.



17. The Cost of Being a Disciple

Luke 14:25-35

Transition: Jesus wept over Jerusalem and their missed opportunity to receive Him as the Messiah. Once again Jesus talks to the disciples about what it costs to follow Him. He demands that He be the first priority over persons, purposes or possessions. Here is the story from God's Word:

Tell the Story (Plant the Seed)

Tell the story: Don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story.

Read: Read the story directly from God's word.



Discipleship Questions (Water the Seed)

Here are the four discipleship questions to ask after you have told the story:

1. What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
2. What is Jesus teaching the disciples?
3. What is Jesus teaching you personally?
4. How can you disciple people as Jesus did in this story?



Life Application Questions (Let it Grow)

1. Who is the person you love that may keep you from following Jesus?
2. What does it mean to carry your own cross?
3. How does the tower story of the advancing army apply to your life?
4. What is the salt of a disciple?

Discipleship Tips for Leaders:

How do you keep Jesus first in your life?

Evaluate your purposes in your life in light of the cross.

Do you help your people count the cost before they make decisions?



18. Sheep, Silver, Prodigal

Luke 15:1-32

Transition: Jesus moved from the cost of discipleship to the task of a disciple-seeking the lost. The scribes and Pharisees had just criticized Jesus for eating with sinners. He told three stories to set them straight on what mattered to Him. Here is the story from God's Word:

Tell the Story (Plant the Seed)

Tell the story: Don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story.

Read: Read the story directly from God's word.



Discipleship Questions (Water the Seed)

Here are the four discipleship questions to ask after you have told the story:

1. What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
2. What is Jesus teaching the disciples?
3. What is Jesus teaching you personally?
4. How can you disciple people as Jesus did in this story?



Life Application Questions (Let it Grow)

1. How important to God is your lost family member or relative who is lost? How important is it to you?
2. What is our part in finding the lost?
3. Which of the characters in the story do you most clearly resemble? Why?

Discipleship Tips for Leaders:

Are you modeling how to go after the lost by calling your people when they are absent?

How do you let those people that don't want to be a part of your group go? Go back to "God's part, my part, their part" training.

Do the people in your group know that they are also responsible for the others?



19. Lazarus Raised From The Dead

John 11:1-49

Transition: Jesus faced going to Jerusalem for the last time. His unbelieving brothers urged Him to go and do miracles there if He was the Messiah but He told them 'no'. He told His disciples several times that He faced rejection and death. Yet they still followed Him. In today's story we see Him make an astounding claim and do an extraordinary miracle on His way to Jerusalem. Here is the story from God's Word:

Tell the Story (Plant the Seed)

Tell the story: Don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story.

Read: Read the story directly from God's word.



Discipleship Questions (Water the Seed)

Here are the four discipleship questions to ask after you have told the story:

1. What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
2. What is Jesus teaching the disciples?
3. What is Jesus teaching you personally?
4. How can you disciple people as Jesus did in this story?



Life Application Questions (Let it Grow)

1. How do you react when face with a risk for following Jesus as Thomas did?
2. How do you react when Jesus' timing doesn't seem to fit your need? Why?
3. What will you do to show your faith in Jesus when you face the death of a loved one or your own death?

Discipleship Tips for Leaders:

How should we respond when the Father's expectations clash with those of your disciples/ group members?

- Recognize that God's ways are higher than your ways
- Respond to the Spirit's leadership rather than the expectations of others
- Be patient when your followers don't understand
- Depend on God to do what you cant do



20. Serving Others

Mark 10:31-45

Transition: When Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead it raised the stakes for the Jewish leaders. Every day brought Jesus closer to His death. The disciples faced each day's new situation with fear and hope. They began to talk about how they would act when Jesus was no longer with them. They competed for leadership. We join them as they follow Jesus into Jerusalem. Here is the story from God's Word:

Tell the Story (Plant the Seed)

Tell the story: Don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story.

Read: Read the story directly from God's word.



Discipleship Questions (Water the Seed)

Here are the four discipleship questions to ask after you have told the story:

1. What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
2. What is Jesus teaching the disciples?
3. What is Jesus teaching you personally?
4. How can you disciple people as Jesus did in this story?



Life Application Questions (Let it Grow)

1. When do we compete for positions in God's Kingdom, the church or the small group? How do we show this competition?
2. How do you show a servant's attitude and actions?
3. What will you do to serve members of the group this week?

Discipleship Tips for Leaders:

How do you deal with members of your group who compete for position or prominence?

- Show them the big picture as Jesus did
- Challenge them when they show selfish desires
- Use these times to teach eternal truths



21. Triumphant Entry

Luke 19:28-48

Transition: In the midst of petty arguments and earth-shattering events Jesus faced the battle of the ages. His emotions ran from exhilarating joy to sheer despair over His disciples and the rejection of the Jews. We join Him and His disciples in one of these up and down emotional days as they entered Jerusalem. Just before our story today, he told the story of the ten talents and the king who would kill enemies that rejected him. Now, here is the story from, God's Word:

Tell the Story (Plant the Seed)

Tell the story: Don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story.

Read: Read the story directly from God's word.



Discipleship Questions (Water the Seed)

Here are the four discipleship questions to ask after you have told the story:

1. What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
2. What is Jesus teaching the disciples?
3. What is Jesus teaching you personally?
4. How can you disciple people as Jesus did in this story?



Life Application Questions (Let it Grow)

1. What would you have done if Jesus asked you to pick up someone's colt (or pickup truck) for Him to use? Why?
2. Why did Jesus cry? How do you feel about those who reject Jesus?
3. How do you react when people desecrate what is holy?

Discipleship Tips for Leaders:

As a leader how do you deal with the emotional swings and pressures every leader faces?

- A daily time with the Father to keep you on track with His purposes
- Don't pay too much attention to those who praise you or criticize you
- Be willing to show your emotions of compassion and righteous indignation



22. Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet

John 13:1-26

Transition: Jesus was bombarded by questions about His authority, paying taxes, marriage in the resurrection. He talked to His disciples about the signs of the end of the age. Judas agreed to betray Jesus to the chief of priests. With all this swirling around Him, Jesus wanted to eat the last Passover meal with His disciples and teach them about what was going to happen to Him. It was at this Passover meal that Jesus modeled leadership in the Kingdom. Here is the story from God's Word:

Tell the Story (Plant the Seed)

Tell the story: Don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story.

Read: Read the story directly from God's word.



Discipleship Questions (Water the Seed)

Here are the four discipleship questions to ask after you have told the story:

1. What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
2. What is Jesus teaching the disciples?
3. What is Jesus teaching you personally?
4. How can you disciple people as Jesus did in this story?



Life Application Questions (Let it Grow)

1. Does Jesus serve out of weakness or strength? What is your self-identity when serving?
2. Why should we "wash one another's feet"?
3. What does "washing feet" look like in your daily life? In your small group? In your church? In your community?

Discipleship Tips for Leaders:

What attitude and actions should you show to your disciples/small group members in light of this story?

- You are the model as you follow Christ
- You take the initiative to serve them first



23. Jesus, the Way to the Father

John 14:1-18

Transition: Jesus not only said that one would betray Him but that Peter would deny Him. They were all shocked, especially Peter who denied it. Then Jesus began to help them understand more clearly who He was and where He was going. He also introduced the Holy Spirit to them as His replacement. Here is the story from God's Word:

Tell the Story (Plant the Seed)

Tell the story: Don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story.

Read: Read the story directly from God's word.



Discipleship Questions (Water the Seed)

Here are the four discipleship questions to ask after you have told the story:

1. What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
2. What is Jesus teaching the disciples?
3. What is Jesus teaching you personally?
4. How can you disciple people as Jesus did in this story?



Life Application Questions (Let it Grow)

1. How will you answer people who say there are many ways to heaven and they all end up in the same place?
2. What does Jesus mean when He tells the disciples that they would do greater works than He did? What does it mean to you?
3. How do you live and work in the Spirit?

Discipleship Tips for Leaders:

How do you help your disciples to take your place and to lead others?

- Make sure they understand the basics
- Encourage them at what they can do by the power and presence of the Father
- Remind them of the promises of God about their ultimate destiny



24. Jesus, the True Vine

John 15:1-17

Transition: After Jesus clarified that he was the way the truth, and the life and that everything He did came from the Father. He moved on to help the disciples understand that their life was in Him. Jesus taught them the secret of how to live in Christ by comparing their lives to the vine, the branches and the fruit. Here is the story from God's Word:

Tell the Story (Plant the Seed)

Tell the story: Don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story.

Read: Read the story directly from God's word.



Discipleship Questions (Water the Seed)

Here are the four discipleship questions to ask after you have told the story:

1. What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
2. What is Jesus teaching the disciples?
3. What is Jesus teaching you personally?
4. How can you disciple people as Jesus did in this story?



Life Application Questions (Let it Grow)

1. How can we stay connected to Christ and who He made us to be?
2. How well are you bearing the Fruit of the Spirit?
3. How can you fulfill the purpose for which Christ chose you?

Discipleship Tips for Leaders:

How do you communicate the truth of abiding in Christ to your Group members?

- Use analogies like the vine. Think of several that teach the same truths
- Share the relationship of love to obedience by teaching it and modeling it as you lay down your life for disciples
- Demonstrate to them the importance of relating to Christ as a friend and other disciples as brothers and sisters



25. Jesus Predicts Peter's Denial

Luke 22:31-62

Transition: After teaching the disciples how to live in Him, Jesus had to tell Peter that Satan was going to sift him like wheat and that he would deny Jesus. As they approached the Mount of Olives Jesus' sorrow mounted. He faced the fact that the will of His father was that He should die for the sins of the world. He spent time in prayer while the disciples slept. Now here is the story from God's Word:

Tell the Story (Plant the Seed)

Tell the story: Don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story.

Read: Read the story directly from God's word.



Discipleship Questions (Water the Seed)

Here are the four discipleship questions to ask after you have told the story:

1. What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
2. What is Jesus teaching the disciples?
3. What is Jesus teaching you personally?
4. How can you disciple people as Jesus did in this story?



Life Application Questions (Let it Grow)

1. In what ways do we deny Christ today?
2. We all know that Satan is sifting us. How do you overcome his temptations? What do you learn from the negative model of the disciples and Jesus' positive model?
3. Have you felt that Christ looked at you after you had failed like He did Peter? What did you do? What will you do when you face temptation in the future?

Discipleship Tips for Leaders:

How do you handle the failures of your disciples/ group members?

- Warn them of Satan and temptations
- Encourage them to pray
- Pray to the Father for strength to meet all your temptations and trials



26. Jesus Crucified

Mark 15:1-39

Transition: Jesus had gone through the six trials preceding His crucifixion. After the Jewish leaders turned Him over to Pilate, Jesus went through the rest of His trials in short order and faced crucifixion. Here is the story from God's Word as Mark told it:

Tell the Story (Plant the Seed)

Tell the story: Don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story.

Read: Read the story directly from God's word.



Discipleship Questions (Water the Seed)

Here are the four discipleship questions to ask after you have told the story:

1. What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
2. What is Jesus teaching the disciples?
3. What is Jesus teaching you personally?
4. How can you disciple people as Jesus did in this story?



Life Application Questions (Let it Grow)

1. If you had been in this story which person do you think you would be? Why?
2. What part of the crucifixion story touches you the most? Why?
3. What does it mean to you to be crucified with Christ? (Gal. 2:20)

Discipleship Tips for Leaders:

How do you live out your teaching?

- Believe so strongly what you teach that you turn the other cheek when hit
- Care for people even when you are suffering. (The dying thief and Jesus' mother)



27. He is Alive!

Luke 24:1-49

Transition: It was over. Jesus had paid the ultimate sacrifice to redeem us-death on the cross. Two members of the Sanhedrin, (the Jewish high court) Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus buried Jesus in Joseph's new tomb. The woman who had followed Jesus all His ministry saw where they buried Him and planned to go bring spices the next morning after the Sabbath. Here is the story from God's Word:

Tell the Story (Plant the Seed)

Tell the story: Don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story.

Read: Read the story directly from God's word.



Discipleship Questions (Water the Seed)

Here are the four discipleship questions to ask after you have told the story:

1. What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
2. What is Jesus teaching the disciples?
3. What is Jesus teaching you personally?
4. How can you disciple people as Jesus did in this story?



Life Application Questions (Let it Grow)

1. How do you think you would have reacted if Jesus appeared to you after you saw Him dead?
2. How would you answer someone who asked what proof you had that Jesus was resurrected?
3. What Scriptures that predicted the death and resurrection of Jesus do you know that Jesus might have used to tell the disciples on the road to Emmaus and the Eleven?
4. Who will you tell the resurrection story to this week with the same enthusiasm as the disciples telling others?



Discipleship Tips for Leaders:

Consider this week how you can live as proof of Jesus' resurrection...

28. Jesus Restores Peter

John 21:1-23

Transition: Jesus told His disciples to go to Galilee where He would meet them. No doubt Peter was devastated by his denial of Jesus even though Jesus had shown Himself personally to him. Evidently they grew restless and Peter took several of the disciples fishing-perhaps going back to their old profession. Jesus came to Peter and confronted him. Here is the story from God's Word:

Tell the Story (Plant the Seed)

Tell the story: Don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story.

Read: Read the story directly from God's word.



Discipleship Questions (Water the Seed)

Here are the four discipleship questions to ask after you have told the story:

1. What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
2. What is Jesus teaching the disciples?
3. What is Jesus teaching you personally?
4. How can you disciple people as Jesus did in this story?



Life Application Questions (Let it Grow)

1. What do you think the disciples thought when Jesus told them to cast on the right side and they caught many fish? Can you think of a flashback for them?
2. How can we show that we love Jesus?
3. What steps can you take to show that you are taking responsibility for making disciples instead of asking about what others are going to do?



Discipleship Tips for Leaders:

What do you do when you have a disciple who has fallen?

- Use a previous experience to help him remember his original commitment (first) and realize how far he has fallen from that commitment
- Challenge him to take his responsibility and not look at others
- Remind him that to follow Christ is costly

29. The Promise of the Holy Spirit

Acts 1:1-10

Transition: Luke told the story of Jesus telling His disciples to stay in Jerusalem until they were filled with the Holy Spirit-to wait for the promise of the Father. He did not tell them how long that would be or how long He would keep appearing to them. Luke picks up the story in the second letter he wrote in the book of Acts. Here is the story from God's Word:

Tell the Story (Plant the Seed)

Tell the story: Don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story.

Read: Read the story directly from God's word.



Discipleship Questions (Water the Seed)

Here are the four discipleship questions to ask after you have told the story:

1. What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
2. What is Jesus teaching the disciples?
3. What is Jesus teaching you personally?
4. How can you disciple people as Jesus did in this story?



Life Application Questions (Let it Grow)

1. How can you relate with the disciples in this story?
2. How can you carry out Jesus' statement that His disciples would bear witness of Him in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the ends of the earth?
3. When you accept Christ, the Holy Spirit inhabits you and works in and through you. How can you yield to His leadership better this week?

Discipleship Tips for Leaders:

How can you answer questions that group members ask that you don't know the answer to? Don't fake it. Say, "I don't know."

- Tell them what you know about the Kingdom of God
- When you don't know the answer because God hasn't revealed it, challenge them with what you do not know that applies to them
- Leave them to apply what you have told them



30. Pentecost

Acts 2

Transition: After the disciples saw Jesus ascend into heaven they went back to the upper room where they had met Him many times. They waited as He had told them to do. They prayed. They searched the Scriptures. They cast lots to see which of the disciples that had followed Jesus the whole time should take the place of Judas. They waited in Jerusalem but probably had no idea what was about to happen when the promise of the Father was answered. Here is the story from God's Word:

Tell the Story (Plant the Seed)

Tell the story: Don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story.

Read: Read the story directly from God's word.



Discipleship Questions (Water the Seed)

Here are the four discipleship questions to ask after you have told the story:

1. What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
2. What is Jesus teaching the disciples?
3. What is Jesus teaching you personally?
4. How can you disciple people as Jesus did in this story?



Life Application Questions (Let it Grow)

1. What will you answer when people ask "How can this be?" [i.e. What happened] about the Spirit working in your life?
2. What will you say when people ask "What should we do?" because they are convicted about Christ being the Savior?
3. Which of the things the disciples did after Pentecost (verses 42-46) is your group doing? What changes need to be made?

Discipleship Tips for Leaders:

How do you lead when God is obviously at work?

- Explain the Scriptures that relate to what is happening
- Give a clear witness and credit to Jesus
- Lead the disciples to practice all the spiritual disciplines of discipleship



31. Peter

Acts 3-4:31

Transition: The Holy Spirit radically changed the disciples and they began to live the life that Christ had promised when they began to follow Him. They worshipped in their homes and in the temple. As they went they began to do miracles as Christ had promised. That got them in trouble but resulted in the church growing greatly. Here is the first recorded story after the Pentecost experience:

Tell the Story (Plant the Seed)

Tell the story: Don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story.

Read: Read the story directly from God's word.



Discipleship Questions (Water the Seed)

Here are the four discipleship questions to ask after you have told the story:

1. What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
2. What is Jesus teaching the disciples?
3. What is Jesus teaching you personally?
4. How can you disciple people as Jesus did in this story?



Life Application Questions (Let it Grow)

1. What is the result of ordinary disciples filled with the Holy Spirit?
2. Under what conditions should you fear or obey those who try to stop you from witnessing?
3. What should you pray when threatened?

Discipleship Tips for Leaders:

How do you keep leading when you encounter personal attacks?

- Rely on the Holy Spirit to give you words, stand firm in Him
- Pray for boldness to speak for Him



32. On Fire

Acts 8:1-25

Transition: God greatly blessed the disciples and they increased with every challenge. They had to face the threats and persecution of the Jewish authorities, deception in their ranks prejudice in the church and the first martyrdom. God's plan to cross every barrier led them out from Judea to Samaria and the ends of the earth. One of the chief opponents, Saul, participated in Stephen's death but could not stamp out the witness to Jesus wherever they were scattered. Here is the story from God's word:

Tell the Story (Plant the Seed)

Tell the story: Don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story.

Read: Read the story directly from God's word.



Discipleship Questions (Water the Seed)

Here are the four discipleship questions to ask after you have told the story:

1. What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
2. What is Jesus teaching the disciples?
3. What is Jesus teaching you personally?
4. How can you disciple people as Jesus did in this story?



Life Application Questions (Let it Grow)

1. How do you plan to deal with persecution or discrimination if it comes because of your witness to Jesus?
2. Who lives in your "Samaria" that needs to hear from you about Jesus?
3. How will you prepare to witness in "one time meetings" with other people?

Discipleship Tips for Leaders:

How can you support your disciples in their ministries?

- Turn them loose
- Go authenticate their ministries
- Learn from them and do what they have pioneered



33. No One Left Out

Acts 10

Transition: God continued to push the disciples out across barriers-geographical, religious, and social. He brought Saul to Himself through the encounter on the road to Damascus. He used Ananias to follow up Saul and accompany him on his first witnessing there. But there was one deep seated barrier that the church had to overcome-their relationship with the Gentiles. It took another intervention from God. Here is the story from God's Word:

Tell the Story (Plant the Seed)

Tell the story: Don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story.

Read: Read the story directly from God's word.



Discipleship Questions (Water the Seed)

Here are the four discipleship questions to ask after you have told the story:

1. What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
2. What is Jesus teaching the disciples?
3. What is Jesus teaching you personally?
4. How can you disciple people as Jesus did in this story?



Life Application Questions (Let it Grow)

1. What traditions do you hold that Jesus would challenge?
2. How do you break the bonds of prejudice?
3. How will you apply the lessons Peter learned in your world today?

Discipleship Tips for Leaders:

How do you deal with your disciples and leaders when God leads you in a different direction?

- Face up to the change God wants to make in you
- Take others with you while you are on the journey
- Give your defense to your leaders based on the leadership of God
- Take a stand on principles when it counts



34. Barnabas and Saul

Acts 13:1-12

Transition: Through Peter, God broke down the middle wall between Jews and Gentiles in Judea but he launched the missionary movement to the ends of the earth through Barnabas and Saul. No longer was it an individual effort but eventually the whole church got involved in the mission of God. Here's how it started from the story in God's Word:

Tell the Story (Plant the Seed)

Tell the story: Don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story.

Read: Read the story directly from God's word.



Discipleship Questions (Water the Seed)

Here are the four discipleship questions to ask after you have told the story:

1. What do we learn about Jesus in this story?
2. What is Jesus teaching the disciples?
3. What is Jesus teaching you personally?
4. How can you disciple people as Jesus did in this story?



Life Application Questions (Let it Grow)

1. Who sent out the first missionaries? What should we be doing if we want to call out missionaries to the world?
2. What preparation did the first missionaries have before being sent out? What preparation do we need today to be missionaries?
3. What should we do if we go to another culture as missionaries?

Discipleship Tips for Leaders:

All believers are missionaries. All believers are priests that are called to actively participate in the mission of God...

- How can you better participate in that mission as a missionary today?
- How can you better lead the members of your group to be missionaries?



Out of the Ordinary

30 Week
Bible Storying Curriculum



blackhawkministries.org



Why God Uses ~~Extraordinary~~ Ordinary People



The Greek definition of ordinary is **common**, belonging to generality by the Jews, **unhallowed, profane, Levitically unclean**.

Common and unhallowed. No fan fare. Nothing to draw us to them. Simply faces in the crowd. In many ways we understand those terms but how is being ordinary profane? Or even worse, not ceremonially pure to be a priest or prophet. God can't use common, unhallowed or profane people like that to make a difference in this world can He?

When we read through Scripture we expect God to use clean, pure people. But consistently He looks past those who claimed to be religiously "right." He chose people like your neighbor, your boss, your parents. He chose people like you to do great things.

2 Corinthians 4:7-10 (NIV)

⁷But we have this treasure in **jars of clay** to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. ⁸We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; ⁹persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. ¹⁰We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body.

Not the ornate jars you would expect but just average. Clay. And the reason why God is longing to do extraordinary things through you today is the same reason He did for our biblical heroes. Not because they were the best! Not because they were even worthy! He did it so that He could show His mighty power.

Shepherds, farmers, fishermen, tax collectors, bankers, teenagers, prostitutes, salesmen and women, tent makers, manufacturers. God used them all in the ***past*** and He is unchanging in His nature. He works through the same kind of people, ordinary ones, ***today*** as well.

The question is: ***if Scripture were being written today and we read your story, what would your life say about the power of God?***

This year our study is going to focus on God using you! I encourage you DO NOT focus on everyone else in your life or your group. *Make it personal!* Listen to the stories of these ordinary people and be honest enough to ask: *How do I see God moving in my life?*

God moved ordinary people to extraordinary things by working through them! Join us as we move **OUT OF THE ORDINARY.**

Curriculum Notes

At the top of the first page you will see the story's passage location, the story's main theme which we will be exploring, and the corresponding week number.

Here is the layout for the curriculum and therefore for your home group.



Leaders Guide: This area will have special notes for you as the leader. It will provide an overview of the story as a whole and offer practical preparation and execution suggestions as you lead.



Transition: This is the compass for determining where we are in God's Story. Briefly summarize last week's story and what has happened leading into this week's story.



Pre-Story Hook: Use the hook question or statement before telling the story. This is a tool to get your people thinking about the theme of the story before it is told. It is helpful to answer the hook question yourself in the group by telling a story to your group, then asking them to think about the question or statement themselves before telling them the story from the Bible.



Tell the Story: The story is the nuts and bolts, or the cogs, of our entire group. Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, JUST TELL THE STORY. Again, the objective is not to memorize it, but to learn it and be able to share it

Rebuild: Chronologically rebuild the story or passage by asking questions, have the group look for what was added or left out.



Thumbprint Questions: Thumbprints are used today to trace a person's identity. We use these "Thumbprint Questions" to help you clearly identify who God is and who we are in relationship with Him. These questions will help lock the story in your people's minds and hearts. Discuss them in your group after telling and rebuilding the story. They are designed to bring your people to a more clear belief of who God really is, who the really are as His people, how they should see the world, and ultimately how they should change in their lives as a result.

STORY

“Restored After Sin”

Samson – Judges 16:1-31

Week 1



LEADER’S Guide:

In this Storying Set, we will focus on stories of ordinary people that were used in extraordinary ways. Our first section will deal with people that God used extraordinarily despite of their sin. All of us deal with sin issues, and many suffer from guilt. This is an opportunity for your LIFE Group to go deep. But be sensitive and don’t push it. Lead by example, your group will go as deep as you are willing to.

Ice Breaker

Consider using an icebreaker that helps your group mesh as you start things off. Remember this is an opportunity to get to know new people in the group as well as deepen the relationship between everyone.



TRANSITION:

Samson, a member of the tribe of Dan, was one of the Judges of Israel. He Judged Israel for 20 years. Samson's mother received a visit from an angel who told her she would give birth to an unusual son, a Nazirite. He told her not to cut his hair. Samson had great strength. He killed a lion with his bare hands and later killed 1,000 Philistines with a jawbone of a donkey. He had romantic encounters with three Philistine women.



HOOK:

Think about a time that you disobeyed a person in authority over you. What was their reaction? What was your reaction?



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story, as best as you can, don’t stop and teach, don’t make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.

Rebuild the Story:

Rebuild the story by going back through the story with Bibles open. Have the group look for what was added or left out. Ask questions to help the group rebuild the story.

Our Mission: Reach the lost and equip the saved across the street and around the world for God's glory.

THE "WHY" Behind the Questions:

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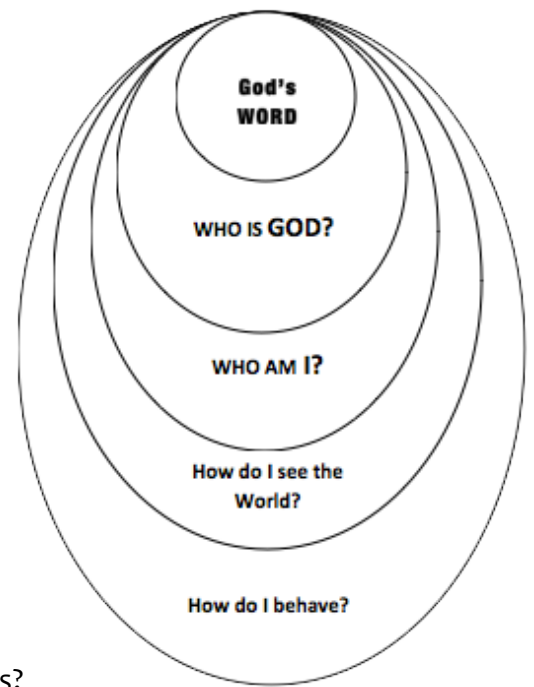
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PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

The Forgiven Woman – Luke 7:36-50

“Restored After Sin”

Week 2



LEADER’S Guide:

This story deals with how God views us in spite of our sins. Take the time to focus on how the woman must have felt approaching Jesus, why she approached Him, and what was the response of others. Make sure to make this personal by asking good questions that make people think about how they approach Jesus and how they view others who are approaching Jesus.

Ice Breaker

Consider using an icebreaker that helps your group mesh as you start things off. Remember this is an opportunity to get to know new people in the group as well as deepen the relationship between everyone.



TRANSITION:

Jesus is invited for dinner by one of the Pharisees (we are not told where, though presumably it is in Galilee where other events in the context of this passage took place). The invitation to dinner certainly implied respect for this new teacher and healer. Was he also a prophet? Simon wanted to learn more about Jesus. It soon becomes obvious that we can't count Simon as a believer -- rather as a skeptic trying to be open-minded.



HOOK:

Are there people that you have been taught to stay away from because of their bad behavior or actions? Why are we to stay away from them? Can we have any type of relationship with them?



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop and teach, don't make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.

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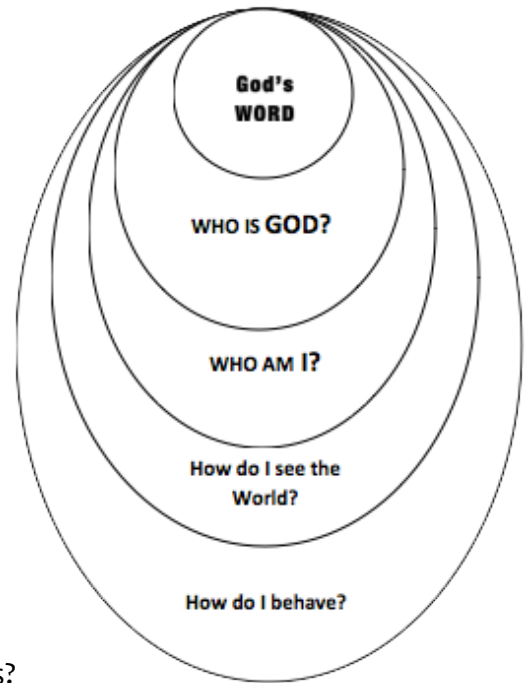
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PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

“Restored After Sin”

Jonah – Jonah 2:1-3:10

Week 3



LEADER’S Guide:

This story shows what God will do to use ordinary people to accomplish His will. We have all encountered tough times as a result of not following God’s will. Use this time to show God’s love in the midst of our disobedience. This is a great opportunity to take your group past the surface level of punishment and dig deep into the love of God’s plan.

Ice Breaker

Consider using an icebreaker that helps your group mesh as you start things off. Remember this is an opportunity to get to know new people in the group as well as deepen the relationship between everyone.



TRANSITION:

Jonah, the son of Amittai, was born in Israel. He was called by God to preach repentance to Assyria whose capital was Nineveh; however, Jonah rebelled. Jonah didn't want to preach to the pagans of Assyria. Instead he tried to escape God's plan by fleeing on a ship. But Jonah was thrown overboard and swallowed by a great fish.



HOOK:

Tell of a time when God asked you specifically to do something.



TELL THE STORY:

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Rebuild the Story

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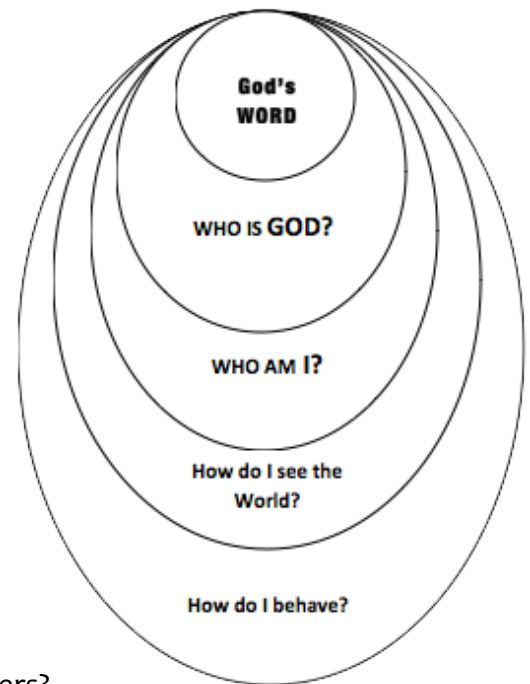
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PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

“Restored After Sin”

David – 2 Samuel 12:1-15

Week 4



LEADER’S Guide:

This story deals with the forgiveness that God offers. The tendency of the group will be to focus on the sin of David and Bathsheba. Be diligent to keep the group focused on forgiveness and not the consequence of the sin itself. Tell the story as usual, but read Psalms 51.

Ice Breaker

Consider using an icebreaker that helps your group mesh as you start things off. Remember this is an opportunity to get to know new people in the group as well as deepen the relationship between everyone.



TRANSITION:

David was the youngest son of Jesse. He was born in Bethlehem in the tribe of Judah. David was handpicked by God, anointed by Samuel, and became Israel's greatest king.

David was a shepherd in his early years. After killing Goliath with a slingshot, he joined the entourage of King Saul, Israel's first king. Saul eventually became jealous of David's popularity with the Israelites and tried to kill him several times. David and his followers had to flee and hide out from Saul. After the defeat of the Israelites, and the death of Saul, David was anointed King over Judah.

David committed adultery with Bathsheba and sent her husband Uriah to his death. For this, God rebuked David through Nathan the prophet.



HOOK:

Tell about a time when you did something wrong and were caught.



TELL THE STORY:

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Rebuild the Story

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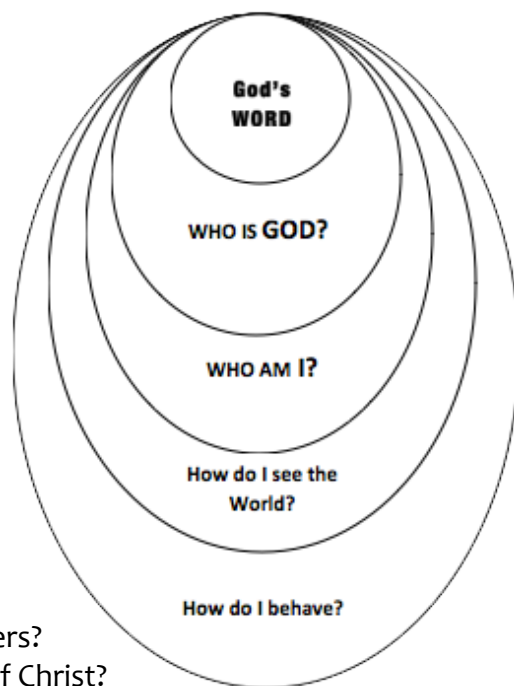
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PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

“Restored After Sin”

Peter – John 21: 9-25

Week 5



LEADER’S Guide:

This story deals with the Jesus personally offering forgiveness to Peter. This is the last week of dealing with the topic of forgiveness. Be sensitive to others that you sense are struggling with this issue. You may want to take some time during the week to pray for them and to also meet with them to see how you can help them.

Ice Breaker

Consider using an icebreaker that helps your group mesh as you start things off. Remember this is an opportunity to get to know new people in the group as well as deepen the relationship between everyone.



TRANSITION:

Peter, an apostle, betrayed Jesus three times by denying that he knew him. Peter did not go to Jesus’ crucifixion. Three days later; however, he was one of the first apostles to view the empty tomb. In our story, we now find Jesus talking with Peter for the first time after all of these events. Peter’s denial was still weighing heavy on his heart.



HOOK:

Tell about a time when you forgave someone for the wrong they had done.



TELL THE STORY:

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Rebuild the Story

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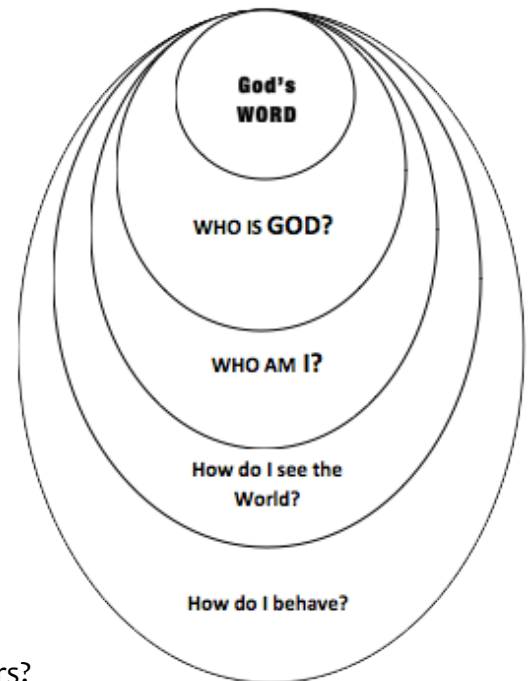
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PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

“Old Testament Miracles”

Elijah – 1 Kings 18:17-40

Week 6



LEADER’S Guide:

Our topic for the next couple of weeks deals with individuals that God used in the Old Testament to produce miracles. As we focus on these ordinary people doing extraordinary things for God, look for ways to make these Old Testament miracles personal to each person. Remember to facilitate discussion and not simply teach about how God desires to use us in miraculous ways.

Ice Breaker

Consider using an icebreaker that helps your group mesh as you start things off. Remember this is an opportunity to get to know new people in the group as well as deepen the relationship between everyone.



TRANSITION:

Elijah, a Tishbite from the region of Gilead, was a prophet in Israel during the reigns of Ahab, Ahaziah and Jehoram. All his life Elijah was active in the defense of God. His teachings brought him into constant conflict with the Kings of Israel and on one occasion he had to flee for his life. He fought against the cult of Baal and clashed frequently with Ahab's wife, Jezebel, who had introduced the pagan cult in Israel.

Elijah performed some extraordinary miracles as a prophet of God. He brought the dead son of a widow back to life (1 Kings 17:22-23). He caused a jar of meal and a jar of oil to constantly refill during a drought. He caused fire to come out of the sky and consume a burnt offering.



HOOK:

Begin by simply discussing the idea of miracles. Does God still do miracles?



TELL THE STORY:

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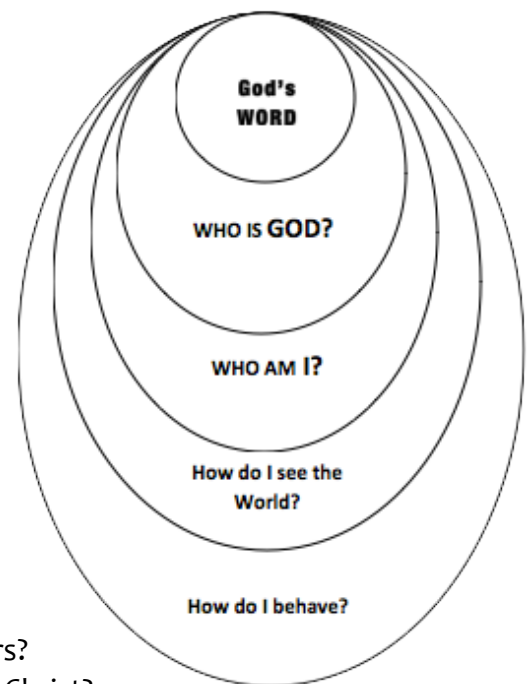
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PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

“Old Testament Miracles”

Ezekiel – Ezekiel 37:1-14

Week 7



LEADER’S Guide:

In this story we find Ezekiel prophesying to a valley of dry bones. Let the conversation develop the story of the miracle of the dry bones, but make sure to spend some time with the meaning. Focus the group on the last of the story where God tells Ezekiel that life will come from the indwelling of the Spirit. Guide the group to go deeper into the meaning of living life with the Spirit.

Ice Breaker

Consider using an icebreaker that helps your group mesh as you start things off. Remember this is an opportunity to get to know new people in the group as well as deepen the relationship between everyone.



TRANSITION:

Ezekiel lived about 2600 years ago, during the time that the Babylonian Empire had subdued the nation of Judah and had destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple. He was the son of Buzi, a Zadokite priest. Ezekiel was among the Jews who were taken as captives to Babylon. He received his call as a prophet during the fifth year of the exile of King Jehoiachin. Ezekiel's ministry lasted about 22 years.

Ezekiel's prophecies about the destruction of Jerusalem caused friction among the Jews who were with him in Babylon. But when his prophecies came true, people began to listen to him more intently. Ezekiel's wife died the day the Babylonians began their siege of Jerusalem. This siege began in 586 BC after Ezekiel and others had been taken captive to Babylon. The siege ended with the destruction of Jerusalem and its Temple also in 586 BC.

After the destruction, Ezekiel's prophecies changed from the theme of unbending judgment to the theme of hope and comfort for the future. Ezekiel was very much a shepherd and a watchman for the nation of Israel. As a shepherd he protected the people and as a watchman he warned of dangers ahead.



HOOK:

Tell of a time when God did a miracle in your life, or in the life of someone you know.



TELL THE STORY:

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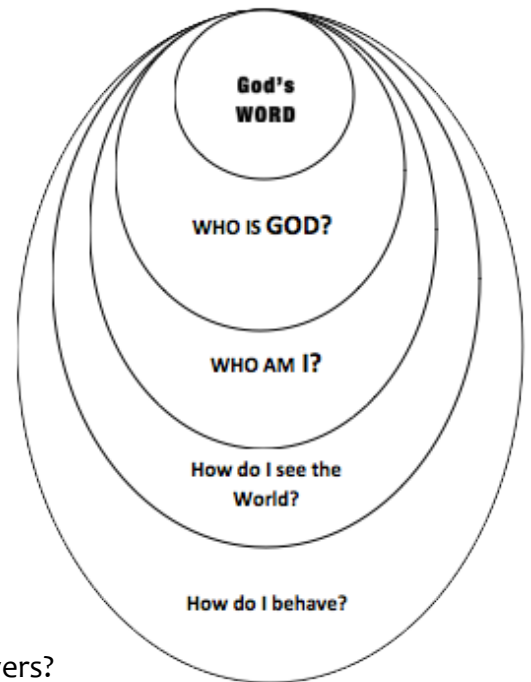
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PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

“Old Testament Miracles”

Elisha – 2 Kings 4:8-37

Week 8



LEADER’S Guide:

In this story, God uses Elisha to raise a boy from the dead. As you deal with the details of the story guide the group to deal with the Why’s of the story. Why did God allow the boy to die? Why raise him again? etc. While dealing with the “why’s” can be uncomfortable, it can be beneficial in allowing others to see how the “why’s” in the Old Testament are the same as what we deal with today.

Ice Breaker

Consider using an icebreaker that helps your group mesh as you start things off. Remember this is an opportunity to get to know new people in the group as well as deepen the relationship between everyone.



TRANSITION:

Elisha, son of Shaphat, was a prophet from Abel Meholah in Gilead. He lived in the northern Kingdom of Israel during the reigns of Jehoram, Jehu, Jehoahaz and Jehoash. Elisha was Elijah's student.

When Elijah was taken up into heaven in a fiery chariot, Elisha picked up Elijah's cloak and struck it on the waters of the Jordan River. He said, "Where is the Lord the God of Elijah?" (2 Kings 2:14). The water then parted and Elisha crossed over and began his service as a prophet of God.

Elisha, like Elijah, performed some extraordinary miracles as a prophet of God. He brought back to life the dead son of a Shunammite woman. He cured Naaman, a general from Damascus, of leprosy. He multiplied loaves of barley and ears of grain to feed a crowd of people. He caused a metal ax head to float on water. He caused an attacking Aramean army to go blind and then returned their sight. And, among other miracles, he filled large empty vessels with oil.



HOOK:

Explain what you think is the purpose of a miracle.



TELL THE STORY:

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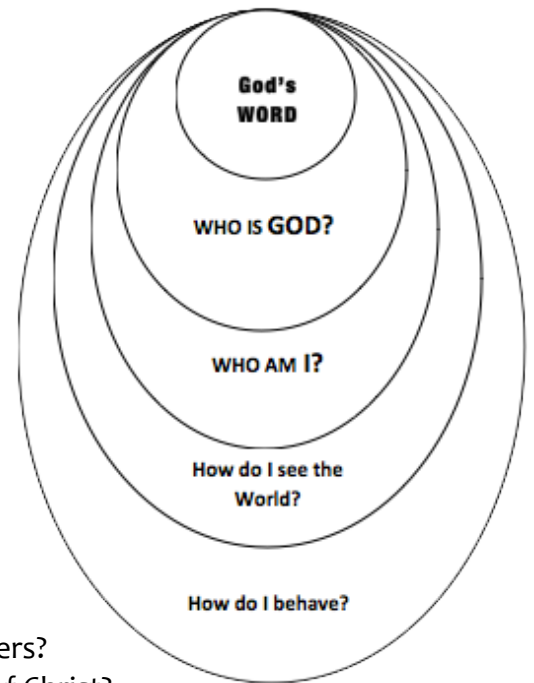
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PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

“Rare Bond of Love”

Ruth/Naomi – Ruth 1

Week 9



LEADER’S Guide:

As we begin this section about a bond of love, focus on the relationship aspect of the story. Spend some time looking at how the relationship began, how it was sustained, what were the obstacles to the relationship, and what are the benefits of having such a relationship. Ruth and Naomi had different backgrounds but were brought together through marriage, grief, and eventually celebration.

Ice Breaker

Consider using an icebreaker that helps your group mesh as you start things off. Remember this is an opportunity to get to know new people in the group as well as deepen the relationship between everyone.



TRANSITION:

Naomi was the mother-in-law of Ruth. Due to a famine Naomi left Bethlehem with her husband Elimelech and their two sons, Mahlon and Chilion, and migrated to Moab.

In the following years her husband died and her two sons married Moabite women, Ruth and Orpah. When her sons died too, Naomi decided to return to Judah.

Naomi told her two daughters-in-law to stay in Moab to find new husbands. Orpah stayed; but Ruth accompanied Naomi back to Judah.

While gleaning fields in Bethlehem, Ruth met Boaz, a rich kinsman of Naomi. Naomi advised Ruth to charm Boaz into taking her as his wife so that Elimelech's property would remain in the family. Ruth married Boaz and later gave birth to Obed. Obed was the grandfather of King David.



HOOK:

Tell about your best friend growing up. Has the friendship continued? Why or Why not?



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop and teach, don't make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.

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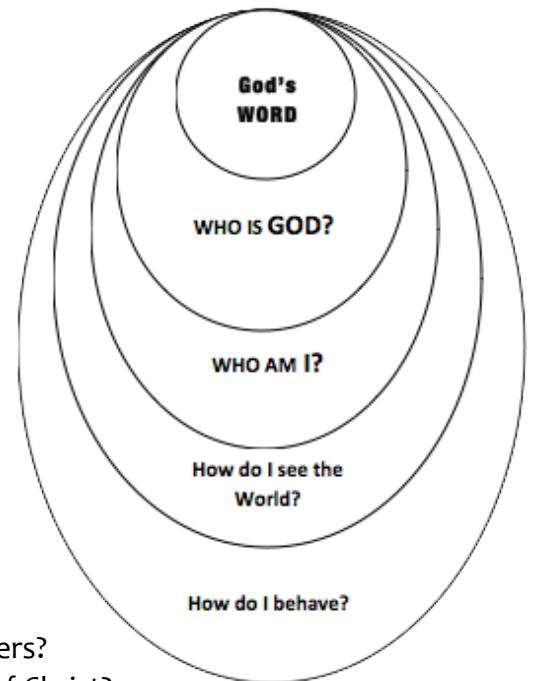
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PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

David/Jonathan – 1 Samuel 18:1-16; 19:1-7

“Rare Bond of Love”

Week 10



LEADER’S Guide:

In this story we see a bond of love between David and Jonathan despite the fact that Jonathan’s father, Saul, wanted to kill David. Bring out the idea of God putting relationships together for a purpose. What was the purpose of David and Jonathan’s friendship?

Ice Breaker

Consider using an icebreaker that helps your group mesh as you start things off. Remember this is an opportunity to get to know new people in the group as well as deepen the relationship between everyone.



TRANSITION:

Jonathan was a good friend to David and the oldest son of King Saul. He was a commander of 1,000 men in Saul's army (1 Samuel 13:2).

In the famous battle of Michmash, Jonathan and his armor bearer attacked the Philistine garrison and killed about twenty men. This caused panic in the Philistine army. When Saul and the Israelites saw this, they attacked and routed the Philistines. But Saul pronounced a curse on anyone in his army who ate anything before the battle was over. Jonathan, who did not know of the curse, ate some honey to refresh himself. Saul was ready to execute Jonathan but the army refused to allow the king to harm him due to his heroic fight and victory against the Philistines.

A few years later, Jonathan and David became good friend. As King Saul became more jealous of David, Jonathan tried to bring peace between the two but the relationship between Saul and David grew worse. Later Jonathan stayed with his father to fight the philistines at Mt. Gilboa where both he and his father were killed (1 Samuel 31:1-2).

When David learned of the death of his good friend he composed a eulogy for both Jonathan and Saul (2 Samuel 1:19-27). Because of David's great friendship with Jonathan, he later took in Jonathan's son, Mephibosheth, and treated him kindly.



HOOK:

Tell about your best friend growing up. Has the friendship continued? Why or Why not?



TELL THE STORY:

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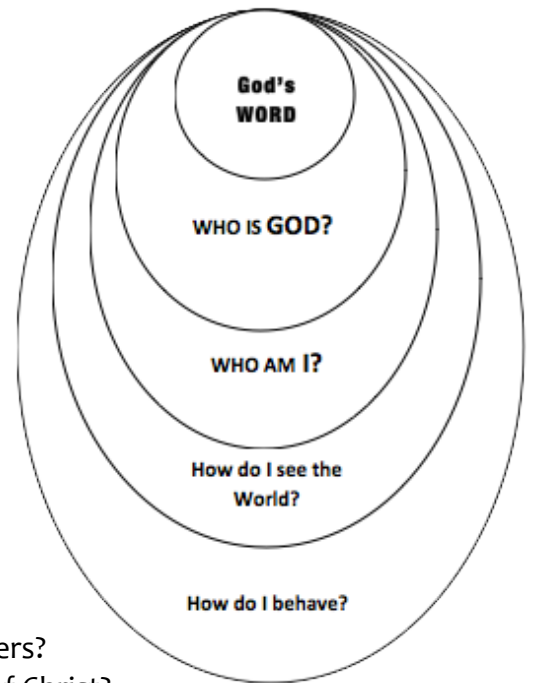
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PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

John the Baptist/Jesus – Matthew 3:1-17

“Rare Bond of Love”

Week 11



LEADER'S Guide:

In this story we see a special bond between Jesus and John the Baptist. For John, this was a relationship that he had been waiting for. When John baptized Jesus a spiritual bond formed. This would be a great time to go deeper in exploring spiritual relationships.

Ice Breaker

Consider using an icebreaker that helps your group mesh as you start things off. Remember this is an opportunity to get to know new people in the group as well as deepen the relationship between everyone.



TRANSITION:

John the Baptist was the forerunner of Jesus Christ. He was born to the elderly Zechariah and his barren wife Elizabeth (similar to Abraham and Sarah). Elizabeth was a relative of Mary, the mother of Jesus, and both became pregnant a few months apart. (Luke 1:41-42). The angel Gabriel visited both.

John was much more than a prophet surpassing his predecessors in greatness. He was comparable to Elijah. But John's generation did not accept him alleging instead that he was demon possessed (Matthew 11:17-18).

John's role as forerunner to Jesus was alluded to in a prophecy from Isaiah 40:3, which spoke of *A voice of one calling: "In the desert prepare the way for the Lord; make straight in the wilderness a highway for our God."* There is another prophecy in Malachi 3:1 that also alludes to John the Baptist's role in preparing the way for Jesus Christ.



HOOK:

Describe a relationship that you have with another disciple of Christ. Is it different? How?



TELL THE STORY:

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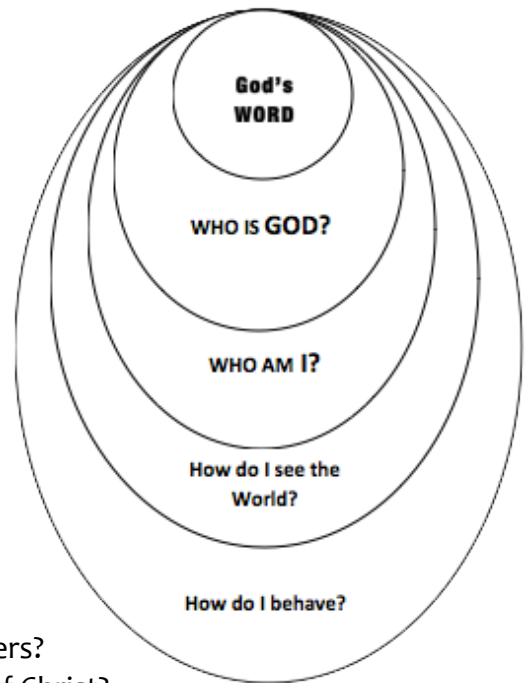
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PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

Esther – Esther 2:15-18; 5:1-8; 8:1-8

“Unlikely People Used by God”

Week 12



LEADER’S Guide:

We will take a look at how God used unlikely people for the next two weeks. We all feel that we are the last people that God would use. Use these stories to allow the group to go deeper by getting personal with the stories. Remember the group will only become as vulnerable as you are willing to be. The story of Esther is spread out over a couple of chapters. Get the main idea of the story, but focus on the reasons how she was the most unlikely to be used by God to deliver her people.

Ice Breaker

Consider using an icebreaker that helps your group mesh as you start things off. Remember this is an opportunity to get to know new people in the group as well as deepen the relationship between everyone.



TRANSITION:

The Persian king Ahasuerus was married to queen Vashti. At this time Persia was a mighty country and the king had great wealth. One day queen Vashti was summoned into the throne room but she refused to come. As a result, king Ahasuerus stripped her from the position of queen of Persia. A new queen had to be found. At the advice of his council, the king ordered a beauty pageant to take place.

Many Israelites at this time were captives in Persia. Esther was a beautiful young woman and the daughter of Abihail of the tribe of Benjamin. She was the cousin and adopted daughter of Mordecai. She was forced to enter the search for the new queen.



HOOK:

Tell of a time or situation when you saw God used someone in an extraordinary way.



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story as best as you can, don’t stop and teach, don’t make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.

Rebuild the Story

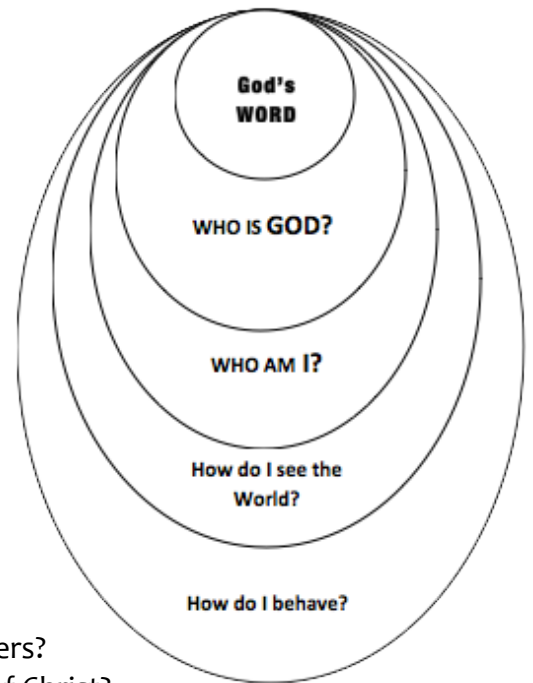
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PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

“Unlikely People Used by God”

Balaam – Numbers 22:22-35

Week 13



LEADER’S Guide:

This is a fun story about how God used a donkey. Allow the group to have fun with it but make sure to keep to the topic of how God uses ordinary people.

Ice Breaker

Consider using an icebreaker that helps your group mesh as you start things off. Remember this is an opportunity to get to know new people in the group as well as deepen the relationship between everyone.



TRANSITION:

Balaam, son of Beor, was a prophet from Penthor on the Euphrates River. Balak was the son of Zippor, king of Moab.

When Balak realized how many Israelites were camped east of the Jordan River and how they had conquered the Amorites, he sent messengers to Balaam to put a curse on the Israelites. Balak sought drive them out of his land. Balaam saddled his donkey and started off together with the messengers of Balak.



HOOK:

Tell of a time or situation when God used you in an extraordinary way.



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story as best as you can, don’t stop and teach, don’t make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.

Rebuild the Story

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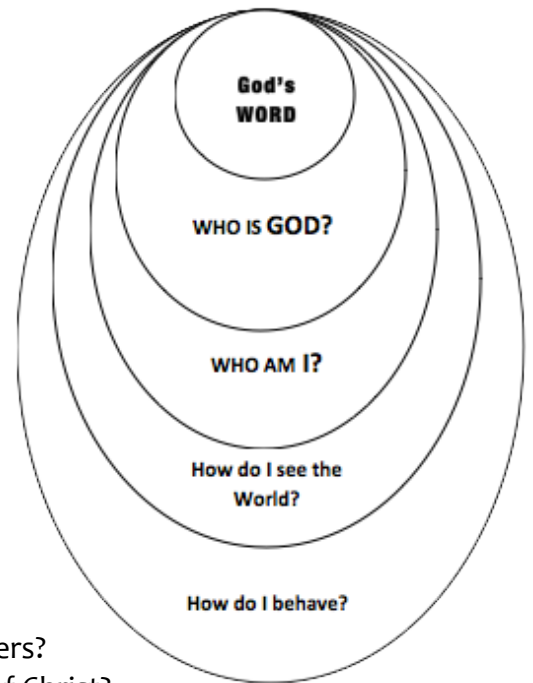
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PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

“Trusting God’s Plan”

Rahab – Joshua 2:1-22

Week 14



LEADER’S Guide:

We will be starting a new section about trusting God’s plan. As you spend several weeks journeying through these stories, help others to realize that God has certain plans and He will direct the disciples’ life to His plan.

In the Hook question this week you will ask everyone to come up with a description of the person that God will use. Obviously God can and will use anyone regardless of how they look. Use the question to reveal any stereotypes that we might have. This is also a great opportunity to talk about Midway’s spiritual growth process (SCMD; Dead, Infant, Child, Young Adult, Parent) that is used to help in the disciple making process.

Ice Breaker

Consider using an icebreaker that helps your group mesh as you start things off. Remember this is an opportunity to get to know new people in the group as well as deepen the relationship between everyone.



TRANSITION:

Rahab was a prostitute who played a key role in the conquest of Jericho. Occupying a house upon the city wall, Rahab gave lodging to the two men sent into Jericho by Joshua on a reconnaissance mission. She hid them under stalks of flax on the roof and told the king's soldiers that they had already left.

For helping the two men escape, Rahab was given the promise that she and her family would be spared when the Israelite army attacked Jericho.



HOOK:

Describe what you think is the perfect person that God uses. How do they look? How do they act?



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story as best as you can, don’t stop and teach, don’t make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.

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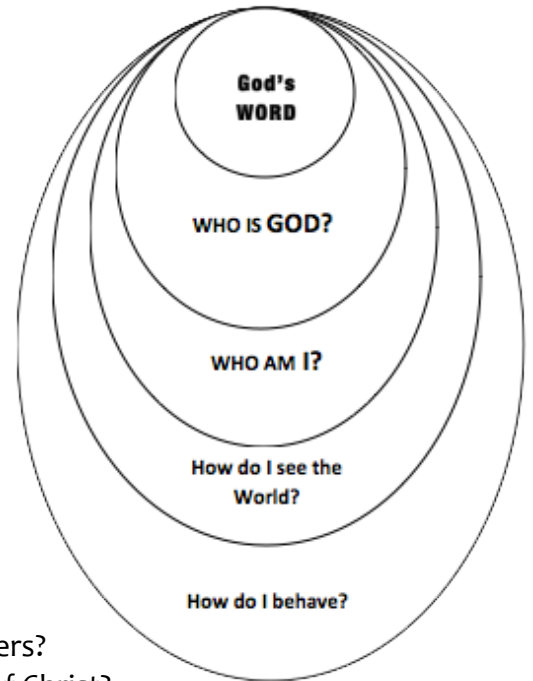
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PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

“Trusting God’s Plan”

Gideon – Judges 7:1-23

Week 15



LEADER’S Guide:

This week’s story deals with the struggle that happens when our plan and God’s plan are different. We all have mental movies of how things should work out. Many times we are disappointed when things don’t go according to our plan. This story will allow great discussion about what we do when things don’t go our way. Remember to be open with your own feelings, as your group will only go as deep as you are willing to lead them.

Ice Breaker

Consider using an icebreaker that helps your group mesh as you start things off. Remember this is an opportunity to get to know new people in the group as well as deepen the relationship between everyone.



TRANSITION:

Gideon was the son of Joash the Abiezrite from Ophrah. He was Israel's fourth major Judge after the birth of Joshua. A large army of Midianites and other nations united against Israel. The Lord told Gideon that he would be made strong and that he was to save Israel from the Midianites.



HOOK:

Tell of a time when the plan you had for something and the plan God had for something were different.



TELL THE STORY:

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Rebuild the Story

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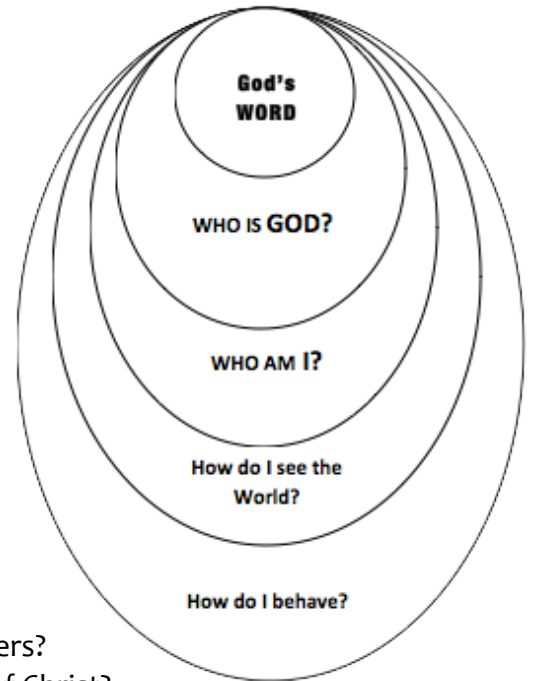
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PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

“Trusting God’s Plan”

Mary – Luke 1:26-45

Week 16



LEADER’S Guide:

We all feel inadequate at times. In this week’s story, we will look at Mary the mother of Jesus. Many disciples are crippled because of the feeling of inadequacies. Use the story of Mary to help others see that God can and will use anyone to accomplish His will even if others think they are inadequate.

Ice Breaker

Consider using an icebreaker that helps your group mesh as you start things off. Remember this is an opportunity to get to know new people in the group as well as deepen the relationship between everyone.



TRANSITION:

It has been more than 400 years since the prophet Isaiah said that the Messiah would be born. All of this time the Jewish people anxiously awaited their savior. As the years passed, so did the hopes and dreams of the Jewish people. Now as servants of Rome, the only way they could see their independence was for God to fulfill His promise. Still they waited. Meanwhile, A young teenage virgin named Mary was engaged to be married to Joseph. The angel Gabriel appears to her with shocking news.



HOOK:

Tell of a time when you were afraid to do something because you thought you were not the right person to do it.



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story as best as you can, don’t stop and teach, don’t make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.

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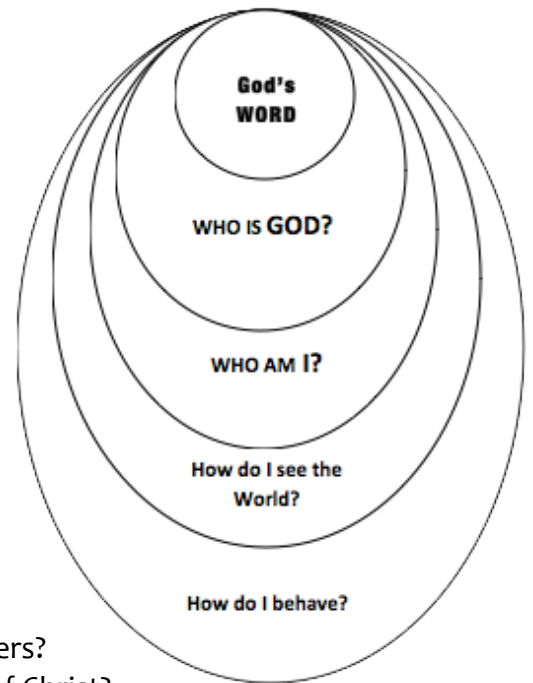
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PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

“Trusting God’s Plan”

Daniel – Daniel 6:1-28

Week 17



LEADER’S Guide:

Sometimes God will ask us to do things that are different from what everyone else is doing. A question that could be raised based on this week’s story of Daniel is “What happens when government asks us to do things that are contrary to the Word of God?” Allow the discussion to grow but make sure to stay in control of the group. Sometimes people will get heated when discussing political views so make sure to focus on what God expects and not political opinions.

Ice Breaker

Consider using an icebreaker that helps your group mesh as you start things off. Remember this is an opportunity to get to know new people in the group as well as deepen the relationship between everyone.



TRANSITION:

Daniel was among the Jews who were carried off into captivity in Babylon about 2600 years ago.

Even though he was a captive, he received an education and rose to a high position in the Babylonian government. He later rose to a high position in the Persian government after the Persians conquered Babylon. Because of his faith in God the Babylonians persecuted him.



HOOK:

Tell of a time when you did the opposite of what everyone else was doing.



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story as best as you can, don’t stop and teach, don’t make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.

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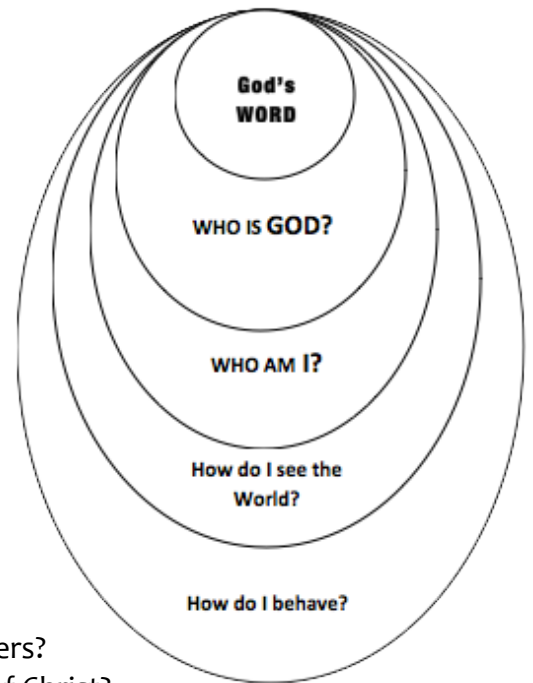
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PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

“Trusting God’s Plan”

Miriam – Exodus 1:15-2:10

Week 18



LEADER’S Guide:

In this week’s story, Miriam watches over Moses as he is put into the river. We all need people in our lives to look out for us. As the discussion grows, look for opportunities to point out how Miriam watched over Moses.

Ice Breaker

Consider using an icebreaker that helps your group mesh as you start things off. Remember this is an opportunity to get to know new people in the group as well as deepen the relationship between everyone.



TRANSITION:

Many Israelites had fled to Egypt during years of famine to find food. One of them, a man named Joseph, rose to great power in Egypt and the Jewish people were well accepted. After Joseph and the pharaoh he served under died, the Israelites continued to grow in number. The new pharaoh did not know about Joseph and was fearful the Israelites would revolt and overthrow the Egyptians. In his fear he ordered all male Israelite boys to be put to death.



HOOK:

Tell of a time when you watched out for someone, or someone watched out for you.



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story as best as you can, don’t stop and teach, don’t make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.

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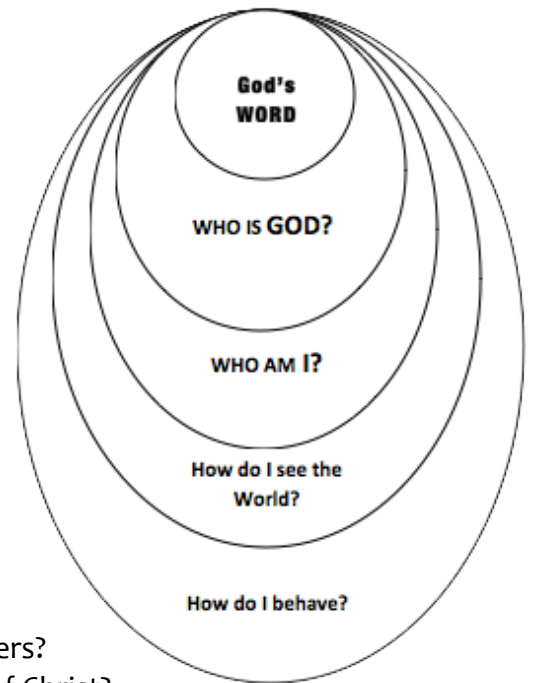
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PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

“Trusting God’s Plan”

Isaac – Genesis 22

Week 19



LEADER’S Guide:

As we finish up the section dealing with God’s plan and looking at the people God uses to accomplish His plan, you may want to spend some time making sure that everyone understands that God uses people like each of us. It is great to know the stories, but don’t miss the opportunity for personal application.

Ice Breaker

Consider using an icebreaker that helps your group mesh as you start things off. Remember this is an opportunity to get to know new people in the group as well as deepen the relationship between everyone.



TRANSITION:

Isaac, son of Abraham and Sarah, was born to them in their old age. After Isaac was weaned, his half brother Ishmael was banished with his Egyptian mother Hagar (Gen 21:8-20). Isaac alone was designated Abraham's heir.



HOOK:

Tell of a time when God asked you to do something that did not make any sense to you.



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story as best as you can, don’t stop and teach, don’t make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.

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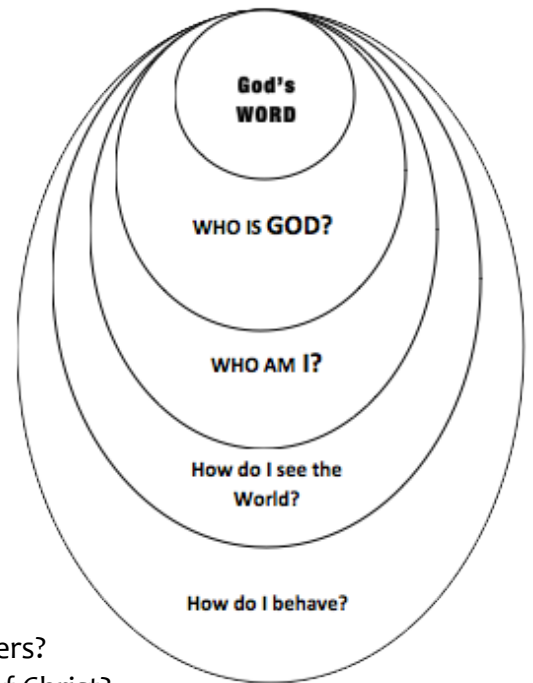
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PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

“The Call of God”

Abram/Sarai – Genesis 12:1-20

Week 20



LEADER’S Guide:

We will begin a new section of stories dealing with the call of God. As people grow as a disciple of Jesus, many become confused and even discouraged when they do not hear or understand the call of God. Use these stories to create discussion about what the call of God is and how we hear, understand, and follow it.

Ice Breaker

Consider using an icebreaker that helps your group mesh as you start things off. Remember this is an opportunity to get to know new people in the group as well as deepen the relationship between everyone.



TRANSITION:

Abraham, whose original name was Abram, was the first patriarch of Israel. He was the son of Terah, and brother to Nahor and Haran. The name Abraham means "a father of many nations." He originally lived near the Mesopotamian city of Ur, but Terah took him to the city of Haran in northwest Mesopotamia (Gen 11:31).

After the death of his father, God told Abraham, who was 75 years old at that time, to leave his country and to go to the land of Canaan with his wife, Sarah, and his nephew, Lot.



HOOK:

Tell of a time when you or someone you knew did something because something inside was telling you or them to do it.



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story as best as you can, don’t stop and teach, don’t make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.

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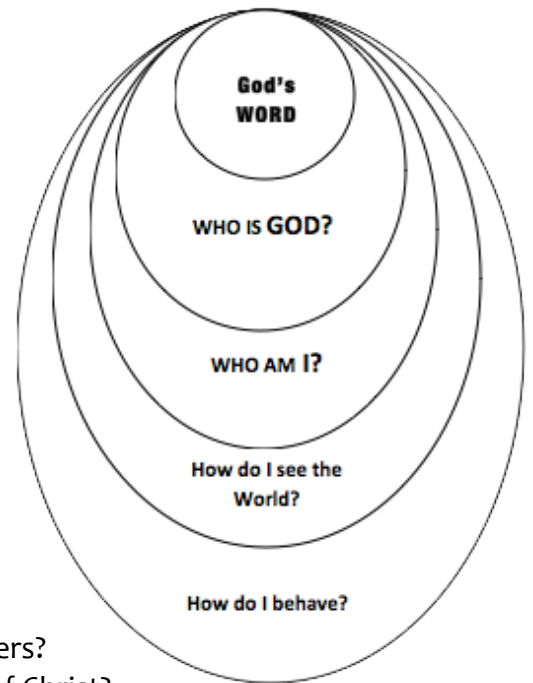
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PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

“The Call of God”

Paul – Acts 9:1-19

Week 21



LEADER’S Guide:

This week’s story is about the conversion of Saul (Paul). The hook question this week is to ask people to tell their testimony about when they received Christ into their heart. Be sensitive to those that you are not sure about their salvation. **Be the first to share your salvation experience.** Make sure that you keep it brief and to the point. Tell briefly about how you became aware of your need for Christ, your accepting of Christ, and what Christ has done in your life since that day. A testimony should not be longer than three minutes.

Ice Breaker

Consider using an icebreaker that helps your group mesh as you start things off. Remember this is an opportunity to get to know new people in the group as well as deepen the relationship between everyone.



TRANSITION:

Paul, the evangelist, was known as *Saul* before he became a Christian. He was born in Tarsus of Cilicia in Asia Minor. His family was of the line of Benjamin. He grew up in Jerusalem and studied Jewish tradition under the elder Gamaliel becoming a zealous Pharisee. Paul was at first an active opponent of the Christian movement. He took care of the cloaks of those who threw stones at Stephen (Acts 7:58, 22:20).



HOOK:

Briefly tell your testimony of when you became a disciple of Christ.



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story as best as you can, don’t stop and teach, don’t make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.

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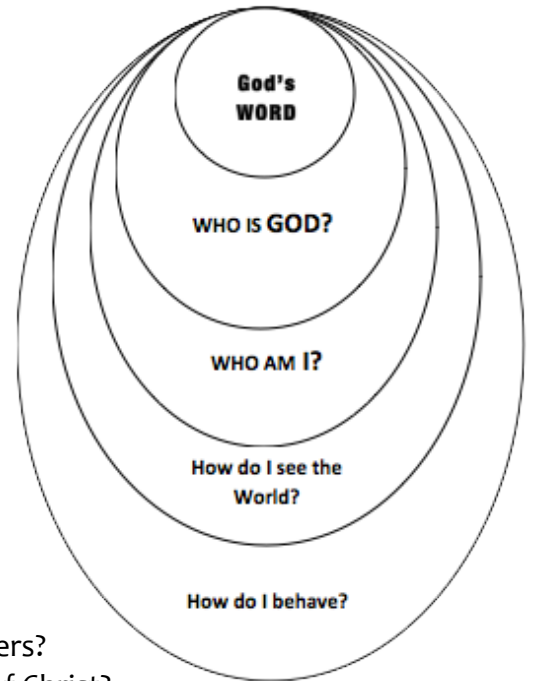
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PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

“The Call of God”

Samuel – 1 Samuel 3

Week 22



LEADER’S Guide:

The tendency when dealing with this week’s story about Samuel is to think that the call of God is only for those in full time vocational ministry (pastors, worship leaders, etc.). As the discussion grows, use the opportunity to show how God calls all of us to be involved in His ministry.

Ice Breaker

Consider using an icebreaker that helps your group mesh as you start things off. Remember this is an opportunity to get to know new people in the group as well as deepen the relationship between everyone.



TRANSITION:

Samuel, the son of Elkanah and Hannah, was a prophet and the last of Israel's judges. Samuel grew up under Eli, the priest at Shiloh. He served a variety of roles in Israel. He was a prophet, a judge and a military leader. He was widely recognized throughout the country (1 Samuel 3:20). His home was in Ramah where he headed groups of prophets.



HOOK:

Tell what your Mom thought would be the perfect job for you.



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story as best as you can, don’t stop and teach, don’t make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.

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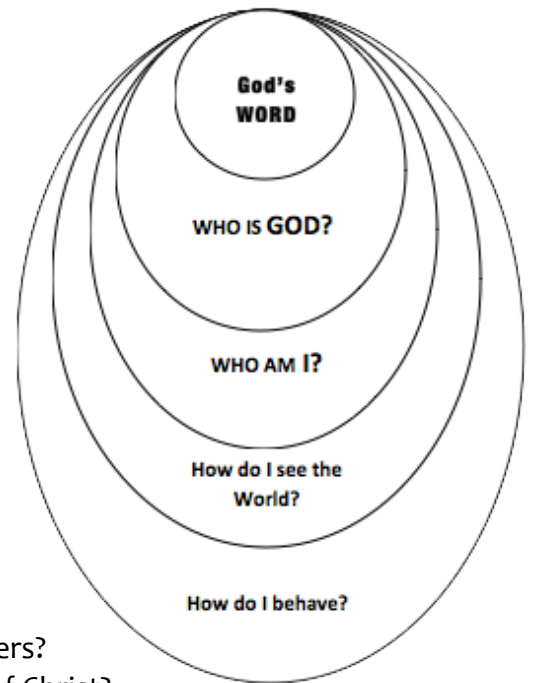
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THUMBPRINT Questions:

Based on this story:

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5. What actions do you need to take to live as a disciple of Christ?



PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

“The Call of God”

Jeremiah – Jeremiah 1:4-19

Week 23



LEADER’S Guide:

As we end this section on following the call of God, do your best to make sure people have an opportunity to explore the call of God by being involved in the group. If you notice someone is ready to tell the story or even lead the group for a night, ask them. Remember small groups exist not for fellowship exclusively, but to intentionally make disciples. Who are you intentionally investing into?

Ice Breaker

Consider using an icebreaker that helps your group mesh as you start things off. Remember this is an opportunity to get to know new people in the group as well as deepen the relationship between everyone.



TRANSITION:

Jeremiah lived about 2600 years ago. His ministry began during the reign of Josiah and continued through the reigns of Jehoiakin, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah.

Jeremiah, according to the Bible book that bears his name, preached from about 628 BC to 586 BC in Jerusalem. During that time, the Babylonian Empire had taken control of Jerusalem. The Babylonians took Jews as captives to Babylon as early as 605 BC and 597 BC. Babylon destroyed Jerusalem in 586 BC.

Jeremiah lived through the invasions of the Babylonian armies, the deportations of the Jew, the slaughter of Jews living in Jerusalem, and the destruction of the Temple.

Jeremiah warned the people of Jerusalem that they would be punished harshly for their sins. He pleaded with the people to turn away from sin and to turn back to God but to little avail. In return, Jeremiah was targeted with scorn and persecution.



HOOK:

Have you ever had to correct someone? What were their reactions?



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story as best as you can, don’t stop and teach, don’t make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.

Rebuild the Story

Rebuild the story by going back through the story with Bibles open. Have the group look for what was added or left out. Ask questions to help the group rebuild the story.

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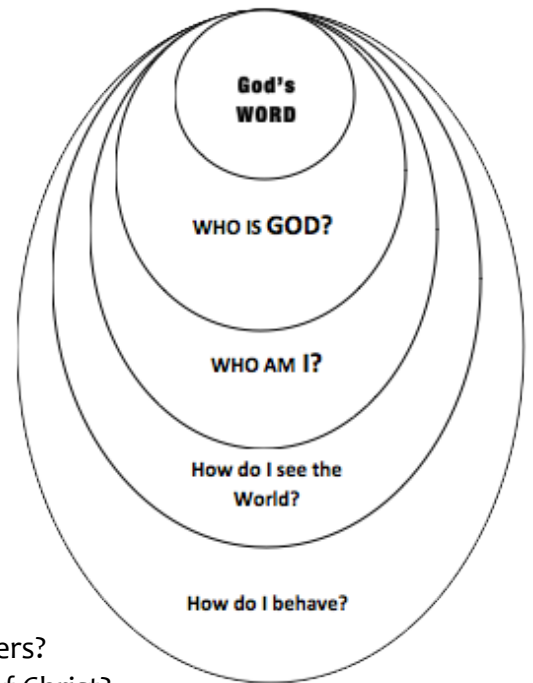
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PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

“Application to the Church”

Lydia – Acts 16:11-40

Week 24



LEADER’S Guide:

This new section deals with stories about individuals that helped the growth of the church. In each of these stories notice that we are talking about ordinary people advancing the church of Christ. Bring out practical application of how we can be involved in the promotion of the church.

Ice Breaker

Consider using an icebreaker that helps your group mesh as you start things off. Remember this is an opportunity to get to know new people in the group as well as deepen the relationship between everyone.



TRANSITION:

Lydia might be the first person in Europe to convert to Christianity. Her story is told in the New Testament book of Acts, chapter 16. She meets Paul, the evangelist, who is traveling with Silas during Paul's second missionary journey. This journey covered roughly 2,000 miles throughout western Asia and southern Europe.

Lydia was from the city of Thyatira and lived in the town of Philippi, a Roman colony that had been founded four centuries earlier by Philip II, who was the father of Alexander the Great. .

Some Bible scholars speculate that Lydia was Jewish and that the town of Philippi did not have enough Jewish residents to have a synagogue so the Jewish people met near a riverbank to hold their worship services. Paul met Lydia there.



HOOK:

Do you think people have a positive or negative view of the church? Explain.



TELL THE STORY:

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Rebuild the Story

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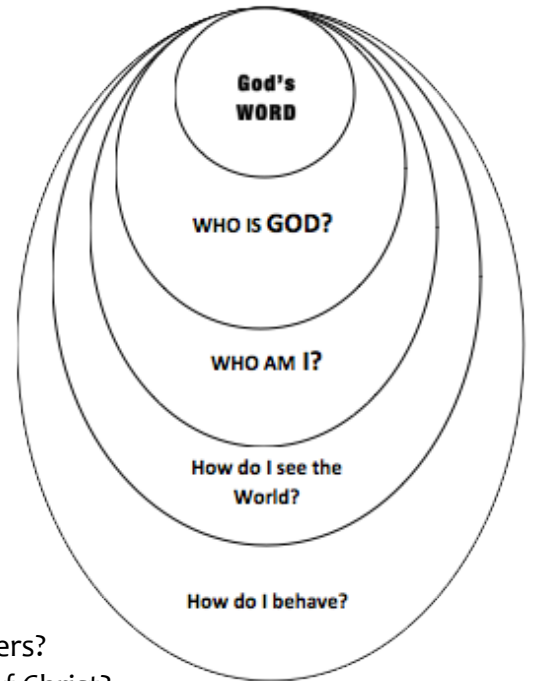
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PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

“Application to the Church”

Joshua – Joshua 7

Week 25



LEADER’S Guide:

So what does the story of Joshua in the Old Testament have to do with advancing the church of Christ? Well, notice the story deals with sin in the camp. Make sure to make the transition from the seriousness of sin in the story to the seriousness of sin in the modern day church. This is not a comfortable topic to talk about but it is necessary. Don’t let the discussion get gloom and doom over sin, instead bring what God must think of sin and celebrate that He has given us a way out of the sin problem.

Ice Breaker

Consider using an icebreaker that helps your group mesh as you start things off. Remember this is an opportunity to get to know new people in the group as well as deepen the relationship between everyone.



TRANSITION:

Joshua was the son of Nun and Moses' successor as the leader of Israel. Of the twelve spies, Joshua and Caleb were the only two men who gave an encouraging report. They were rewarded with permission to enter Israel with the new generation of Israelites. Joshua and his army crossed the Jordan and the battle began.

After taking Jericho, there were three campaigns fought, one in the north, one in the central region, and one in the south. It took seven years of war to conquer the land and drive out most of the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. Joshua and his army destroyed thirty-one kings and their cities.



HOOK:

Tell of a time when you disappointed someone else or someone disappointed you. What did it do to the relationship?



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story as best as you can, don’t stop and teach, don’t make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it, but to learn it and be able to just share it.

Rebuild the Story

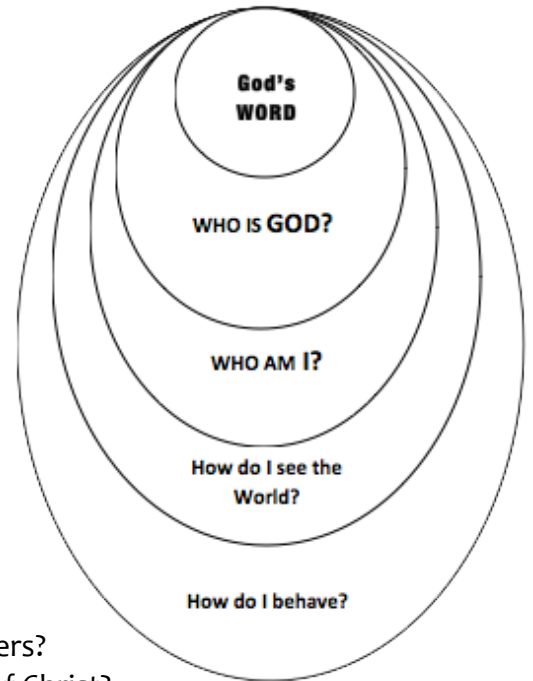
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PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

“Application to the Church”

Barnabas – Acts 9:20-31

Week 26



LEADER’S Guide:

Barnabas was a critical part of the promoting of the church. Last week we dealt with the seriousness of sin. Be just as serious in talking about encouragement. Look for opportunities in the discussion to bring out ideas of how we can be encouraging to one another in small group, in worship, and while we are ministering together.

Ice Breaker

Consider using an icebreaker that helps your group mesh as you start things off. Remember this is an opportunity to get to know new people in the group as well as deepen the relationship between everyone.



TRANSITION:

Barnabas was an apostle but not one of the original twelve. He was a colleague of Paul on his first missionary journey. He was a Levite from Cyprus who, having sold his property, gave all his money to the apostles. Barnabas was his surname. His original name was Joseph (Acts 4:36-37).

Barnabas had the difficult task of proving Paul’s conversion to Christians who had feared his rule and persecution.



HOOK:

Tell of a time when someone encouraged you. How did it make you feel?



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story as best as you can, don’t stop and teach, don’t make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.

Rebuild the Story

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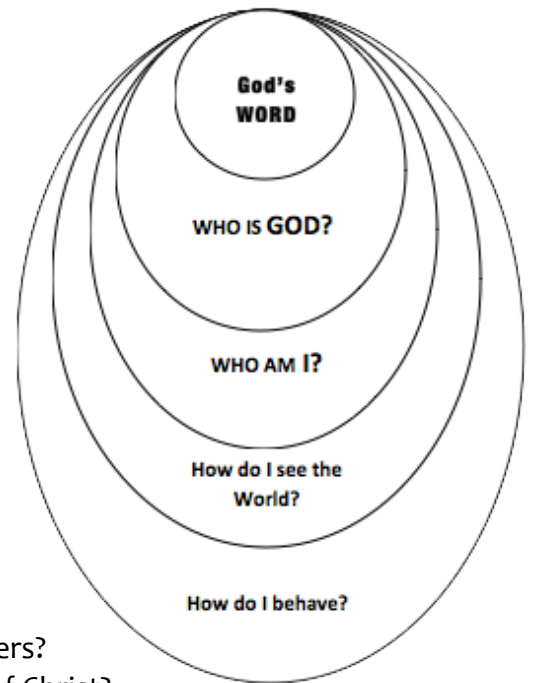
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PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

“Keeping Commitments”

Hannah – 1 Samuel 1:21-28; 2:11

Week 27



LEADER’S Guide:

The final section before summer break deals with keeping out commitments. Many in your group have made decisions during the small group experience. While you do not want to come across as legalistic in this section of stories, understand that God is serious about our commitments with Him.

Ice Breaker

Consider using an icebreaker that helps your group mesh as you start things off. Remember this is an opportunity to get to know new people in the group as well as deepen the relationship between everyone.



TRANSITION:

Hannah was the wife of Elkanah. She could not have children and was being mocked for this by Elkanah's other wife, Peninnah, who had several children. On a pilgrimage to the Temple in Shiloh, she made a vow to God that if He granted her a son she would dedicate him to the Lord for life. Eli, the priest at Shiloh, saw Hannah's lips moving in silent prayer and thought she was drunk. But Hannah convinced Eli she was praying to the Lord and Eli blessed her and asked God to grant her petition.



HOOK:

Tell of a time when you or someone you know made a promise and did not keep it.



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop and teach, don't make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.

Rebuild the Story

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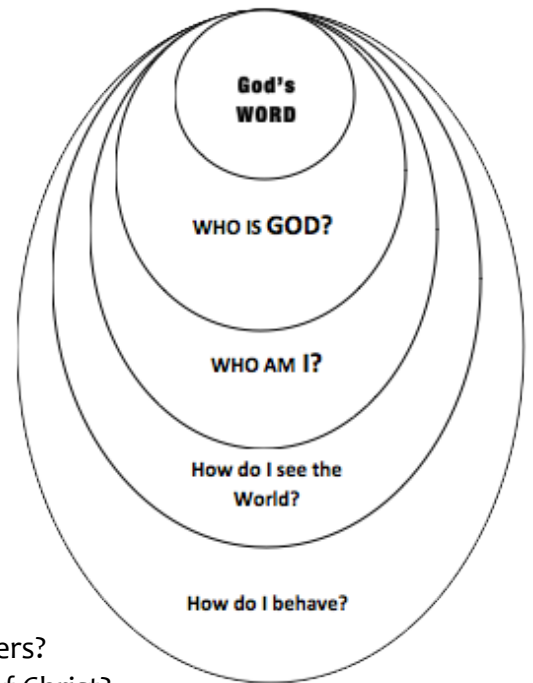
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PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

“Keeping Commitments”

Jephthah – Judges 11:1-40

Week 28



LEADER’S Guide:

This week’s story tells of a man that made a rash vow to God. This is a great opportunity to look at the seriousness of our promises to God. We have all made promises to God that we have not kept. Encourage each person to think about making promises from God’s perspective. Remember, your group will only go as deep as you go. Be open, honest, and transparent.

Ice Breaker

Consider using an icebreaker that helps your group mesh as you start things off. Remember this is an opportunity to get to know new people in the group as well as deepen the relationship between everyone.



TRANSITION:

Jephthah was the ninth Judge of Israel. Being an illegitimate child, he was kicked out of the family by his half brothers to prevent him from sharing in the inheritance. He fled to "the land of Tob" and gathered a group of "worthless men" and engaged in raids throughout the surrounding area. The elders of Gilead asked Jephthah to free them from the oppression of the Ammonites. He insisted on a position of leadership in Gilead if he succeeded in fighting the Ammonites. He was assured of this, and went to war. He launched an attack through Mizpah of Gilead and defeated the Ammonites "with a very great slaughter." After the war Jephthah made a vow to God.



HOOK:

Tell of a time when you or someone you know made a promise that you knew would not be kept.



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story as best as you can, don’t stop and teach, don’t make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.

Rebuild the Story

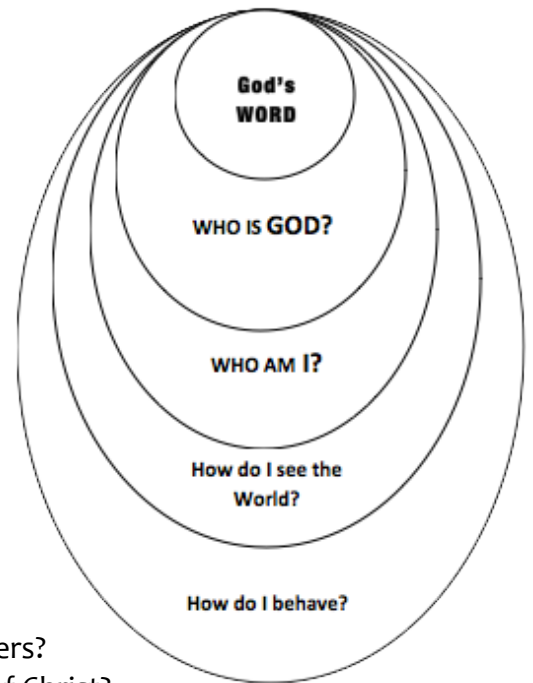
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PRAYER REQUEST: _____

STORY

“Keeping Commitments”

Elizabeth – Luke 1:5-25; 57-66

Week 29



LEADER’S Guide:

This is the last week of small group while studying this session. Through this story set we have focused on how God uses ordinary people to do extra ordinary things. Take some time to see how each person is seeing how God is using them in extra ordinary ways. Take some time this session to discuss events for the summer.

Ice Breaker

Consider using an icebreaker that helps your group mesh as you start things off. Remember this is an opportunity to get to know new people in the group as well as deepen the relationship between everyone.



TRANSITION:

Elizabeth was the mother of John the Baptist and the wife of Zechariah the priest. Elizabeth had been barren for many years but God performed a miracle and she conceived a child who would be the forerunner of the Messiah.



HOOK:

Tell of a time when you or someone you know kept a promise even though it was difficult.



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story as best as you can, don’t stop and teach, don’t make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.

Rebuild the Story

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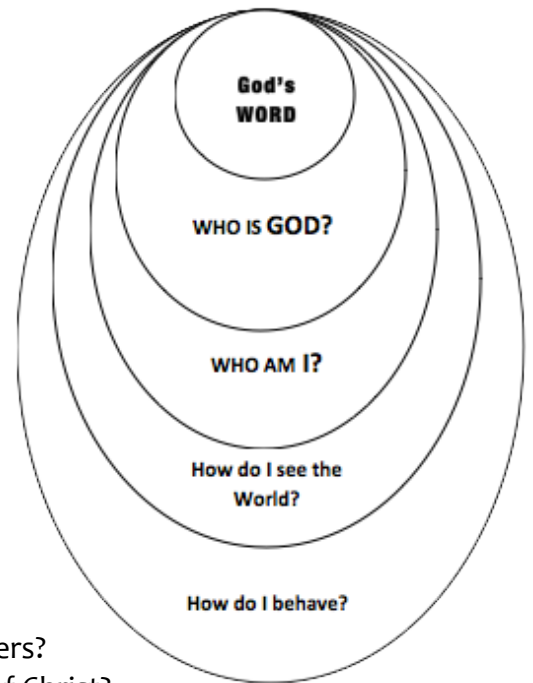
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PRAYER REQUEST: _____

As we close this study of “Out of Ordinary,” consider how God has plans to do extraordinary things through you.

Lead the group in a time of writing out their testimony, their own story, in a way that they would be able to share it in three minutes or less.

Use the example of Paul from Acts 26:9-29.

Paul’s example of How to Share Your Testimony:

1. My Life **BEFORE CHRIST** (9-11)
2. How I became a **CHRISTIAN** (12-18)
3. My Life Since **CHRIST** (19-23)
4. Inviting Others to **RECEIVE CHRIST** (24-29)

Have group members that are willing to share their story with the group.

How has God done extraordinary things through your life?

What extraordinary things do you think God desires to accomplish in you?

How do the previous stories from the Bible help you realize your potential?

The Parables of Jesus

12 Week
Bible Story Set



The Parables

From beginning to end, the Scriptures are full of History, Truth, and Stories of God's dealings with His Creation. Believers are left with the power of God's Holy Spirit to guide them through the process of learning and studying His Word.

Throughout the Gospels, we can't help but notice the methods of how Jesus continued to deal with, and teach, His Creation the Truth of His Father and His Kingdom. Many of us are aware that Jesus preached and taught the crowds as He challenged those who may be gathered just to see what He might do next. Jesus also used two other methods that we want to focus some attention on for the purpose of this twelve week story set. Jesus preached, but He also told parables, and asked great questions.

Some of you might ask, Why Parables and Why look at how Jesus asked good questions? And simply, the answer is because Jesus modeled it. Jesus was and is the master teacher and the work of His Holy Spirit combined with the Truth of His Word can never be underestimated. If it was good enough for Jesus, than there must be something to it, and the truth of these parables is still relevant to our lives today.

What is a Parable?

For the sake of us all being on the same page for this story set we wanted to take a minute and define what a parable is and focus on why Jesus used them. A parable was a small story that illustrated a moral from a situation or circumstance that might be well known to the people hearing it. For example, the parable of the sower and the seed is something an agricultural society like the Jews of Jesus time would be familiar with. (Matthew 13:3-9)

Why did Jesus Use Parables?

Jesus many times used the situation around Him or a story for the foundation that He would base many of His parables around. Through His use of these stories Jesus gave His audience of mostly uneducated seekers a way to understand what would have probably been hard through any other method.

Why are we Studying Parables?

Again, one main reason we are taking the time to examine many of the parables that Jesus taught is because it is one of the main ways He taught. Another is to just to be as familiar with scripture as possible, because parables make up about 1/3 of the teachings found in the four Gospels. Again these parables are still relevant to our lives and it's much easier for us to remember truths God is teaching us through stories.

Why Great Questions?

Jesus many times asked great questions that left men and women to draw conclusions about Himself and challenge their thinking about the Father. Jesus didn't argue for His position or debate His way to Lord, but simply confronted man's Head, Heart, and Hands. For example, Peter's confession of Christ. (Matthew 16:13-17)

Curriculum Notes

At the top of each week's parable page you will see the story's passage location, the parable's main theme and corresponding week number.

Here are some symbols that you will find through out the curriculum and what they communicate to the readers. These symbols will help you walk through each week's parable step by step.



Fun Facts: This area will be an “ice breaker” of sorts and will be full of interesting facts about the time and culture of the Bible.



Background for our Parable: This area will act as the compass of where we are in Gospels and the context to which Jesus is teaching those following Him. This will also serve as a brief summary of what has happened leading into each week's story.



The Parable: This is where the parable of the week will come into focus. Please remember that Jesus taught in short, simple stories to reveal much deeper truths. Again, the reason our focus is on parables is so that the truths of these simple stories may fuel topics of discussion between you and your children throughout the week.



Rebuild: Chronologically rebuild the story or passage by asking questions, have the group look for what was added or left out.



Head, Heart, and Hand Questions: This area will challenge you and your students by following Christ's example in following up His parables by asking good questions. The questions are used to understand how the Word of God is shaping our lives.

Head questions deal with what we need to know from each parable. Heart questions challenge our attitudes and beliefs about God. Hand questions take what we've learned and ask us how we're going to apply it to our lives.

Notes

Other Recommendations

The Process: We want to encourage you along this journey as much as we can and one way we can do that is to give you a simple example of a process we've found that works.

First, follow the steps in the guide they will lead you step by step through each week if you are not at a comfort level with the study. Next, be prepared each week to first share the parable with your student from memory. This allows us to get in the habit of memorizing scripture, and allows our students to hear the parable from scripture multiple times. Some of our kids will need to hear it and read it. After you've told the parable look at it together in scripture and rebuild the parable. This helps make sure what we've shared is accurate to scripture and we haven't left anything out. I know, not that you would ever make a mistake but just in case.

Pray for your students: I know this sounds obvious, but we have been praying that God would continue to encourage growth from His kingdom by opening communication lines in families about the truths of God. Our students face a lot and this twelve-week study, during break from school should provide you with plenty of opportunities to discuss what God is doing in their lives. Just be in prayer about how God is shaping their lives.

Ask Yourself the Hard Questions: One of our primary roles as parents is to be the main discipler in our kids' lives. One way we can focus attention here is just by assessing how we're doing periodically. Occasionally ask yourself these tough questions...what am I modeling for my children? Am I showing my children that my relationship with God is a priority? Can my children see the love of Christ in how I deal with my spouse? How often do I talk to my kids about the truths of God's story? Do I know what's going on in my kids' lives? Do I spend time in the word for me?

By asking the tough questions we give ourselves greater opportunities to be challenged and shaped by the word of God. We can only let the truth of God's word shape us as far as what we're willing to invest it in our life.

Relationship with God?

Throughout this study you will hear us talk about a relationship with Christ. We never want to operate under the assumption that everyone doing this study will have a relationship with God, or understand what that means.

What we wanted to do is give you or anyone, access to a guide that walks you through how we take that first step in a relationship with God. Hopefully you find this helpful. And if you already have a walk with God, the intent is that you share this message with others who may not know God on an intimate level.

The Relationship

A relationship with God is one that could never be earned. In fact, scripture tells us that it's by God's grace that we've been saved. We didn't ever deserve the love of a perfect and holy God, but He gives it to us free. (Ephesians 2:8-9)

Scripture tells us in (Romans 3:23) that all have sinned (done things wrong). We can all think of times where we've failed and made mistakes. Scripture calls that sin, and our sin is what put conflict between us and God. Actually, the sin was such a serious issue that we deserved death. The Bible tells us this in (Romans 6:23), but the good news is that while we were deserving of death because of our sin God offered a gift of Life. This gift of Life is actually a gift of eternal life. This means we then are given the opportunity to live in Heaven if we except God's gift of Life. This gift of Life came from God sending His son Jesus to take our penalty of death on the cross. This is where we see that grace we talked about earlier, because even as you and I were deserving of death and were sinners Christ still died for us (Romans 5:8). It doesn't matter who we are or what we've done, Christ death covered all sins for anyone who would accept it. Scripture says that whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved (Romans 10:13). God's salvation is like any gift though, it has to be something that is accepted. The way we take the first step in entering a relationship with God is by accepting His gift. (Romans 10:9-10) Tells us how to do this, by confessing Jesus is Lord, and believing that Jesus was God's son and He was raised from the dead to give us Life.

Entering a relationship with God is easy, but it also takes commitment. Not a commitment that you now have to keep God happy by the things that you do, but that out of your love for what He did on the cross for you, you'll do your best to please Him with your life. It was by grace and God's power that He saved you and it's by His grace and His power that He holds your salvation.

Sower and Seed- Matthew 13:1-9; 18-23

The Parables of Jesus Week 1



Interesting Fact:

When the Israelites had cleared out the Promised Land God gave to them, they entered back into a life of agriculture that hadn't been done for 40 years. The weather in the region of the Promised Land was very uncertain, especially when it came to rain. This is why Moses warned the Jewish people to trust in God who would provide what they need. The pagan cultures that worshipped Baal, worshipped him as a storm god.



Background for our Parable:

The parables that Jesus shares in Matthew were to reveal the truth about God's Kingdom to His true followers, while leaving the truth of His kingdom hidden from those outside the Kingdom. Jesus was using a familiar example because agriculture was a large portion of Jewish life. It may have even been likely you could have seen sowers throwing seed from where Jesus taught this parable. The sower would hang the bag of seed over his shoulder and toss seed as he walked through his field.



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story, as best as you can, don't stop and teach, don't make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.



Rebuild the Story:

Rebuild the story by going back through the story with Bibles open.

Sower and Seed- Matthew 13:1-9; 18-23

The Parables of Jesus Week 1

Head, Heart and Hand Questions: These questions are used to understand how the Word of God is shaping our lives. We use these “Head, Heart and Hand Questions” to help you clearly identify who God is and who we are in relationship with Him. Head questions deal with what we need to know. Heart questions deal with attitudes or beliefs that either need to be challenged or strengthened. The goal here is life transformation. Hand questions take what we have learned and our changed heart and apply it to our behavior.



Head:

What do you think Jesus was trying to teach His audience with this parable?
What were some of the soils represented in the story?
Who does the sower in this parable represent?

Heart:

Do you think the sower wants all the seeds He sows to grow?
Can we sow seeds? If we do will they all grow?

Hands:

How can you sow seeds?
Where are the best places for you to do that?
Will you sow seeds?
your life today.

Notes, or things I've learned...

Prayer Request or Journal

Hidden Treasure, Priceless Pearl- Matthew 13:44-46

The Parables of Jesus

Week 2



Interesting Fact:

It was not an uncommon thing for people of Jesus' time to bury valuables in a secret place. It seems like a foreign thought to us, but Israel was a land of war. Jewish history was one filled with battles and armies invading to steal and plunder.



Background for our Parable:

Jesus again was telling another parable to the crowds who were gathered near the banks of the Sea of Galilee. These two brief parables were also about the Kingdom of Heaven. The Jews of Jesus' day had many ideas about what the Kingdom of Heaven was. Jesus was using this parable to teach the Jews not to take the Kingdom of God for granted, and just because they were Jews didn't mean they were getting into Heaven. The only ones who understand the worth and are willing to sacrifice would enter the kingdom.



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story, as best as you can, don't stop and teach, don't make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.



Rebuild the Story:

Rebuild the story by going back through the story with Bibles open.

Hidden Treasure, Priceless Pearl- Matthew 13:44-46

The Parables of Jesus

Week 2

Head, Heart and Hand Questions: These questions are used to understand how the Word of God is shaping our lives. We use these “Head, Heart and Hand Questions” to help you clearly identify who God is and who we are in relationship with Him. Head questions deal with what we need to know. Heart questions deal with attitudes or beliefs that either need to be challenged or strengthened. The goal here is life transformation. Hand questions take what we have learned and our changed heart and apply it to our behavior.



Head:

What do you think Jesus was trying to teach about the Kingdom of Heaven?

How do you know the man and the merchant were excited to find their treasures?

Heart:

How excited are you about the treasure you've found in God's salvation?

How do you express that to others and God?

Hands:

Do you think those who are saved by God should show their excitement? How?

Notes, or things I've learned...

Prayer Request or Journal

The Unforgiving Slave-Matthew 18:21-35

The Parables of Jesus

Week 3



Interesting Fact:

Coins in the Bible were not commonly mentioned until Nehemiah. Coins became much more common and plentiful during the New Testament. The parable we'll be looking at this week refers to Talents. A Talent is about 300 shekels, and the Denarii mentioned was a gold Roman coin. The Romans allowed local coinage to circulate with their own.



Background for our Parable:

Jesus was asked the question before He told this parable, how many times should I forgive my brother? The metaphor Jesus uses in the talents and denarii paint the picture of the amount of debt these slaves owed their master. The 10,000 talents represent a debt that couldn't be paid.



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story, as best as you can, don't stop and teach, don't make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.



Rebuild the Story:

Rebuild the story by going back through the story with Bibles open.

The Unforgiving Slave-Matthew 18:21-35

The Parables of Jesus

Week 3

Head, Heart and Hand Questions: These questions are used to understand how the Word of God is shaping our lives. We use these “Head, Heart and Hand Questions” to help you clearly identify who God is and who we are in relationship with Him. Head questions deal with what we need to know. Heart questions deal with attitudes or beliefs that either need to be challenged or strengthened. The goal here is life transformation. Hand questions take what we have learned and our changed heart and apply it to our behavior.



Head:

What do you think Jesus was saying about forgiveness?

How many times should we forgive those who've hurt us?

Heart:

What are some of the struggles you have in forgiving people?

What is God's response when we refuse to forgive others?

Do you need forgiveness for something? What ?

Hands:

Is there someone you need to forgive now?

How can you let them know you've forgiven them?

If you have a relationship with God, do you thank Him for His forgiveness?

Notes, or things I've learned...

Prayer Request or Journal

The Parable of the Talents - Matthew 25:14-30

The Parables of Jesus

Week 4



Interesting Fact:

During Jesus time the value of certain materials was done by the amount of weight of the material given. A talent was somewhere between 75-80lbs and represented about all a man could lift. It was the largest unit of measurement for weight in the Hebrew culture.



Background for our Parable:

In the parable you will notice a man who leaves for a journey but is coming back. Obviously, Jesus had a point to this parable that He was teaching about the Kingdom of Heaven. Do you think this parable has anything to do with His returning and our responsibility for His church?



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story, as best as you can, don't stop and teach, don't make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.



Rebuild the Story:

Rebuild the story by going back through the story with Bibles open.

The Parable of the Talents - Matthew 25:14-30

The Parables of Jesus Week 4

Head, Heart and Hand Questions: These questions are used to understand how the Word of God is shaping our lives. We use these “Head, Heart and Hand Questions” to help you clearly identify who God is and who we are in relationship with Him. Head questions deal with what we need to know. Heart questions deal with attitudes or beliefs that either need to be challenged or strengthened. The goal here is life transformation. Hand questions take what we have learned and our changed heart and apply it to our behavior.



Head:

What do you think this parable was meant to represent?
Why was the man so angry when he returned?
Does God have expectations for us like this? Why?

Heart:

Is it hard to put your abilities to work for God? Why?

Hands:

What are some things you have that you could use for God’s glory for His Church, or the needs of others?

Notes, or things I’ve learned...

Prayer Request or Journal

Parable of the Vineyard Owner - Mark 12:1-12

The Parables of Jesus

Week 5



Interesting Fact:

Jesus' parables were mostly geographically set in Northern Judea. Judea was a rural area that thrived on agriculture of grapes, figs, olives and wheat. The positioning of Judea allowed them to take advantage of trade routes and the use of share croppers to work farms was a common scenario.



Background for our Parable:

As Jesus told the parable of the vineyard owners, the people of Judea understood the context of sharecroppers and other farmers working their land for them. However, it was the religious elite who Jesus was addressing with this parable. They were questioning the authority by which He was speaking. Jesus was telling them that their rejection of the Truth and who God had sent was going to have consequences.



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story, as best as you can, don't stop and teach, don't make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.



Rebuild the Story:

Rebuild the story by going back through the story with Bibles open.

Parable of the Vineyard Owner - Mark 12:1-12

The Parables of Jesus Week 5

Head, Heart and Hand Questions: These questions are used to understand how the Word of God is shaping our lives. We use these “Head, Heart and Hand Questions” to help you clearly identify who God is and who we are in relationship with Him. Head questions deal with what we need to know. Heart questions deal with attitudes or beliefs that either need to be challenged or strengthened. The goal here is life transformation. Hand questions take what we have learned and our changed heart and apply it to our behavior.



Head:

From the way the parable ended, what do you see was the response of the Pharisees and Scribes toward Jesus?

What do you think Jesus was illustrating with this parable?

Heart:

What are some of the reasons people don't accept Jesus and His message?

Will everyone who hears the message of Christ accept it?

Have you accepted Jesus message that He was God's Son sent here for your sins and mine?

Hands:

Do the people who reject God's message still deserve to be loved by you and I?

How can we show them that love?

Notes, or things I've learned...

Prayer Request or Journal

Signs of the End of the Age - Mark 13:28-37

The Parables of Jesus Week 6



Interesting Fact:

Fig trees were valued for their fruit and their shade. Figs also became a symbol of security and prosperity. In the winter the fig trees would lose their leaves and by spring would begin to produce new shoots to show that summer was near. Most fig trees would produce shoots starting around April and the first fruit would be ripe by June.



Background for our Parable:

In this parable Jesus was teaching across from the temple complex in Jerusalem specifically to the disciples about the signs of the end times. A few of the disciples asked Him how they know the end was approaching. Jesus wanted to use this as teaching moment to encourage the disciple to be alert and aware of the signs.



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story, as best as you can, don't stop and teach, don't make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.



Rebuild the Story:

Rebuild the story by going back through the story with Bibles open.

Signs of the End of the Age - Mark 13:28-37

The Parables of Jesus

Week 6

Head, Heart and Hand Questions: These questions are used to understand how the Word of God is shaping our lives. We use these “Head, Heart and Hand Questions” to help you clearly identify who God is and who we are in relationship with Him. Head questions deal with what we need to know. Heart questions deal with attitudes or beliefs that either need to be challenged or strengthened. The goal here is life transformation. Hand questions take what we have learned and our changed heart and apply it to our behavior.



Head:

What do you think Jesus was trying to teach us from the example of the fig tree?

What do you think Jesus means when He's tell us to be alert?

What role does God's word play in being alert?

Heart:

Do you believe Jesus is coming back? Why?

Why do you think Jesus wants you to be prepared and alert for His return?

Hands:

What are some ways you can be ready to be alert and look for when Christ return will come?

Notes, or things I've learned...

Prayer Request or Journal

The Good Samaritan - Luke 10:25-37

The Parables of Jesus

Week 7



Interesting Fact:

During Jesus time it wasn't out of the ordinary that men would position themselves along popular trade routes to take advantage travelers knowing they would have money and supplies on them. Also, remember the Jews and the Samaritans were not two cultures that got along. The Samaritans were viewed as outcast and outsiders.



Background for our Parable:

Jesus was again teaching and was questioned by a religious teacher. These religious leaders didn't like Jesus, or his teaching and many times tried to trap Him with His words. Jesus knew their intentions and taught through their twisted questions.



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story, as best as you can, don't stop and teach, don't make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.



Rebuild the Story:

Rebuild the story by going back through the story with Bibles open.

The Good Samaritan - Luke 10:25-37

The Parables of Jesus Week 7

Head, Heart and Hand Questions: These questions are used to understand how the Word of God is shaping our lives. We use these “Head, Heart and Hand Questions” to help you clearly identify who God is and who we are in relationship with Him. Head questions deal with what we need to know. Heart questions deal with attitudes or beliefs that either need to be challenged or strengthened. The goal here is life transformation. Hand questions take what we have learned and our changed heart and apply it to our behavior.



Head:

According to the story, who is our neighbor?
Why do you think Jesus used specific characters in this story?
How far should you go in loving your neighbor?

Heart:

Is it hard for you to treat everyone as your neighbor?
How often do you look for those with needs in order to help them?
Should you do it more often?

Hands:

What are some ways you can show love to those around you right now?

Notes, or things I've learned...

Prayer Request or Journal

Parable of the Rich Fool - Luke 12:13-21

The Parables of Jesus

Week 8



Interesting Fact:

During Jesus time farming was hard. All work was done by hand with the help of your animals, perhaps a donkey or oxen. It would take roughly 30 lbs. of seed to cover half an acre. Then you would plough it. Ploughmen were taught to never look back, because a sudden lose of concentration could result in a costly mistake. Rows for crops were to be planted in straight lines, and all obstacles needed to be avoided not to break the thin plows.



Background for our Parable:

Jesus taught a lot. During one of these teachings a man cried out from the crowd about his concern about money. Jesus looked past the guy's question and addressed a bigger issue he and possibly the crowd had, the greed and love of money.



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story, as best as you can, don't stop and teach, don't make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.



Rebuild the Story:

Rebuild the story by going back through the story with Bibles open.

Parable of the Rich Fool - Luke 12:13-21

The Parables of Jesus

Week 8

Head, Heart and Hand Questions: These questions are used to understand how the Word of God is shaping our lives. We use these “Head, Heart and Hand Questions” to help you clearly identify who God is and who we are in relationship with Him. Head questions deal with what we need to know. Heart questions deal with attitudes or beliefs that either need to be challenged or strengthened. The goal here is life transformation. Hand questions take what we have learned and our changed heart and apply it to our behavior.



Head:

Why do you think this man wanted Jesus to tell his brother to split the inheritance?
What message do you think Jesus was trying to teach His audience?

Heart:

How easy is it to take security in the possessions and money we have? Why?
Do you feel like this is an area where you struggle trusting God? Why or Why not?
Are our possessions guaranteed to always be there, are they eternal?

Hands:

What are some active steps you can take that show we trust in God, not our possessions?

Notes, or things I've learned...

Prayer Request or Journal

The Barren Fig Tree - Luke 13:6-9

The Parables of Jesus

Week 9



Interesting Fact:

Fig trees were valued for their fruit and for their shade. During Jesus' time if figs were going to be used on a regular basis for fruit they would plant them in vineyards. Fruit could be found on Fig trees for about 10 months of the year. Fig trees would even often produce a small crop of winter figs that remained until spring.



Background for our Parable:

There are some pretty famous stories between Jesus and fig trees. In Mark 11, Jesus even calls a fig tree out for not producing figs. With this parable Jesus is painting a similar picture of expecting to find fruit and being frustrated when there isn't any. What could he be illustrating for us?



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story, as best as you can, don't stop and teach, don't make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.



Rebuild the Story:

Rebuild the story by going back through the story with Bibles open.

The Barren Fig Tree - Luke 13:6-9

The Parables of Jesus

Week 9

Head, Heart and Hand Questions: These questions are used to understand how the Word of God is shaping our lives. We use these “Head, Heart and Hand Questions” to help you clearly identify who God is and who we are in relationship with Him. Head questions deal with what we need to know. Heart questions deal with attitudes or beliefs that either need to be challenged or strengthened. The goal here is life transformation. Hand questions take what we have learned and our changed heart and apply it to our behavior.



Head:

Why do farmers get frustrated when their plants don't produce fruit?

Why do you think Jesus told this parable, what point was He trying to teach?

Does Jesus expect fruit from our lives? If so what kind? Can we find it in Scripture?

Heart:

What causes you not to produce the fruit Jesus would want for our lives?

What do you think Jesus response is to those who don't produce fruit?

Hands:

What are some active steps you can take now to make sure you are producing fruit in your life that glorifies God?

Notes, or things I've learned...

Prayer Request or Journal

Parable of the lost Coin, Sheep, Son - Luke 15:1-31

The Parables of Jesus

Week 10



Interesting Fact:

Foods such as meats and fish were luxury items and only confined to the wealthy. Most meals consisted of bread and vegetables. During celebrations to set them apart however meals were very elaborate and costly. Taking choice cattle, or goats and sacrificing them was a true mark of celebration.



Background for our Parable:

We've all lost something and here in Luke, Jesus tells a series of stories together to illustrate for us the joy found in heaven over those who choose to turn from their sin to Him. The religious leaders needed to repent, but they were far from recognizing it.



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story, as best as you can, don't stop and teach, don't make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.



Rebuild the Story:

Rebuild the story by going back through the story with Bibles open.

Parable of the lost Coin, Sheep, Son - Luke 15:1-31

The Parables of Jesus

Week 10

Head, Heart and Hand Questions: These questions are used to understand how the Word of God is shaping our lives. We use these “Head, Heart and Hand Questions” to help you clearly identify who God is and who we are in relationship with Him. Head questions deal with what we need to know. Heart questions deal with attitudes or beliefs that either need to be challenged or strengthened. The goal here is life transformation. Hand questions take what we have learned and our changed heart and apply it to our behavior.



Head:

What do you think the lost items in each of these stories represents?

Who do you think the shepherd, woman, and father represent?

Did you learn anything new from these stories?

Heart:

What do we learn about God in these stories?

What do we learn about our response when we see others forgiven sometimes?

Do you ever feel like the older brother in the story?

Hands:

What can you do to thank God that He forgives us and accepts us even after we've made mistakes?

Notes, or things I've learned...

Prayer Request or Journal

Rich Man and Lazarus - Luke 16:19-31

The Parables of Jesus Week 11



Interesting Fact:

It's hard for us to imagine eating without a table. A table was a luxury only the rich could afford. In simple homes there was a common food pot, placed on a rug, and the family sat around it on the rug. Only the wealthy would own a table and chairs, or a couch, as we know it.



Background for our Parable:

Jesus taught this parable to teach us that the materials of this world aren't all that matter, and that they're temporary. Jesus was also teaching that the afterlife is something that's real, and there will be judgments for what happens while we are here.



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story, as best as you can, don't stop and teach, don't make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.



Rebuild the Story:

Rebuild the story by going back through the story with Bibles open.

Rich Man and Lazarus - Luke 16:19-31

The Parables of Jesus

Week 11

Head, Heart and Hand Questions: These questions are used to understand how the Word of God is shaping our lives. We use these “Head, Heart and Hand Questions” to help you clearly identify who God is and who we are in relationship with Him. Head questions deal with what we need to know. Heart questions deal with attitudes or beliefs that either need to be challenged or strengthened. The goal here is life transformation. Hand questions take what we have learned and our changed heart and apply it to our behavior.



Head:

Why do you think Jesus told this story?

Do you think that there is life after death? Why?

Do you think life after death is permanent? Why?

Heart:

How serious is Jesus telling us the decisions were making effect us?

Do your actions reflect that you’ve made a decision to follow Christ?

Hands:

How often do you make sure your family and friends know that their decisions to obey Christ now matter for eternity?

Notes, or things I’ve learned...

Prayer Request or Journal

Pharisee and the Tax Collector - Luke 18:9-14

The Parables of Jesus

Week 12



Interesting Fact:

Pharisees and tax collectors were hated people with a lot of pull during Jesus' time on earth. The Pharisees knew the Law of Moses and made sure everyone else knew about it and held it over their heads. The tax collectors were also hated because they were seen as traitors working for the Roman government. They would intentionally charge their own people more than was due to pocket part of the money.



Background for our Parable:

Jesus understood the cultural dynamic between the average citizens, tax collectors, and Pharisees. He used this parable with these two characters to teach a valuable lesson about what He judges. Jesus was constantly having to put the Pharisees in their place and He used this story to do just that?



TELL THE STORY:

Tell the story, as best as you can, don't stop and teach, don't make points, just tell the story. Again, the objective is not to memorize it but to learn it and be able to just share it.



Rebuild the Story:

Rebuild the story by going back through the story with Bibles open.

Pharisee and the Tax Collector - Luke 18:9-14

The Parables of Jesus Week 12

Head, Heart and Hand Questions: These questions are used to understand how the Word of God is shaping our lives. We use these “Head, Heart and Hand Questions” to help you clearly identify who God is and who we are in relationship with Him. Head questions deal with what we need to know. Heart questions deal with attitudes or beliefs that either need to be challenged or strengthened. The goal here is life transformation. Hand questions take what we have learned and our changed heart and apply it to our behavior.



Head:

Why do you think Jesus was trying to teach with this parable?

Do you think it was unique that He used the Pharisee and Tax Collector?

As humans we look on the outward appearance, from this story what does it look like God judges?

What does it mean to be justified, why do you think Jesus said the man was justified?

Heart:

Is it easy for you to look down on others? Why, Why not?

Do you think we are deserving of God's forgiveness, was the Tax Collector?

Hands:

How do you show God you gratitude for His forgiveness?

What are some things you can do to show others you love them as yourself and God loves them?

Notes, or things I've learned...

Prayer Request or Journal

SMALL GROUP

ICEBREAKER RESOURCE BOOKLET

This booklet contains tons of resources for you to use in small group settings for icebreakers, including questions and activities.

For additional small group icebreaker resources, visit:

<http://www.smallgroups.com/meeting-builder/icebreakers/>

Leading a Small Group

Creative Icebreakers: Getting to Know Each Other

Did You Know?

Find interesting facts about individual group members before the group meets. Try to discover information that sets each person apart from the others, such as "I have a tugboat named after me" or "I once wrecked the same quarter panel of my car four times." Make a sheet with one fact from each person and a blank beside this fact. Give everyone in the group a sheet and five to seven minutes to find who goes in each blank. When they find the right person they must also learn one other fact about that person.

Most Unique

Go around the room and have each person share something that makes them different from anyone in the group, like, "I've never left the state I was born in" or, I am one of ten kids."

Two Truths and a Lie

Have each person make three statements about themselves: two true statements and one lie. For example, "I've never broken a bone. I have five sisters. I was born in Yugoslavia." The group tries to guess which statement is the lie.

M&Ms Game

Pass a bag of M&Ms around and tell everyone to take a few. Then, before they eat them ask them to share something for every M&M. For example, something about their family for every red one, something about their plans for the future for every green one, etc.

House on Fire

Ask, "Your house is on fire, and everyone is safe. You have thirty seconds to run through the house and collect three or four articles you want to save. What would you grab? Why?" After everyone has done this, the group can discuss what they learned about the things they value.

Chart Your Life

Thinking back as far as you can, draw a line graph to represent your life. Consider the high points, the low points, moments of inspiration, moments of despair, leveling off times, and where you are now. After you've drawn it, share what it means to you with the group.

My Life in Pictures

Bring a newspaper or magazine. Have each person tear out a picture, article or anything they think tells something about themselves. If there's enough time they can make a collage that tells more about themselves.

Best/Worst

Have each person share their best and worst moments from the previous week. Try to steer your group away from school items. It can get boring to hear, "My best was an A in calculus, and my worst was a D in biology." This icebreaker is an easy one to use at first and gives you good feedback concerning their life at the moment. Some veteran groups do this every week. Their bests and worsts will become more honest.

Deserted Island

Ask, "You've been exiled to a deserted island for a year. You are told you may take three things you want, apart from the essentials. What would you take and why?"

Heroes

Ask each member to name three people, past or present, they admire. Why? Or, ask them if they could interview anyone in history, who would that be and why? What one or two questions would they want to ask?

Most Deprived

Give each person the same amount of M&Ms (try ten). Start by stating something you've never done that you think everyone else has done. You might say, "I've never had a birthday party," or some other true statement about yourself that you think everyone else has surely done. Then, everyone who has had a birthday party pays you an M&M. You pay everyone who has not had a party. Keep playing until everyone has a turn or until someone runs out of M&Ms. Obviously the idea is to come up with the most M&Ms and be the most deprived.

You Write the Question

Give each person a 3x5 card. You pick the topic and let them write the questions. For example, you choose "friendship" as a topic, and they each write out a question for anyone in the group to answer about friendship. For example, "What do you value most in a friend?" Then pile all the cards face down in the middle of the group and let people draw.

Personal Scavenger Hunt

Take five minutes and find the following items in your wallet or purse: Something that...

- * You've had a long time
- * You're proud of
- * Reveals a lot about you
- * Reminds you of a fun time
- * Concerns or worries you

Have each person share the first item. Repeat with the second and so on.

Make Believe

If you could go anywhere in the world now, where would you go and why? If you could talk to anyone in the world, who would it be? Why? If you could talk to any person who has died, who would you talk to and why? If you could wish one thing to come true about your upcoming summer, what would it be?

You Write the Question 2

Play "You Write the Question" again by changing the topic. Topic ideas on the lighter side: jobs, life goals, funny stories, hobbies, etc. Topic ideas on the more vulnerable side: family, fears, dating issues, significant relationships, relationship with God, etc.

Sample List of Icebreakers

Tons of Icebreakers:

1. Ask: If you were a car, what sort of car of car would you be?
2. If you could visit anywhere in the world, where would you visit?
3. If you could swap roles with someone for a day, whom would you choose?
4. Play a word association game
5. Ask everyone to put an object/item into the middle of the floor that best describes his or her life right now.
6. What sort of impression do you feel you give to others?
7. Describe what your perfect day would be?
8. What is your favorite time of day and why?
9. What was your 'moment of glory'?
10. If you could attempt anything with guaranteed success what would it be and why?
11. What is your earliest memory?
12. If you could star in a movie, what would the movie be about?
13. If you could give your parents anything for Christmas, what would it be?
14. What is one of your biggest pet peeves?
15. Have you ever broken a law?
16. What was your favorite TV show when you were eight years old?
17. If you could marry the perfect person, what would he or she be like?
18. If you could be a famous person who would you like to be?
19. If you won the lottery, what would you do with the money?
20. What is your favorite food/dish and/or restaurant and why?
21. What is the funniest joke you've ever heard?
22. What do you think your friends say about you when you're not around?
23. What do you think is the best age to get married?
24. When you hear the words, "getting older," what comes to your mind?
25. When was the first time you ever fell in love?
26. What was the happiest moment in your life?
27. What is the greatest regret of your life?
28. The hardest thing I have ever done. . .
29. The greatest compliment I've ever received . . .
30. Tell us about your best earthly friend. . .
31. What room in your house do you like best and why?
32. What is one thing you want to accomplish next week?
33. Where did you feel safest and warmest as a child?
34. If you had a time machine that would work only once, what point in the future or in history would you visit?
35. When was the last time you did something for the first time?
36. Which of the following restrictions could you best tolerate: leaving the country permanently, or never leaving the state in which you now live?
37. At a meal, your friends start belittling a common friend. What do you do?
38. If you could take a pill that would enable you to live until you reach 1000 years, would you do it? Why?
39. What is one of the best gifts you've ever been given and why?
40. What was the best thing that happened to you this week?
41. What sort of impression do you feel you give to others?
42. If you were a toothbrush, what kind would you be, and why?
43. Did you have a favorite fairy tale or Disney Movie growing up? Explain.
44. Can you think of a moment in your life where you felt victorious? (Ex: school, sports, career, personal life, etc)?
45. What was one of the best surprises you ever received in life?
46. What do you like to do for fun and relaxation?
47. What do you value most in your relationships with people?
48. If you could plan your family vacation, what would you do?
49. How would you like to be remembered after you died?
50. What is something that you are really proud of?
51. If you had three wishes what would they be?
52. Is there a skill or hobby that you would like to learn?

Tons of Icebreakers (cont'd):

53. What is the best movie that you have ever seen?
54. Have you ever had a reoccurring dream? If so, what was it about?
55. What is the scariest thing that has ever happened to you?
56. What is your greatest fear?
57. What kinds of things do you like to read?
58. Who is your favorite cartoon character?
59. What is your favorite ice cream flavor?
60. When you do something stupid, how much does it bother you to have other people notice it and laugh?
61. Would you like to know the exact date of your death? Why?
62. If you could change two things about the way you were raised, what would they be?
63. Who is your favorite relative? Why?
64. What is your favorite memory/time spent, as a child, with your father? Your mother?
65. If you could change places with a Bible character, whom would you choose? Why?
66. Who has had the greatest influence on your life since we last gathered?
67. What would be your dream job?
68. Recall a time when you embarrassed yourself recently.
69. Name someone you admire who had to overcome great obstacles to get where they are now.
70. What do you value most in your relationship with Christ? Your parents?
71. How do you react when you aren't thanked for going out of your way for someone?
72. What is your favorite time of day and why?
73. What do you value most in your relationship with your parents?
74. What was your least favorite chore growing up and why?
75. What was your earliest childhood memory?
76. If you could chose to meet anyone who ever lived in America, who would that be, and why would you like to meet him/her?
77. If you could choose to live anywhere in the world, where would you live and why?
78. What gift (spiritual, emotional, mental, ect.) do you believe you are bringing to this meeting? (In other words, what do you think you are bringing that will-or may- contribute to the encouragement of other- or the building- up of the "church"?)
79. Describe a significant experience in your life that changed your value system completely.
80. What are some of your goals for the year ahead?
81. What is your position in your family- first, second, ect? Would you like to change this position?
82. If you became the leader of any country in the world, which would it be and why?
83. Share the best and worst experience of your week?
84. Give everyone a piece of paper and ask him or her to draw a picture of their jobs or whatever they do on a daily basis. Explain your sketches.
85. Ask each person to say why he or she is glad to be a part of the group tonight.
86. Where have you lived?
87. How many brothers and sisters do you have?
88. What kind of transportation does your family use?
89. Who is the person you feel closest to?
90. When did God become more than a word to you?
91. Who did God use to bring you to the point where you knew you needed Jesus?
92. What is your favorite book in the Bible? Why?
93. What is the first thing that comes to mind when you think of God?
94. Why did you start attending this church?
95. Who has been the greatest influence on your Christian life and why?
96. What do you want said (and NOT said) at your funeral? (And why?)
97. Choose your favorite relative or best friend. . .why do you like them?
98. What is your favorite memory from childhood?
99. One thing which I do not understand about the opposite sex is. . .
100. What job do you do? Name three things you like or dislike about it?
101. Who is the most interesting person you have ever met? Or whom do you most admire? Or whom do you respect?

Tons of Icebreakers (cont'd):

102. Have you ever felt inspired to write poetry, compose a song, draw a picture (or anything else)?
103. Think about your life in 5 years; 10 years; 20 years. What events are you not looking forward to? What events are you looking forward to?
104. Do you have a favorite TV show? Explain...
105. If you ran the world, where would your summer and winter castles be?
106. If you were President of the United States, what would you be known for?
107. If you could have one superpower (like Superman) what would it be and why?
108. If you could choose the weather tomorrow what would you choose and why?
109. Which person of the Bible do you most identify with?
110. Suppose you were going to live for a year in Antarctica. All your material needs will be met, but you can only take three items on the boat with you. What would you take?
111. If you were a type of food, what would you be and why?
112. If you had a year's wages just to spend on your friends, what would you do with it?
113. What would you like your own family to be like one day?
114. For what are you thankful?
115. Share the most meaningful scripture to you and why it is so meaningful?
116. Share about a spiritual experience you've had. . .
117. What is your favorite song or type of music?
118. What have you learned recently from another person? Share the best and worst experience of your week.
119. What is the one thing you want to accomplish next week?
120. If you were asked to make up an icebreaker for this group, what would it be??
121. If you could make a movie what would it be about and who would star in it?
122. Name one quirky trait about yourself that you got from your parent(s)?
123. Who would you call first if you were arrested?
124. If you could perform one miracle right now like Jesus did in the Gospels, which one would it be and why?
125. When you hear the word "awkward" what comes to mind?
126. What three qualities do you want your children to have?
127. Say 3 things you appreciate about your family and 3 ways in which you find them difficult at times.
128. One thing I would really like to see happen now in my (choose one) family, church, small group or world...
129. When you were a little kid what did you like or hate most about church?
130. Who's the best teacher you've ever had? (And why?)
131. Have you had an answered prayer? Share the story
132. Have you ever experienced supernatural healing? Share what happened?
133. Amongst your friends and family, what subject is bound to start an argument?
134. What do you think God likes about you?
135. What's the weirdest dream you've ever had?
136. How would your life be different if you knew Jesus was returning in six months time?
137. Who is (or was in the last 200 years) the most inspiring person you can think of?
138. What are you the absolute best at among your friends, workmates and family?
139. What was the best team or group you ever belonged to? Why was it so good?
140. Would you rather raise your kids in a religious or non-religious society?
141. When you were growing up, what did your parents want you to be? What did you want to be?
142. What's your immediate reaction when someone on the streets asks you for money?
143. Who do you pray for the most? Why them?
144. Did you have heroes when you were young? Which ones ended up being big disappointments?
145. How do you get right with God when you blow it?
146. What's your best story for being late for something important?
147. If you could live (choose one) this week, this year, this decade over again what would you do differently?
148. What was one of the biggest wastes of money in your life?
149. Have you ever done something funny while you were sleeping?
150. If you could play a sport professionally which one would it be and why?
151. If you could be a star on TV, what type of show would it be and why?
152. Are you a morning or night person? Explain...

Tons of Icebreakers (cont'd):

- 153. What were you afraid as a child growing up?
- 154. If you could experience a moment in your life a second time, what would it be and why?
- 155. Who did you (or everyone) most fear or misunderstand in your neighborhood when you were growing up?
- 156. What's the weirdest/riskiest/silliest thing you've ever done because you were a Christian? What do you think of it in retrospect?

Ideas for Worship:¹

- 1. Put on a track from your favorite worship CD. Sing along or simply "be" with God. Become aware of His presence and His love for you.
- 2. Read a Psalm out loud slowly. Pause at particularly significant bits. Allow people to drink in what is being said or simply to use the words of the psalm to focus on God. Do the same with the Lord's Prayer. Take it line by line; allow 15 minutes to finish the prayer.
- 3. Use the breaking of bread as a focus for worship
- 4. Construct a simple cross. Use this for the focus of worship. Plain children's building blocks make a good example of this!
- 5. Write out the name "Jesus" in bold block capitals. Put it on the mantelpiece or some other focal point. Again allow people to meditate on the name.
- 6. Experiment with body posture! Kneel as a sign of penitence. Stand as you wait on God.
- 7. Have a reading of a passage of Scripture or some other devotional passage as a starting point for a time for silent worship and/or meditation.
- 8. Encourage people to write out their most heart-felt prayers to God as a preliminary to worship. Collect their slips of paper and without reading them place them in a inflammable container and set them alight as an offering to God.
- 9. . . .or simply encourage them to listen to God and write out the replies.
- 10. Get a big sheet of paper and invite people to write down words that describe God. Then begin thanking God for who He is.
- 11. Light a candle, play some music, think about Jesus--the light of the world!
- 12. Bring some art materials and get everyone to draw or paint something that expresses worship to God.

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¹ Joel Comiskey, *How to Lead a Great Cell Group Meeting*, (Houston, TX: TOUCH Publications, 2001), 76.

ICEBREAKER: SIT DOWN IF

INSTRUCTIONS: Get everyone to stand up, then read through the following list. The last person standing is the winner!

- Sit down if you have eaten chocolate today
- Sit down if you are wearing purple
- Sit down if you were born in September
- Sit down if you have blue eyes
- Sit down if you are the youngest child
- You have broken a bone
- Gone for two weeks without a shower
- Can speak more than two languages

ICEBREAKER: M&M GAME

This icebreaker is a simple way to help people introduce facts about themselves. It's very flexible and adaptable – and (if you have a sweet tooth) delicious too!

SETUP: Pour M&Ms or any other multicolor candy into a bowl. Have everyone in the group grab as much or as little as they like from the bowl. Make sure that no one eats their candy right away.

HOW TO PLAY: For each piece of M&M candy they took, they will have to answer a question, depending on its color. For example, you can designate:

- Red candy: favorite hobbies
- Green candy: favorite foods

- Yellow candy: favorite movies
- Orange candy: favorite places to travel
- Brown candy: most memorable or embarrassing moments
- Blue candy: wild cards (they can share anyone they choose)

ICEBREAKER: TWO EXTREMES

A game of two extremes! This is a simple ice breaker to get people up and moving and sharing their preferences or views on topics.

INSTRUCTIONS: Create an imaginary line from one end of the room to the other. Instruct people to move to a point on the line to indicate where they stand on a particular issue.

For example - move to the left hand side of the room if you like chocolate, the right hand side if you like strawberry. If people don't have a strong opinion they stand in the middle.

Continue with other examples / extremes:

- Fold toilet paper or Scrunch
- Sleep in or Get up Early?
- Big party or intimate dinner?
- Country or Hip Hop Music
- Would you rather go to the football game or a concert
- Vanilla or Chocolate ice cream
- Sweet or Spicy
- Work on your car or have someone else do it?
- Facebook or Twitter

- Summer or Winter
- Run/Jog or Bike?
- Would you rather be beautiful/handsome or smart?
- Be taller or shorter?
- So You Think You Can Dance or American Idol?

When everyone chooses a position, read out the next one and everyone moves again.

ICE BREAKER: IN AN AVERAGE LIFETIME GROUP GAME SHOW

This is a group game, covering random trivia of what an average person does in a lifetime.

INSTRUCTIONS: You can split your small group up men versus women, or couples competition. Whichever team gets the most right answers (or responses closest to the right answer) wins. There are many, many trivia questions out there, but here are a few examples:

- How many times will an average person brush their teeth?
- How many years will an average person spend watching TV?
- How many years will an average person spend asleep?
- How many years will an average person spend grooming?
- How much time will an average person spend kissing?
- How much time will an average person spend at a stoplight?

ICEBREAKER: HIGH / LOW

This is a good warm-up for groups that have become familiar with the other members.

INSTRUCTIONS: Each member simply shares their high (best moment) and their low (not-so-best moment) for the week.

ICEBREAKER: TWO TRUTHS AND A LIE

INSTRUCTIONS: Ask everyone to write down three things about themselves which may not be known to the others in the group. Two are true and one is not.

Taking turns, they read out the three 'facts' about themselves, and the rest of the group votes which are true and false. There are always surprises. This simple activity is always fun, and helps the group and leaders get to know more about each other.

ICEBREAKER: MY NAME IS?

INSTRUCTIONS: Ask each person in the group to state his/her name and attach an adjective that not only describes a dominant characteristic, but also starts with the same letter of his name. For example, Generous Graham, Dynamic Dave. Write them down and refer to them by this given name for the rest of the evening (or at least for awhile!).

ICEBREAKER: I'M COOL BECAUSE I YOU'RE COOL BECAUSE

INSTRUCTIONS: Go around the room and everybody say one thing they like about themselves, as well as one thing they like about somebody else in the room. (Leader, make sure nobody's left out!).

Icebreakers

True or False?

Each student should write down three sentences describing himself. For example, "I have attended 11 schools," and "I have an aunt and an uncle both named Laverne," and "I love to vacation in Cancun." The catch is, two of the statements are true and one is false. (Try to guess which one I am lying about!) The students then share their three statements with each other or the entire class (whichever you prefer) and vote on which they think are true and false. The catch here is that the more unusual the information, the harder it will be for the other students to guess. Let them know this, and you are sure to learn some interesting trivia about your new students.

Famous Pairs Game

For this icebreaker, tape the name of a famous person or character to the back of each participant. You will need an even number of participants. Each person is to find his/her match without directly talking to each other. They may give a description of who they are (once they figure it out) or say a common phrase. Use the following list as a guide:

- Fred and Wilma Flinstone
- Bill and Hillary Clinton
- George and Judy Jetson
- George and Martha Washington
- Dawson and Joey (Dawson's Creek)
- Mickey and Minnie Mouse
- Jack Dawson and Rose (Titanic)
- Aladdin and Jasmine

*This activity can be adapted by handing participants notecards rather than taping the cards to their backs.

Animal Pairs Game

This icebreaker is similar to the Famous Pairs Game, except that the pairs will have the same character on their backs. This time, each participant is an animal.

The participants may only make the sound of the animal to find his/her pair. Use the following list as a guide:

- Dog
- Cat
- Elephant
- Lion
- Snake
- Monkey
- Bear

*This activity can be adapted by handing participants notecards rather than taping the cards to their backs.

I've Never...But I'd Like to Someday

For this exercise, the entire group should form a circle and each participant should be given three popsicle sticks. The first person begins by saying "I've Never (insert words), but I'd like to someday." Each person in the group who HAS done that activity should throw a stick into the middle. This continues around the circle as many times as necessary. The goal is for each person to run out of sticks. Examples:

I've never _____, but I'd like to someday."

- Bungee jumped
- Make straight A's on a report card
- Rode a roller coaster
- Been to Disneyland
- Traveled outside the U.S.
- See the ocean

Getting to Know You...Multiple Choice Style

This icebreaker helps students to understand that they are not as different as they may think. This is an active learning activity in which the moderator/teacher/leader reads a series of questions and participants respond by selecting a multiple choice answer. Each corner of the room should be a designated letter. Example statements:

- If I had to see a movie, I would rather see: (A) Dumb and Dumber (B) Acaconda (C) Star Wars (D) The Little Mermaid.
- If I could go out to eat, I would eat at: (A) Red Lobster (B) Olive Garden/Pasta House (C) McDonalds (D) Applebees.
- My favorite thing about myself is: (A) My personality (B) My looks (C) My car (D) My brain.
- If I had to give up one thing at home, it would be: (A) Air conditioning (B) Television (C) Microwave (D) Computer.
- If I could hold one of the four jobs listed, I would be: (A) Pilot (B) Webmaster (C) Teacher (D) Doctor.

Partner TV Commercials

This is a good one-on-one icebreaker. Students should get into groups of two and interview each other. They only get two minutes each. Then, the students have one minute to come up with a quick television commercial advertising their partners. This one takes some creativity! You may wish to give students a guide sheet and/or do an example commercial first.

Who Am I?

For this activity, put the name of an individual on the back of each participant. The participants must then go around the room trying to guess who they are. They may only ask Yes/No questions. Examples:

- Woody WoodPecker
- Jay Leno
- Papa Smurf
- Bill Clinton
- Jim Carrey

Pass It Around

This activity can be done several different ways, but my favorite is either with a roll of toilet paper or with a bowl of candy. Pass either one around and have participants take "as much as they need." Then, go around the room and for every piece of candy (or square of tissue), they must share that much information about themselves with the group.

The Line Game

Divide the students into equal groups. You will announce an order that you wish them to line up in, first group to do it and sit in a line on the floor wins a point. Use any of these categories: street addresses (highest in the front - lowest in the back), age, shoe size, birthdays, telephone numbers, middle names in alphabetical order, Mother's first name, etc.

Remember My Name

This is a fun activity for learning names. Put group members in a circle. The first group member introduces himself, gives himself a nickname that starts with the same letter, and explains why he chose that name. Then, the group works their way around repeating each nickname along the way. If they mess up, they must start back at the beginning. Example:

- Jeff--Jumpy Jeff (he gets frightened easily)
- Paula--Pretty Paula (her mom always tells her she is pretty)
- Carlos--Caring Carlos (he always lends others a helping hand)

Getting to Know You Bingo

Each participant should be given a preprinted bingo card and a pen/pencil. On the card should be several unique (some do not have to be too unique) attributes. Each person must work their way around the room trying to find someone who fits that box. That person must sign the box. **NO NAME MAY BE USED MORE THAN ONCE.** Once the winner is determined, use the winner's card to introduce the rest of the group members. Examples for card:

- Has never been outside of Missouri
- Was born in another state
- Works at the local grocery store
- Plays volleyball
- Is taking Keyboarding this year
- Has a younger brother or sister
- Is an only child
- Is in Beta Club

The Great Wind Blows

This is a fast paced icebreaker that gets student moving and laughing. Arrange a circle of chairs. Ask each student to sit in one of the chairs (have an exact number). Tell students that if they agree with your next statement, they should stand up and move to another chair. Stand in the center of the circle and say: "My name is _____ and the great wind blows for everybody who...." (choose an ending that would likely apply to nearly everyone in the class, such as "likes chocolate ice cream." At this point, everyone who likes chocolate ice cream gets up and runs to another empty chair. As the students move, make sure you occupy one of the empty seats. If you do, then one student will have no seat to occupy and will replace you in the center. Have the new person in the center finish the same incomplete sentence. Play the game as often as it seems appropriate.

*This can be adapted by using the phrase "I've got mail for....anyone who likes chocolate ice cream" instead of "The Great Wind Blows."

The Company You Keep

Make a list of categories you think might be appropriate for a getting acquainted activity (Examples: month of birthday, people who like/don't like something, favorite something, hand in which you write, color of your shoes, agreement or disagreement with any statement of opinion on a current issue). Clear some floor space so students may move around freely. Call out a category. Direct students to locate as quickly as possible all the people whom they would associate with the given category. For example, right-handers would separate from left-handers. If there are more than two choices (birthday month, for example) you will have more than two groups. When students have formed the clusters, ask them to shake hands with "the company they keep." Invite all to observe approximately how many people there are in different groups. Proceed immediately to the next category, Keep students moving. Reconvene the class and discuss the diversity of students revealed by the exercise.

Summer Activities Name Game

Have each student introduce himself by first name and tell something they did this summer that starts with the same letter. For example, I could say "Hi, my name is Nicole, and I nudged the President." The next person in the line (or

circle) does the same but must also introduce the people before him and their summer activity.

Sing a Tune

Each student receives a slip of paper with a song title on it, with about four or five people receiving the same song. They don't show their song to anybody. Instead, they hum their song, walking around the room trying to find other people humming the same song.

Blanket Name Game

Students are divided into two teams. Each team sits on the floor facing the other team. A blanket is held by two volunteers (teacher and a student) between the two groups. Each team then quietly chooses one member of their team to sit just behind the blanket and ahead of their own team. At this point the chosen individuals are sitting facing each other, but concealed by the blanket. The blanket is then dropped and the two students quickly identify his opponent. A point is scored for the team who shouts out the opposing person's name first.

Modification: Each team can reveal a verbal clue describing the chosen individual directly behind the blanket, prior to the dropping of the blanket.

I'm Going on a Trip

For this activity, the students line up in a circle. Someone starts by saying "I'm going on a trip. My name is _____ and I'm taking _____." (My name is Liz and I'm taking luggage) You must use your name and an item you are taking that starts with the same letter. Then, the next person adds on: "I'm going on a trip. My name is Frank and I'm taking a flashlight. This is Liz and she is taking luggage." The game continues around the circle or as long as needed.

Pile of Hats

Gather together as many different and unique kinds of hats as you can find and place them in the center of the room. Ask the group members to sit in a circle around the hats and select one member of the group to start. Ask this person to choose the one hat that they feel best represents how they are feeling right now. Allow everyone to take a turn selecting a hat and to explain why they chose the hat that they did. Each person should return his/her hat to the pile when their turn is done so others may select the same hat if they choose.

After everyone has chosen a hat, the group may do more rounds of this activity with different instructions. You may ask them to select a hat that represents how they feel when with this group, when with their family, when alone, when at school, when at work, etc. Compare the different "hats" people wear when with different groups.

Team Builders

Human Knot

For this team builder, participants get in groups of five, and connect hands so that they form a tangled knot. Then, each team must try to get out of the knot without letting go of each other's hand.

*This activity can be adapted by having participants use string to knot up rather than their hands.

Machine Game

For this team builder, participants get in groups of four to six. The rule is that everyone must participate. Each group will be given a card with the name of a machine. They must group like the machine and once the machine is put together, they may make the sound of the machine. The following are ideas for machines:

- Stapler

- Television Set
- Washer/Dryer
- Vacuum
- VCR
- Microwave
- Three-hole punch

Photo Scavenger Hunt--Objects

For this activity, each group needs a list of objects and a disposable camera. Give each group 30 minutes to find the objects on the list. Rather than retrieving the objects (and having to worry about returning them to their owners!), they must take a picture of the object with at least one group member in the picture. This can be done either at school or using the community (if you are in a small town where people know each other well enough). Record the time for each group, have the pictures developed that night, and post poster boards with each group's pictures the next day. Ideas for objects:

- Elvis record
- 8 track tape
- Yo-yo
- Merry-go-round
- Big Wheel
- Baby swing
- Christmas decoration

Photo Scavenger Hunt--Poses

For this activity, each group needs a list of poses and a disposable camera. Give each group 30 minutes to get to the appropriate locations and get the pictures. All group members (except the one taking the picture) must be in the picture. When they arrive back at school, record the time for each group, have the pictures developed that night, and post poster boards with each group's pictures the next day. Ideas for poses/locations:

- Police Station: You're under arrest! Three group members are cops and the rest of you are up against the building ready to be searched!
- Basketball Court (park): It's time to shoot some hoops! Get your group into positions as if you are playing a basketball game. Someone should be taking a shot.

- Red Rover (playground): It's time for a playground game of Red Rover. Divide up your group into two red rover lines. When someone is called to run through, snap a picture.
- Adopt-a-Highway: This place is a mess! Clean up that road. Get your group members to the road to pick up trash and get a picture!

Team Getaway

Provide each team with a stack of index cards (different sizes in each stack are best). Challenge each team to be as effective a group as possible by constructing a three-dimensional model of a "getaway retreat" solely from the index cards. Folding and tearing the cards are permitted, but no other supplies can be used for the construction. Encourage teams to plan their retreat before they begin to construct it. Provide marking pens so that the teams can draw on the cards and decorate the getaway as they see fit. Allow at least 15 minutes for the construction. Do not rush or pressure the teams. When the constructions are finished, invite the class to take a tour of the getaway retreats. Visit each construction and request that team members show off their work and explain an intricacies of their house. Applaud each team's accomplishments.

Blind Map Walk

Giving and receiving directions over the phone is much more difficult than giving them in person. When you are talking on the phone, you need clear communication skills for both parties to understand each other. In this game success depends on clear verbal skills and excellent listening skills.

This teambuilder is designed to help participants to learn the importance of giving clear directions and to learn what is required of them when using good listening skills. To build trust among group members. You will need blindfolds and a sketch of the surrounding area with a course drawn on it.

Divide the group into pairs and blindfold one member of each pair. Give the partner, without the blindfold, a copy of the map. The partner without the blindfold must guide the blindfolded partner through the course with only verbal directions. The partners may walk together but they may not touch each other.

Once the course has been completed, switch the blindfold to the other partner and give the pair a new map to follow.

HINT: This works best when you use an area that is unfamiliar to the group so they do not already know what obstacles they may encounter.

Discussion Prompts:

1. Did you like giving or receiving directions the best? Why?
 2. What did you do to make sure the directions were clearly understood?
 3. What did you do to make sure you were following the directions?
 4. Why are good communication skills important?
 5. How was trust a factor in this activity?
-

Big Vs. Small

Being put into an unfair situation isn't fun for anyone; and some people who lack anger control will act out in this type of situation. This game is a good object lesson in how things can (at times) be unfair, unbalanced, or mismatched. This game is also a good discussion starter in what is unfair in people's lives and how it should be handled, especially for those who are easily angered and who become destructive when things don't go their way. For this activity, you will need a basketball, volleyball or beach ball.

Ask the group to line up from shortest to tallest. Divide the line in half so all the short people are on one team and all the tall people are on the other. Set up a game for the group to play in which height is an advantage. Some suggestions are: basketball, volleyball or keep away with a beach ball.

After playing this way for a while, the tall team will most likely be winning with the short team being frustrated. At this point change the rules and tell the tall team that they must all put one hand in their pocket or behind their backs for the rest of the game.

Discussion Prompts:

1. How did you feel when the game was in your favor?

2. How did you feel when the game was not in your favor?
 3. Do you ever feel like your life is like this game? Are you usually winning or losing?
 4. Do you ever get angry when things seem to be unfair?
 5. How do you release the anger that you feel when things are unfair?
 6. Is there a better way to handle an unfair situation?
-

Human Scavenger Hunt

Break the large group into smaller groups of about six to twelve people each. Have each group stand or sit together in a place that is separate from the other groups but of equal distance from you - the leader who stands in the middle of the room.

Read one item from the list at a time. The team who sends up a person or group of people to you first that fits the description you have just given earns a point. For example, you might say "two people who have the same middle name" and within each group the members must talk, find out if any two have the same middle name, and then quickly send those people up to you. The first group of people with the same middle name to reach you earns a point for their team. You may give a bonus point for different items if it applies - for instance, if a group has three people with the same middle name they may earn a point for this round even if they were not the first group to get to you. The group with the most points at the end of the game wins.

Human Scavenger Hunt List

1. Two people who have the same first and last initial
2. The person in your group who was born the farthest away from here
3. Two people with the same middle name
4. A group of people whose ages add up to 100
5. Two people with the same birthday (or birthday month)
6. A group of people whose shoe sizes add up to 40
7. The person in your group who lives the closest to here
8. A group of people who have attended school for a total of 38 years

9. A group of people who can spell a word by putting together the first letters of their first names
10. A group of three people who all have different colored eyes

Variations

- ~ Ask for items such as "a 1982 coin" or "an expired drivers license" or any other items that group members may be able to find in their pockets, purses, wallets, or on themselves.
- ~ Add a stunt to each item on the list - for example, "Two people who have the same first and last initial must leap frog up to me".