

Life Group Leaders Guide

In His Steps

Learning to live, love and lead like Jesus.

First Baptist Church of Eugene
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In His Steps

Learning to live, love and lead like Jesus.

The entire story of God in the Bible is built around one central truth. It is the truth in which all other truths point to....the glory of Jesus Christ. It is the exaltation of our Lord Jesus. The Apostle Paul states it this way:

Col. 1:16 *For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him.*

Here is one of the most amazing things about God's story - He wants to reveal His glory in and through each one of us! God intends on making His glory known to the universe through the personal expression of Christ in each one of our lives, and even more wonderfully, in our lives together as His People, the Church, Amazing! Peter wrote this to the Jewish Christians driven out of Jerusalem and scattered throughout Asia Minor, and all believers everywhere:

1 Peter 2:21 *To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.*

God created each of us and redeemed us to glorify Him through His Son, Jesus. May we follow in His steps.

The following collection of passages is designed to help us do just that. They are handpicked to help each of us:

- See Jesus more clearly than ever before;
- Grow in our personal relationship with Him;
- Seek Him with our hearts so we can better understand the work God wants to do in us;
- Step out in faith by letting God do His work through us;
- So that we may *experience, more than ever, the joy of helping one another live, love and lead like Jesus together!*

To Our Amazing Life Group Leaders,

We are excited to see each of you partner with God in your Life Groups to explore this series of Gospel passages that develop the movements of live, love and lead like Jesus. Each person will discover through the work of the Holy Spirit, the life changes that God is putting on their heart to accomplish one single purpose....to become more like Jesus!

Frank Bonser, Pastor

Let's get started.....

In His Steps

Learning to live, love and lead like Jesus.

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How to use this Leader's Guide

The group story-telling and discussion time consist of five separate parts. Each part is important to help group member to: 1) Participate, 2) Learn by repetition, and; 3) Discover what God wants them to do with each passage.

1. **Review: (2-3 Minutes)**

Take a short time to review last week's passage and draw out key points that were learned.

Caution: Do not create a discussion. Example questions could be:

- What was one thing you remember about last week's story?, or,
- Did someone last week say something that was particularly meaningful to you this week, What was it?, or,
- Did you find yourself sharing the story with anyone? Who? or,
- Ask follow-up questions of individuals who shared a particular action they were going to take as a result of last week's passage.

2. **Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)**

Briefly set the context of this week's passage from your Leaders Guide.

- Here is what has happened since last week's story and some context to this week's story, or
- This week we are looking at

Optional: You could ask a couple of general questions as an introduction to stimulate the group's thoughts about the upcoming passage. They help get the group focused on the story that is about to be told.

- Example: Say, before we start the story, "As you hear our story, I would like you to be thinking about a couple things."

3. **Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes)**

Tell the story as best as you can in your own words. Let God's word stand on its own.

- Don't add to the story...just tell the story.
- Don't stop to teach or try to make points...just tell the story.
- This is not a performance; just think of sitting around a campfire and telling it in your own words.
- The objective is not to memorize it, but to learn it and be able to just share the main points of the passage.

4. **Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes)**

Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions.

- What was the first thing that happened?
- What Happened next? Then what happened? Then....?

If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events of the story.

- Don't stop for discussions. Keep moving through the passage until it has been completely rebuilt.
- Remember the ***purpose*** is to:
 - Get everyone to participate.
 - Make sure the passage is accurate. Nothing added or left out.
 - Help learn and remember the passage through repetition.

5. **Group Discussion: (35-45 Minutes)** The group discussion time consists of three different types of questions: **Head, Heart and Feet**. Each of these has a specific purpose and should not be skipped.

Basic Questions: (What does the passage say?)-Head

These four questions can be used to start a discussion each week. Use them in a variety of ways. You will not have time to cover all four each week, which is good.

1. What is one thing that struck you, or was new to you, from this passage?
2. Is there anything you dislike or confuses you about this passage? Don't stop to discuss, but remember to come back if you have time.
3. What does this passage teach you about God? (Jesus or the Holy Spirit?)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions: (What does the passage mean?)-Heart

These are extremely important questions for your group. They not only can stimulate great discussion and prompt your group members into action; they can also allow you to see into a person's heart in significant ways. There are two ways to ask life application questions:

- Use story specific questions provided in the guide, or
- Form your own questions based on hearing an individual's comments during the Basic Questions time.
- The point of these questions is to go deeper in to what the passage means, and not to discuss more information about the passage.
- There is no particular order to ask these questions. They are used to guide the facilitator in asking follow-up questions that will reach people's hearts.

Life Application Questions: (What should we do with what we've learned?)-Feet

1. How is God asking you to respond to this passage? or,
2. What do you think God is putting on your heart to do with this passage?
 - **Important:** The Life Application Question(s) are the most important questions and are the purpose of the discussion. This is where people put the Scripture into action.
3. How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus?

Tips:

- Do not skip the Basic or Other Applications Questions. They set up the Life Application Questions.
- Manage your discussion time well to ALWAYS arrive at these question(s) with at least 10-15 minutes of discussion time left. It is intended to be the most meaningful time of the group meeting.

Prayer Thoughts:

Each discussion page will have some thoughts to assist in how the group can pray for each other and for the Life Group based on the context of the passages that were just reviewed.

Group Facilitator Reminder:

Participants will experience the passage four different ways (Repetition is our best learning method).

1. Individually read it before they come to the group meeting.
2. Hear it told orally in the group.
3. Participate in rebuilding it together.
4. And finally, discuss it in detail as a group.

Follow Jesus

Luke 5:1-11

Context for this week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist, and then He was tempted in the Desert by Satan. After His temptation, Jesus returned home where He was rejected by the people of his own hometown of Nazareth. He left Nazareth and moved to Capernaum where we find Him teaching on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. This is where 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: (3-4 Minutes) Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop to 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.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or that confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. What is one area or times in your life you find it most difficult to follow Jesus? Why?
2. What boat in your life does Jesus want to get in? Can you tell us a little about that?
3. Is there an area of your life you think Jesus might be asking you to launch out into the deep with Him? Would you be open to sharing it with us?
4. What is the next step Jesus may be asking or challenging you to take these days?
5. Is there anyone in your life that you would you like to help lead into a loving relationship with Jesus? Would you share them with us and what would be a step you could take to begin? Could we pray for that right now?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you to respond to this passage?
2. Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
3. What are some thoughts you have from this passage about believing in Jesus and following Jesus? What do you think God might be asking you to do with them?
4. How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus?

Prayer Thoughts:

Thank you God that you find us all worthy to be called disciples of your Son, Jesus. We pray that our hearts remain open to hear and act upon the instructions that You give us through Your Word. Help us to take one more step towards keeping our eyes focused on Jesus by learning to live, love and lead like Him together.

Jesus on Belief

John 3:1-21

Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

Jesus is now traveling with his disciples and was invited to join his mother at a wedding in Cana. This is where Jesus performed His first miracle by turning water to wine at the wedding ceremony. After a few days, He went to Jerusalem for the Passover and there He discovered the temple courts being used as a "market" He cleared the temple courts saying, "How dare you turn my Father's house into a market!" This is also where He met Nicodemus, a Pharisee member of the Ruling Council. This next passage covers the truths that Jesus reveals to Nicodemus about faith.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes) Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop to 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.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. Is there anything in this passage that you can especially relate to? Please explain.
2. Do you ever experience times when you don't understand God's Word or what it is saying to you? Could you tell us about one of those times?
3. What does it mean to expose darkness in our lives? Why do you think people find that difficult? Why do you find it so difficult?
4. What are some of the things that you find most difficult when it comes to living by faith? Does that ever cause you to question following Jesus? How so?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you to respond to this passage?
2. Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
3. What are some thoughts you have from this passage about believing in Jesus and following Jesus? What do you think God might be asking you to do with them?
4. How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus?

Prayer Thoughts:

Thank you God for the gift of Your Son, Jesus. For in Him is the promised gift of salvation and eternal life, freely given through Your grace. Help us to discover the changes each of us needs to make to live a life that is more like Jesus today than yesterday.

Who Can be Saved?

Matt. 19:16-30

Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

Jesus traveled with His disciples through Galilee teaching and answering the disciples' questions by using many life illustrations and parables. He left Galilee and was followed by great crowds to the region of Judea where He healed many of them. This is where our next passage begins. A young man came up to Jesus and asked. "Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life"? Let's see how Jesus replies.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes) Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop to 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.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. What is Jesus teaching you and me about the difference between our wants and your needs?
2. Are you comforted by the fact that Jesus says we don't have to sell everything and give to the poor? Why?
3. What is one area of your life that you have the most difficult time surrendering to God? Why? What is one thing you can do to step toward surrender in this area? Is there anything our group can do to help?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you to respond to this passage?
2. Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
3. What are some thoughts you have from this passage about believing in Jesus and following Jesus? What do you think God might be asking you to do with them?
4. How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus?

Prayer Thoughts:

Thank you God for the clear instruction of your Word that gives us an eternal perspective of the resources you have given each of us. Reveal the things that may be preventing us from completely surrendering to Jesus as the Lord of our lives. Lord, help us see the areas of our lives that you want to change to become more like You.

Do You Know Him?

John 14:1-14

Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

Jesus has shared His final Passover meal with the disciples where He washes their feet, tells them that one of them will betray him, that Peter will deny him three times, and that He is going where they cannot follow. Knowing that the disciple's hearts were confused, Jesus comforted them and also challenged their lack of understanding. This passage gives us Jesus' words as He talks to His disciples during the Last Supper.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes) Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop to 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.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. Is there any part of the disciple's thoughts or questions that you can especially relate to? How so?
2. Why didn't the disciple's know the way, even after Jesus had explained it several times? How would you explain it to someone you know?
3. What does it mean when Jesus tells you and I that we "will do greater things" than He has done?
4. How does this passage influence your desire and actions to believe and follow Jesus?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you to respond to this passage?
2. Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
3. What are some thoughts you have from this passage about believing in Jesus and following Jesus? What do you think God might be asking you to do with them?
4. How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus?

Prayer Thoughts:

Thank God for His Word and for the promise of heaven. How wondrous this will be. Our joy can then be declared and lived out. Help us know You more. Help us be faithful. Help us believe and follow You and You only.

Finding Freedom in Jesus

John 8:31-58

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into Scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

Jesus is in Jerusalem teaching in the temple courts where all the people are gathered around Him. The Pharisees vocally challenged Jesus and His teaching by claiming that His testimony is not valid. They could not understand or discern the spiritual context by which Jesus was teaching. In spite of their vocal opposition and refusal to accept his teaching, as Jesus spoke, many people put their faith in Him. Jesus presses forward by teaching another truth in this passage that will set men free from bondage. Let's hear what that truth is.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes) Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop to 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.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. What is the most difficult part of living by faith for you? Can we pray for that after the discussion, or now?
2. How do you respond to those that scoff at the truth of Jesus? What would Jesus do?
3. Have you ever experienced persecution as a result of your faith in Jesus? Would you be willing to share that with us? How did you respond? How has that changed you?
4. What did Jesus mean in v: 31-32? Free from what? Free to do what?
5. What are some of the things you think keep people from being set free? How about you? Would you be willing to share one?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you to respond to this passage?
2. Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
3. What are some thoughts you have from this passage about believing in Jesus and following Jesus? What do you think God might be asking you to do with them?
4. How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus?

Prayer Thoughts:

Thank you Lord for the power of Your Word. You are Truth. Help me to obey as I follow You in order that I may be Your witness and reflection to others. I pray that they too will be glorified by believing in You and following You.

Great Faith

Luke 7:1-10

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into Scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

Jesus returned from the mountainside after praying all night and then chose his twelve disciples. He went down and stood on a level place where a large crowd of His disciples, and a great number of people, had gathered. Jesus addressed His disciples with His Sermon on the Mount. After He had finished, Jesus entered Capernaum, where He was approached to come and heal a centurion's servant that was dying. This passage helps us see the power of faith in Jesus.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes) Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop to 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.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. Has there been a time in your life that you haven't felt worthy of Jesus' love? Could you describe that time?
2. What are some of the most difficult things you find in your life to ask Jesus for? Why do think that is? Would it be ok to ask right now?
3. What does having great faith look like to you?
4. Has there been someone in your life that you would describe as having great faith? Would you mind telling us a little about them and what made you choose them?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, to respond to this passage?
2. Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
3. What are some thoughts you have from this passage about believing in Jesus and following Jesus? What do you think God might be asking you to do with them?
4. How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus?

Prayer Thoughts:

Father, Grant us such faith that we can come to You knowing of Your desire to bless. Let us be men and women of great faith in you. Help us to believe and follow You in new and meaningful ways as we grow in the grace and knowledge of Your Son, Jesus.

Little Faith

Matt. 14:22-34

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into Scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

The setting of this passage is after Jesus was rejected in his own home town of Nazareth and John the Baptist was beheaded by Herod. Jesus had just fed the five thousand people following Him with only five loaves and two fish. That evening, after being dismissed by Jesus, the disciples headed out in the boat where they encounter a storm, but they ended up experiencing something much greater than wind and waves. Let's get started on our story.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes) Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop to 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.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. Is there any character in this passage that you can especially relate to? Why?
2. What are some of the things in people's lives that cause them to doubt? What are a few things in your life that cause you to doubt? Can we pray for these later?
3. How did Jesus respond to Peter's "little faith"? How do you think he would respond to yours?
4. How are you affected by the faith of others? How are others affected by your faith?
5. Can you share a time of "great and little faith" in your life and how you dealt with both?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, to respond to this passage?
2. Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
3. What are some thoughts you have from this passage about believing in Jesus and following Jesus? What do you think God might be asking you to do with them?
4. How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus?

Prayer Thoughts:

We pray Lord that when life's troubles surround us that we never take our eyes off of Jesus. May we always take time out of our day for prayer to help us grow in You so that you can do your work in us and through us. Lord, thank you for your promise that you will never leave us. You will never forsake us. Thank you for your faithfulness Lord.

Dealing with Doubt

John 20:19-31

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

After the crucifixion and death of Jesus, His body was prepared and placed in a tomb. Early on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been rolled away. She ran to report to the disciples that Jesus had been taken from tomb and she didn't know where they had taken Him. Rushing to the tomb, the disciples only found the burial clothes of Jesus. They returned to their homes while Mary remained at the tomb. In her tears of sorrow, Jesus appeared to her and instructed her to tell the disciples that He was returning to his Father, "their Father". Mary did as Jesus instructed and this passage describes the days and doubts that follow.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes) Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop to 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.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. Why was it important for Jesus to breathe the Holy Spirit into the disciples? Describe what it means to be "Spirit Empowered" as a disciple?
2. What does the saying "Seeing is Believing" mean to most people? How about to you in the context of this passage?
3. Do you and I have the same power to forgive, and not forgive, sins as Jesus gives the disciples in this passage? How so?
4. How does the power affect the way you live and relate to others?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you to respond to this passage?
2. Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
3. What are some thoughts you have from this passage about believing in Jesus and following Jesus? What do you think God might be asking you to do with them?
4. How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus?

Prayer Thoughts:

Thank you God for the gift of the Holy Spirit; for your instruction through the Word and the testimony of believers. This helps us follow Jesus and spread the Good News.

Counting the Cost

Luke 9:51-62

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

The opposition to Jesus continued even in the midst of all His great miracles and healings. Even among His own disciples they argued about "Who will be the greatest?" Jesus used this circumstance to teach the disciples that "...he who is least among you all - he is the greatest". This passage helps us to understand what the cost of being a disciple is. Let's see what we can learn.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes) Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop to 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.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. Is there any part of this passage you can especially relate to? Why?
2. Why doesn't Jesus accept these three excuses?
3. What are some of your first reactions to persecution? How do you deal with them?
4. What excuse do you find yourself using for not going where Jesus sends you?
5. Why should you keep on doing what Jesus asks you to do?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you to respond to this passage?
2. Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
3. What are some thoughts you have from this passage about believing in Jesus and following Jesus? What do you think God might be asking you to do with them?
4. How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus?

Prayer Thoughts:

Dear Heavenly Father, grow our faith and trust in You so that we may be effective servants in your kingdom and not be distracted with life's circumstances and business. Help each of us see how to follow You in our family, work and worship. Help us live a Spirit-Empowered and Gospel-Centered life.

So Worth It

Luke 24:36-53

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

After Jesus had risen from the dead, He appeared many times including on the road to Emmaus, to Mary Magdalene, to the disciples, and to over 500 at one time. In this passage, Jesus appears to the disciples one last time to comfort them, assure them, and instruct them before his final ascension to the Father. This passage is the instruction He has left them with....and for all of us.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes) Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop to 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.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. How does the knowledge that Jesus is fulfilling all of Scripture change the way people view or live life? What are some of the ways it has changed how you live?
2. Could you share an experience in your life, or a time, when you knew that that the Holy Spirit was in control?
3. What are some promises from Jesus that are most meaningful to you and why?
4. What would be one question you would ask Jesus if you were eating a meal with Him today? What difference would it make for you?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, to respond to this passage?
2. Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
3. What are some thoughts you have from this passage about believing in Jesus and following Jesus? What do you think God might be asking you to do with them?
4. How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus?

Prayer Thoughts:

Lord, help us to be obedient to Your Word. Thank You that we are witnesses to the work You have done - not only in our own lives, but in the hearts and lives of others around us. Use each of us in this group Lord, as we seek to know You better and experience Your presence in and through one another.

Serving Like Jesus

John 13:1-17

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

It was just before the Passover Feast and Jesus knew the time had come for Him to leave the world and go to the Father. Jesus had His last meal with His disciples and continued to instruct them and fill them with knowledge of the things that would happen in the future. After the meal, the disciples received an extraordinary lesson of how to live, love, and lead like Jesus. Let's hear what we can learn from this passage.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes) Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop to 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.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. Why do you think the disciples were confused when Jesus washed their feet? Why?
2. What are some of the most common motives you see when people serve others? How does that compare to Jesus' example of serving?
3. How does the type of relationship we have with one another affect how or why we serve one another? Or does it?
4. Is there anyone in your life that you find hard to serve? Would you be willing to share that with us in a way that would still respect and honor them?
5. What is one way that someone has washed your feet? Could you share that with the group?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
3. What are some thoughts you have from this passage about abiding and serving in Jesus. What is one way you could grow in each of these areas?
4. How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus?

Prayer Thoughts:

We thank you Jesus that for how You have washed our sins away because of what You did on the cross. Thank you that you gave up your life so we can have true life today. Help us

to serve you and serve others by your example. In all things we do Lord, let them be in love.

If You Love Him

John 14:15-31

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into Scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

After the Last Supper, Jesus knew that the disciple's hearts were heavy with the knowledge of Him leaving them in addition to his prediction of betrayal and denial. Jesus then promised them that He would return for them, but in the meantime, He would send an extraordinary gift to them that the world cannot accept. Let hear what the gift is in this passage.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes) Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop to 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.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. What is it that you find most challenging about the peace and love that Jesus describes in this passage? What are some of the differences between the world and eternal views of peace? Love?
2. Why were the disciples troubled and afraid? Do any of you ever feel that way? When does it most often affect you?
3. What are some of the ways that Jesus shows himself to you today?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
3. What are some thoughts you have from this passage about abiding and serving in Jesus. What is one way you could grow in each of these areas?
4. How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus?

Prayer Thoughts:

Lord, you have sent the Holy Spirit to teach and guide me to the truth. Fill my heart with your peace and joy as I focus my eyes upon you. Teach me your ways, and guard my heart against the ways of the world. Put your promises in my heart that I may rest in you and have peace in you knowing that I am yours.

Abide

John 15:1-17

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

Jesus continued to instruct his disciple's after the Last Supper by telling them the things that were going to happen in the future, so that when they did happen, the disciples would believe. He spent time comforting them and explaining His love for the Father, and His Father's love for Him. Jesus then gave the disciples His second greatest command. Let's hear what that command is from this passage.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes) Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop to 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.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. What does it mean to abide in Him?
2. How can we stay connected to Jesus?
3. What is the fruit of the Spirit? How well would you say you are bearing fruit these days?
What is one area you would like to see more fruitful in your life.
4. How does the differences between servants and friends relate to us today?
5. Are there people in your life you find hard to love? How do you deal with them?
6. How is serving and abiding connected to loving like Jesus?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
3. What are some thoughts you have from this passage about abiding and serving in Jesus. What is one way you could grow in each of these areas?
4. How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus?

Prayer Thoughts:

Lord, thank you for helping us understand that all good things are from You and through you. Give us the wisdom and courage to face the things that you want to prune out of our lives to be more useful to you.

Be Thankful

Luke 17:11-19

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

Jesus was on the way to Jerusalem, and as He approached, He encountered ten men with leprosy who called out to Him. This encounter would reveal another amazing lesson in faith and thanksgiving. Let's see what we can learn and apply from this passage.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes) Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop to 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.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. Do you think all ten men were thankful? Why?
2. Why did only one return?
3. What part of this passage can you relate to the most and why?
4. How are some of the ways we express our love for Jesus? How does that influence how we express our love for others?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
3. What are some thoughts you have from this passage about abiding and serving in Jesus. What is one way you could grow in each of these areas?
4. How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus?

Prayer Thoughts:

Lord, thank you for the work that You have already done in each of us. We pray that our hearts continue to be open and searching for you. Forgive us for the things that we so easily forget and never let us forget the price you paid for each of us to be with you for eternity.

Facing temptation

Matt 4:1-11

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

The context leading up to our next passage is at the Jordan River where Jesus is baptized by John the Baptist. Heaven opened and the Spirit of God descended like a dove. And landing on Jesus, a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." Jesus was then led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. This passage tells us about that experience of temptation.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes) Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop to 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.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. What is temptation? How would you define it to an eleven year old?
2. What are some of the times or conditions in your life when you are most vulnerable to temptation?
3. If we are abiding in Christ, why does he allow us to continuously face temptations?
4. What experience have you had with Satan's lies? What were they and how have you struggled with the most?
5. What did Jesus leave each of us from this passage as a way to resist temptation?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
3. What are some thoughts you have from this passage about abiding and serving in Jesus. What is one way you could grow in each of these areas?
4. How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus?

Prayer Thoughts:

Father, we praise you that Jesus has overcome the evil of Satan and his grip on us. We call on your name to keep us strong and close to you, through your Word and prayer to turn away for the evil temptations of this world.

What do you want from Him?

Mark 10:35-52

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

Jesus was once again on the move leading his twelve disciples back to Jerusalem from the region of Judea and on the way He was instructing them about his future death and resurrection. The disciples were astonished; however, those who followed became afraid. It was at this time that James and John asked Jesus to give them something that Jesus could not give them. Let's hear from this passage what they wanted from Jesus.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes) Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop to 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.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. Has there been a time in your life when someone asked you for something that was not yours to give? Would you be willing to tell us about it? What would have happened if you gave it to them?
2. Has there been an experience in your life when you asked Jesus for something you wanted and he showed you that what you needed was something much different? Could you share it with the group?
3. How expectant are you when asking for things in prayer? What is difficult about not knowing if your prayers will be answered?
4. What is it that Jesus wants us to ask Him for? What would you want to ask Him for right now? Would it be okay if we prayed for that at the end of our discussion?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
3. What are some thoughts you have from this passage about abiding and serving in Jesus. What is one way you could grow in each of these areas?
4. How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus?

Prayer Thoughts:

Father, thank you for the personal relationship you pursued with each of us. Thank you that you know what is best for us. Help us recognize that more as well as Keep our eyes focused on how we can serve others in a way that glorifies you, Lord, and not of ourselves.

Love my Neighbor?

Luke 10:25-36

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

After Jesus had sent out the seventy-two and they returned, He rejoiced in the Father for what had taken place and said to his disciples privately, "Blessed are the eyes that see what you see." He then told them a parable to help them see how to love by serving others. Let listen to this passage as it teaches a lesson of the Good Samaritan.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes) Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop to 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.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. Is there any character in this passage that you can especially relate to and why?
2. What are some of the attitudes of these characters?
3. What are some of the reasons/excuses people use to not care for others? Are there any of these that you struggle with? Why?
4. Is there any neighbor in your life that needs a Good Samaritan? Are there any steps that you think you should take today in that situation?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
3. What are some thoughts you have from this passage about abiding and serving in Jesus. What is one way you could grow in each of these areas?
4. How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus?

Prayer Thoughts:

Father, thank you for the reminder that all people are loved by you. We pray that our eyes stay focused on you and the things that are most important to you. Help us see all people through your eyes and give us a heart to love others as you love us.

Betrayal, Denial, and Love

John 13:18-38

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

At the end of the meal with His disciples, the Last Supper, Jesus revealed many things about the future that were difficult for the disciples to understand. These predictions of betrayal and denial were not well received by the disciples, causing confusion, and in some cases denial that they would happen. Let's put ourselves in their position and see how we might respond. Here is what happened next.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes) Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop to 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.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. What are some of the ways today that we betray or deny Jesus? Are they different from what we learn in this passage?
2. What is the purpose behind the command that Jesus gave us to love one another? Do you see that purpose being filled in your life? How so?
3. Have you ever had someone betray or deny you? How did you respond?
4. Is there anyone in your life that has loved you as Jesus loves you? Would you be willing to share that experience with us?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
3. What are some thoughts you have from this passage about abiding and serving in Jesus. What is one way you could grow in each of these areas?
4. How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus?

Prayer Thoughts:

Father, thank you that you have revealed every detail of your plan to redeem us through your Son, Jesus We are thankful that Jesus was obedient to You, even to His death, that we can escape death. Thank you for the example of how you use all things, even evil, to your good.

It Takes Time to Grow

Mark 8:1-21

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

After Jesus had fed the five thousand, He continued to travel with His disciples, healing the lame and teaching the things of heaven. He once again faced a large crowd of people that were following him, but towards the end of the day they had nothing to eat. Jesus had compassion on them and once again performed a miracle to feed four thousand with seven loaves of bread and a few fish. This passage shows how Jesus was using the illustration of bread to teach the disciples, but they did not seem to understand. Let's hear and discuss this passage and see what we can gain in understanding.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes) Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop to 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.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. In what ways do you ask Jesus to keep proving Himself to you?
2. What areas of your life are you failing to trust in Jesus?
3. Which characters of this passage can you relate to the most? Why?
4. What is one thing that you have learned from this passage that you would like to teach to someone else? Who and when will you do that?
5. Why did Jesus use the symbolism of yeast? What is the yeast of the Pharisees and of Herod? Do we need to be concerned today since they are not here? Why?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
3. What are some thoughts you have from this passage about abiding and serving in Jesus. What is one way you could grow in each of these areas?
4. How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus?

Prayer Thoughts:

Father, please show us the areas of our hearts that are small, but growing in ways that are unhealthy for our growth with You. Remove all the roots of bitterness and anger lingering from circumstances of today or the past. Erase any seeds of unbelief or rebellion that may cause us to stumble. Help us abide in you with clean and sincere hearts.

Leading a Friend to Jesus

Mark 2:1-12

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

This passage brings us to the time shortly after Jesus was baptized and tempted in the desert by Satan. He was walking beside the Sea of Galilee where He saw Simon and Andrew casting a net into the lake and called them to follow Him. On His travel to Capernaum, He drove out evil spirits and healed many people. This drew attention to Him and caused people from everywhere to seek Him for healing. Jesus then heals a paralytic and the events of this passage follow.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes) Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop to 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.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. Why do you think the men, especially the four men, made such an effort to help the paralytic?
2. What do you think it took to help the paralytic?
3. Do any of you have someone in your life that needs to be picked up and carried to Jesus? Do they want to be picked up and carried to Jesus?
 - a. Could you share that with us?
 - b. Can you do it alone?
 - c. What is the next step?
 - d. Can we pray for that now?
4. What was more important to Jesus than the physical healing of the paralytic? Why?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
3. What are some thoughts you have from this passage about whom you can share Jesus with and who you might disciple to be more like Him?
4. How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus?

Prayer Thoughts:

Lord, help us see the people you want us to bring before You. Use us to serve you by serving others. Show us who you want brought before you and how we may be your servants.

Jesus Sharing Himself

John 4:1-26

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

John the Baptist was testifying that Jesus was the one who "is above all" and "speaks the words of God". The Pharisee's heard that Jesus' disciples were baptizing more people than John the Baptist. When Jesus heard this He headed back to Galilee. When he came to a town in Samaria, the disciples went ahead for some food and Jesus encountered a woman at the well, Jacob's well. Let's see what happens at the well and then we can discuss what we can learn from this passage.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes) Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop to 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.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. What places do you know that people commonly gather? Why do they go there? Do you go there? Why?
2. How did Jesus share the Good News with this woman?
3. How would Jesus want to share Himself there?
4. Do you know anyone in your life that is thirsting for living water? Do you know anyone who could lead them there? How?
5. How do you continue to fill yourself with living water?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
3. What are some thoughts you have from this passage about whom you can share Jesus with and who you might disciple to be more like Him?
4. How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus?

Prayer Thoughts:

Thank you Lord for your life-saving, living water. Help us to show others where they can also get that water so they will not thirst again. Let your glory shine through us as we interact with your people, both those that know You and those that need to know you. Let's pray for a few people we know that need you in their lives.

The Heart of Jesus

Luke 15:1-32

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

Jesus has been traveling and teaching the disciples and large crowds about the cost of being His disciples using parables. Each time Jesus encountered a new circumstance and people, He used parables in order to help the people see that his teaching is relevant to the life and culture they were living. Let's see what this next parable can teach us about living, loving and leading like Jesus.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes) Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop to 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.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. Which character in these parables can you most identify with the most and why?
2. What is one helpful principle you have gained from this passage when sharing Jesus with others? Why is it so meaningful?
3. What is our part in finding the lost? Is there anyone in your life that needs to be found or welcomed back?
4. How important is the lost to Jesus? How important are they to you?
5. Do you have any lost friends or family members? Jesus says you can't rescue them, only He can, so what do you think He wants you to do about them?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
3. What are some thoughts you have from this passage about whom you can share Jesus with and who you might disciple to be more like Him?
4. How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus?

Prayer Thoughts:

Father, thank you for your infinite and unconditional love for us. We ask that you put the heart of Jesus in us through your Holy Spirit. Help us do what is right in your eyes and model the examples you have given us in this passage.

Telling Your Story (pt 1)

John 9:1-41

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into Scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

The Jewish leaders grew more angry and hostile towards Jesus as He testified in the temple courts of Himself and quoted Scriptures that foretold his coming. He challenged the Pharisees by telling them they have eyes and ears, but do not see or hear. In this passage, Jesus heals a blind man and we will see this man's story unfolds in a way that can help us discover how God wants to use our story.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes) Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop to 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.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. Why do you think that so many did not believe the blind man?
2. Did the blind man embellish his story? Why or Why not?
3. If you have accepted Jesus, have you ever written a 3-4 minute version of your testimony or faith story? Would you be willing to do that in the next few weeks and share it when you're ready?
4. How do you respond to those that do not believe your story? How does this passage help you respond?
5. If you needed to gather witnesses to testify of your testimony, who would you call?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you us, to respond to this passage?
2. Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
3. What are some thoughts you have from this passage about whom you can share Jesus with and who you might disciple to be more like Him?
4. How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus?

Prayer Thoughts:

Father, thank you for the unique life story that you are giving each one of us to share with others. Help us see the changes in our hearts as a result of You and Your story. We pray that we can tell our story so that it tells others how amazing you truly are. Show us the people that you have chosen for us to share it with and may we take the initiative to tell them about You.

Telling Your Story (pt 2)

Acts 26:1-32

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

Let's have someone share their story tonight in 3 minutes or less.

Paul was brought before the Sanhedrin and sent before Governor Festus to tell his story. Governor Festus was unable to find a charge against Paul and was uncertain how to handle the situation. Festus then consulted King Agrippa and turned Paul over to him. Now King Agrippa has asked to hear Paul's story himself. Let's hear Paul testify in the courts with his story from this passage.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes) Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop to 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.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. Why do you think God would put Paul in danger and at risk by testifying in King Agrippa's court?
2. What are the key components of Paul's testimony/story? What was first, second, third?
3. Why couldn't King Agrippa find any false witness in Paul's testimony? Why is that important to you and me?
4. What is the difference between testifying and telling your story? Would each of you begin to think about telling your story to the group sometime in the future?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
3. What are some thoughts you have from this passage about whom you can share Jesus with and who you might disciple to be more like Him?
4. How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus?

Prayer Thoughts:

Praise be to you God for the testimony of your servant Paul. Thank you for his example of how the work that you have done in each of our lives is how we share the good news with other.

The True Change Agent

John 16:1-15

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

Jesus is preparing the disciples for the time of His departure and promising them that He will not leave them alone. He tells the disciples that there is much more for them to hear and learn, and he will send the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, to instruct them and guide them in the truth. Let's see how this passage assures us that we have the same Spirit of Truth to guide us and how we can help others discover the same.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes) Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop to 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.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. What are some of the difference between having Jesus physically here today versus the Spirit of truth?
2. What are some of the things that may happen as a result of you sharing your testimony or Good News about Jesus with others? Does it help to know these things before they may happen? Why?
3. What is the Holy Spirits role in understanding the truth? Why is it so important when sharing the truth with others?
4. How do you know if people have the Spirit of truth? If not, what are a few things you might be able to do to help them?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
3. What are some thoughts you have from this passage about whom you can share Jesus with and who you might disciple to be more like Him?
4. How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus?

Prayer Thoughts:

Thank you Lord for sending each one of us, that believes and follows you, the gift of the Holy Spirit. We call upon him to fill us with wisdom, discernment and power to live out a Gospel Centered life.

Lead Like a Shepherd

John 10:1-21

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into Scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

Jesus is speaking to the Pharisees again to help them see their blindness and refusal to believe the claims of Jesus. His illustration of a shepherd and his flock helps us understand the love and care Jesus leads us with as our Shepherd. Let's see how the Pharisees respond in this passage and then discuss how we can help disciple others towards the Good Shepherd, Jesus.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes) Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop to 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.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. If Jesus is our Good Shepherd, how are we also able to be a shepherd to others? What are some characteristics of a good shepherd that you observe in this passage?
2. What is the difference between knowing about Jesus and knowing Jesus?
3. Do you have any family or friends that need you as a shepherd to stay connected with Jesus? What is one step you could take?
4. Is there anyone in your life that you would be willing to spend time with to help them grow in their relationship with Jesus? What would be one thing you could do to disciple them?
5. Could we write down a list of names tonight of people we know could benefit from joining a Life Group? What are a few things we could do to help lead them towards connecting with God's people? Can we pray that each of us would take a step towards them in the next few weeks?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
3. What are some thoughts you have from this passage about whom you can share Jesus with and who you might disciple to be more like Him?
4. How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus?

Prayer Thoughts:

Lord, we are all sheep and easily led astray. Help us to follow you as our Good Shepherd and help us lead others by sharing the blessings we have received by your good and loving care.

Truth Caught Before Taught

Luke 11:1-13

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into Scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

Being a follower of Jesus can seem complex, particularly as a result of us making it that way. Jesus teaches us this during his Jesus visit with Mary and Martha. Martha is worried and upset about many things, while Mary sits at Jesus' feet. Jesus teaches the simplicity of following Him by telling Martha that "Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her". In this passage, Jesus teaches his disciples how to pray. Let's hear how prayer allows us to enjoy a deep level of intimacy with God.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes) Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop to 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.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. Why do you think the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray?
2. Is prayer something you just started doing on your own or did you learn (catch) the meaning and need for prayer from others? Who is catching it from you?
3. How have you learned how to pray? Would you like to learn more about prayer? How could you do that?
4. Is there anyone you know that might enjoy learning how to pray or to pray with you? Do you think they will ask you?
5. Are we asking for the right things as we pray in our Life Group? Are there other ways for us to pray that might be beneficial to each of us?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
3. What are some thoughts you have from this passage about whom you can share Jesus with and who you might disciple to be more like Him?
4. How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus?

Prayer Thoughts:

Lord Jesus, we want to learn to pray as You pray. We want to live and love and lead as you do. Thank You that you hear every word that is in our prayers, and even the ones on our hearts that are not spoken. Protect us Lord. Help us pursue the discipline of talking with You and sharing with You what is on our hearts.

Go And Make Disciples

Matt 28:10-20

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into Scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

After the death and burial of Jesus, He appeared to Mary and instructed her to tell the disciples to go to Galilee where they would see Him. This passage gives us the final instructions that Jesus left His disciples before His ascension to the Father. Then we can discuss what these instructions might mean to us.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes) Tell the story as best as you can, don't stop to 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.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. What are the key essentials that you need to be a disciple that makes another disciple of Jesus?
2. What do you feel you are missing to go and make disciples? If you don't have everything you feel you need; what do you know and have that you could still use?
3. Is there anything that you do know about Jesus that you could share with someone? What are a few of those things?
4. What is the last promise that Jesus made to his disciples before he ascending to the Father? How does this comfort or motivate you?

Life Application Question(s):

1. What is the significance of Jesus saying that "all authority" has been given to Him by the Father? How does knowing this affect how you receive His great commission?
2. Why do you think Christians struggle to follow Jesus' commission? What makes it hard for you to pursue?
3. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
4. Is there an area of your life that this passage is causing you to see differently? Could you tell us a little about that?
5. What are some thoughts you have from this passage about whom you can share Jesus with and who you might disciple to be more like Him?
6. How can this passage help you live, love, and/or lead more like Jesus?

Prayer Thoughts:

Thank God for the completed work in Jesus. Pray that as disciples of the living Jesus, we hear His Word and command to be witnesses in our Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. Let us never stop growing in You and seeking Your truths Lord.

Year End Review Leaders Guide

Purpose:

To help group members recognize the personal growth they have experienced in their relationship with Christ and with each other as a group.

Facilitators Notes/Suggestions

- *You might handout the following questions the prior week so group members can come better prepared to share their answers.*

Discussion Questions:

Curriculum Review

1. What was one of the most meaningful passages for you this past year? Why?
2. What is one way you have been surprised by this study of passages?
3. What is one theme that you are walking away with from this past study of God's Word?
4. What is one area that you have grown the most in as a result of this study?
5. How do you feel you are better equipped to live, love and lead like Jesus?
6. What is one thing that God has put on your heart as a result of this past years study?

Life Group Experiences Review

1. What is one way you have been surprised about your Life Group experience this past year?
2. What is one way you have personally grown this past year as a result of our Life Group?
3. What have been your biggest challenges this past year and what influence has our Life Group had on it for you?, your family?, your co-workers?, friends?
4. What things have you appreciated most about being together this past year?
5. How would you describe a Life Group to someone who has never experienced it before?
6. Is there any group member's contribution that has been particularly meaningful to you? Who, What and Why?
7. What are some of the ways you would like to grow this coming year? Why?
8. Who do you know that we could be praying for this year to join us or another Life Group?
9. What would you like to see our Life Group become this coming year? Why?

Prayer Techniques:

- You can ask a group member to begin accumulating both individual and group prayer requests from the discussion.
- You can pray as each request surfaces from the discussion time.
- Prayers can be written down and sent to the group later to remind each member of what they are committing to individually and the group.
- Pray for the Leadership of your Life Group, the development of new leaders to start new groups for our growing biblical community.

We are thankful for...

- The instruction book that God has written for us for life.
- The personal and loving relationship he has pursued with each of us through Jesus.
- The personal relationships we have developed together as a Life Group.
- The prayers and encouragement that has been so meaningful this past year.
- You fill in the rest!

Appendix

Telling Your Story

From Acts 26:1-32

INTRODUCTION

- One of the most powerful tools you have in sharing Jesus with others is your own story with Jesus. (In Christianese terms, it is also called your “testimony”.)
- Sharing your testimony is simply telling people how Jesus has changed and is changing your life. It is telling others how your story intersects with God’s story.
- In Acts 26, Paul tells his story to King Agrippa. Let’s look more closely at what characterized Paul’s story and learn how it can help us to tell our own.

1. WHAT CHARACTERIZED PAUL’ STORY TO KING AGRIPPA?

A. He was gracious in his speech.

- He didn’t begin on a note of condemnation. King Agrippa was last of the Herod’s. Herod the great was the first, and put babies in Bethlehem to death when Jesus was born, in attempt to slay the Messiah. His son, Herod Antipas had John the Baptist beheaded in prison. And his grandson, Agrippa 1, put James to death with the sword. King Agrippa was married to Bernice who was his full sister. Don’t condemn them for living like non-Christians, they are non-Christians.
- Tactful and respectful.
- Remained calm when confronted by Festus.
- Lots of I’s and me’s not you’s and your’s. Not a preachimony.

B. He spoke the language of his audience.

- No special jargon, secret coded clichés. No Christianese.
- Though special and important to us, beware of words and phrases that are meaningless to non-believers.
- Avoid religious words, phrase, jargon (e.g. born again, under the blood, testimony)
 - Under the blood=God forgave me
 - Testimony=Faith story
 - Went forward=decided to turn my life over
- Avoid spiritualizing (e.g. God said to me, I prayed and God gave me a job)
- Avoid glittery generalities (e.g., wonderful, glorious, terrific)

C. He was honest and transparent about his life story.

- He was real, authentic, and vulnerable.
- Didn’t make up stories, didn’t exaggerate, didn’t downplay.
- There is a tremendous power in being authentic and vulnerable.

D. His life story was easy and simple to follow

- Life before Jesus (vv.4-11)-Committed to Judaism, fanatically opposed Christianity. He once tried to snuff Christianity out of existence. Even traveled mid-day when he should have been resting from the heat of the day because he was intensely purposeful. Had good and bad aspects. Good-wanted to excel, lived my faith, hard-working, desire education. Bad-selfish, angry, greedy.

Preparing Your Personal Testimony

Sharing how you came to know Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord is an invaluable tool. Your personal testimony can be spoken anywhere at any time, and presents the gospel in a clear and personal manner.

Main Points and Pattern

These are the three main points of a testimony with suggestions on what you might talk about on how you came to know the Savior.

1. Life BEFORE I met Christ

- What were your attitudes, needs, problems, etc?
- What did your life revolve around? What was most important to you?
- How did you look for security, peace of mind, happiness?
- How did you find your activities unsatisfying?

2. HOW I met Christ

- When did you first hear the Gospel? How? (Be specific-to allow people to relate)
- Speak of the eternal forgiveness that you found in Christ.
- A realization of guilt and condemnation.
- Discovery that I was unable to pay for my own sin.
- Christ's death on the cross is the only adequate payment for sin.
- Christ's resurrection is my hope that we can be freed from sin.
- Admit one's guilt to God and turned to Christ, trusting Him to forgive and cleanse.

3. Life SINCE I met Christ

- What changes did you see in your life, actions, attitudes, or problems? (Be specific)
- How long did it take before you noticed changes?
- Briefly state the role of prayer and the Bible in your life.

4. Conclusion

- What does Jesus mean to you now?

Communion Guide

Tips, Suggestions and References

What we believe

- Communion (or the Lord's Super) is an *expression* of our faith in Jesus Christ, as our Lord and Savior. We believe it is a *symbol* of Jesus Christ's sacrifice for us on the cross and is to be done in *remembrance* of Him. The key is found in the phrase: "do this in remembrance of me" (Lk.22:19; 1 Cor.11:24-25).

Why do we value the Lord's Supper?

- The Lord Jesus placed a supreme value upon it; (Matt 26:26-29, Mk. 14:22-25, Elk. 22:17-20)
- The Early church highly regarded it; (Acts 2:42,46; 20:7, 1 Cor. 11:23-26)

What is the meaning of the Lord's Supper?

- A special time of remembering what Jesus has done for us. It is His body and blood which are remembered in the Lord's Supper.
 - Remember the Past: What He did on the cross.
 - Remember the Present: Our current relationship with Him.(1 Cor. 10:16-17)
 - Remember the Future: His promised return.(Lk.22:16)
- A time of thanksgiving (The Lord Jesus took the bread, and "having given thanks, He broke it...")
- A time of fellowship with other believers. Reminder of the unity we have in Jesus Christ.

Who should take part in the Lord's Supper?

- Assembled believers in Jesus Christ (Acts 20:7, 1 Cor. 11:27-32)
- It is for believers whose hearts are prepared before the Lord (1 Cor. 11:20-22, 27)
- Ask yourself:
 - Is there any unconfessed sin in my life?
 - Do I need to restore any broken relationships in my life?
 - Do I need to recommit myself to the Lord?

Resources:

- Bread (A form of flat cracker by its nature represents the sinless body of Christ)
- Cup (Grape juice)
 - Special cups are not required. Any variety or size of cups can be used. Small 1 ½ oz. cups can be purchased at many local stores: Dollar Store, Christian Book Stores, etc.

General Group Flow

- Open with a short devotional.
 - The What and Why of Communion, or,
 - Passages leading up to the Last Super.
- Prayer of thanksgiving for the bread.
- Read the Scripture verse
 - Take the bread together.
- Prayer of thanksgiving for the cup.
- Read the Scripture verse
 - Take the cup together.
- Close in Prayer