

ICEBREAKER

- What comes to mind when you think about sharing your faith with others? What feelings arise?
- Who was the most influential person in your decision to follow Christ?

LEADERSHIP SUMMARY

1. Please seek to help those in your group to understand the difference between “apologetics” (defending the faith through intellectual/theological discussion/debate) and sharing their story in a relational context. There is a significantly different posture and level of expertise in each of these approaches. Group members should become comfortable with sharing the message of God’s love intertwined with their story. Not everyone will be an accomplished apologetic, but everyone can listen and offer hope.
2. Those who wish to pursue an apologetic approach to influencing others can be directed to the writings of Lee Strobel (*The Case for Faith, The Case for Christ, The Case for a Creator, The Case for the Real Jesus*) and Josh McDowell (*More Than A Carpenter, The New Evidence That Demands a Verdict, Evidence That Demands a Verdict – Volumes 1 & 2*). (pg. 132)
3. You may wish to explore a Biblical example of someone sharing their story of deciding to follow Jesus. The apostle Paul does a masterful job of this in Acts 26. Below is an outline of his testimony that serves as a blueprint for those in your group:
 - a. Life Before Christ (BC) – Acts 26:1-11
 - b. Commitment to Christ (t) – Acts 26:12-18
 - c. Life After Christ (AC) – Acts 26:19-23
 - d. Question: Acts 26:27-29
4. You are encouraged to help those in your group think of themselves as one link in a long chain that helps people decide to follow Jesus. This takes the pressure off of them and helps them to see God’s overall plan in drawing someone to himself.

5. One final concept that will help to produce courage in those who attend your group is the idea of the “Man of Peace” in Luke 10:1-11 (see also Mt. 10:1-16). Jesus sent his followers out looking for people of peace. If a person was hostile to the good news, He instructed them to move along. We should do the same.

QUESTIONS

- Read Matthew 28:18-20. [\[See if they can quote it.\]](#)

18 Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

1. Why do you think it was important for His followers to hear that Jesus would “surely be with them always, even to the very end of the age”?
2. How does it affect you that Jesus says He will be with you always?
3. In our first meeting together, we learned there is only one command in this passage – to make disciples. Disciples are people who learn to do what Jesus does. How are you growing as a follower of Jesus?
4. There are three aspects of making disciples according to our passage: going, baptizing, and teaching people to obey. Who are some people around you who need Jesus to whom you could go? (Encourage each group member to share his/her list from page 27. If they haven’t written it out yet, strongly encourage them to make a list of people that includes family, friends, co-workers, and neighbors and to pray through that list regularly.)
5. What would “going” to them look like for you? (The leader should share the importance of making a relationship and serving them as part of bringing the gospel to them.)

6. Have you written out your testimony as indicated in *Learning to Follow Jesus*? Did you notice a theme beginning to emerge?
7. Leadership moment: Open your copies of *Learning to Follow Jesus* to pages 114-115. We need to get comfortable sharing our stories with one another so we will be ready to share them with others. You need to write out your story answering these questions. It is best to be able to share your story in about 3 minutes. Who would be willing to share their 3 minute story next week in the group? (The leader should set up a schedule at this point for the group members to share their stories in the remaining meetings you have together. You may even want to double up so everyone has a chance to share.)

BREAK INTO GROUPS OF 2-3

1. What was your primary evangelism style from the assessment on page 224 of *Learning to Follow Jesus*? (see pages 224 and 227 for a summary)
2. How do you plan to use your style this week to influence someone to follow Christ?
3. Do you feel comfortable inviting people to Riverside Community Church? Why or Why not? What would make it more comfortable? (note the "Cringe Factor")

MISSION

- The leader will share his/her 3 minute testimony.
- Plan an activity together that has as its focus some aspect of influencing people to follow Christ (i.e. barbeque to meet friends, fun activity together to which you invite friends & family, cleaning up the neighborhood, etc.)

PRAYER

- How can we pray for each other? (emphasize decisions)

BEFORE NEXT GATHERING:

- Read *Learn To Love* (pgs. 136-158)
- Memorize Matthew 22:37-39

RESOURCES

- Music to Inspire You to Follow Jesus (PDF)
- Influence Verses
 - 1 Peter 3:15
 - Colossians 4:5-6
 - 2 Corinthians 5:20
 - Philippians 2:14-16
 - 2 Timothy 2:23-26
- Unstoppable Series (PDF)
 - The Role of the Holy Spirit Before Christ
 - The Role of the Holy Spirit After Christ
 - Pentecost – The Backstory
 - Unstoppable
 - The Blessing of Being Filled With the Holy Spirit
 - In Step With the Spirit
 - A Prayer to be Filled
 - Holy Spirit Bibliography