

Make & Send Disciples to Live Sent



Stories from The Bible



Riverside Church LIFEGRUUPS

VOLUME 16.2

Summer 2017

MAKING
DISCIPLES
WHO LOVE & LIVE
LIKE JESUS

Attend

Connect

Serve

Share

Lead

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Why tell our stories?

It gives us the opportunity to share who we are, where we've come from, and how God is working and has worked in our lives over the years. It gives us compassion and understanding for others, allowing us to more easily extend grace and care for each other. This is part of how we become "family."

LETTER TO THE FACILITATOR

Dear Riverside Family,

*FIND THIS STORY SET ONLINE AT RiversideChurch.org

Our mission is to make and send disciples who love and live like Jesus and we cannot do this without you all living on mission every week in your groups. I wanted to say thank you for your faithfulness and for serving and leading our life groups and church so well! You truly are the heartbeat of our church.

The second half of our Summer Story Set is a short collection of some of our facilitator's favorite stories from the Bible as well as some built in time to hang out and get to know each other more. We have provided a few questions with each story, but please feel free to come up with your own heart level questions. Just remember to keep them open-ended and curious. Try not to lead your group to something you want them to learn, but rather, keep it open to give the Holy Spirit room to reveal whatever He may.

I have included two weeks for telling your own stories. This is a great time to ask someone in your group to share their story with the group. Be sure to take time to celebrate all God has done in their lives. We are all in process and we all have stories of how God has worked and is continuing to work in our lives. These are the stories we need to be ready to share to the lost in our community; stories of the hope we have in Christ. The Life Group is a great place to practice these!

Life Group leader training will be held on August 20th. We will have lunch together after church and meet to talk through the Fall plan and equip you to disciple your groups. I hope you will make every effort to be there and that you will invite your apprentice couple.

The Fall Story Set will begin September 10th, right after Group Link on August 27th. Thank you for all you do, all the time you give and all the ways your love and lead your people. Enjoy your summer and have fun doing life with your group!

Doing life together,

Matt

Matt Nations
Director of Adult Ministries
Riverside Church
941-266-9014
Matt@RiversideChurch.org

A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.
John 13:34-35 (NIV)

And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." Matthew 4:19 (ESV)

LETTER TO THE FACILITATOR

Why tell our own stories?

I like what John Eldredge writes in his book *Epic*:

“Life, you’ll notice, is a story. Life doesn’t come to us like a math problem. It comes to us the way that a story does, scene by scene. You wake up. What will happen next? You don’t get to know—you have to enter in, take the journey as it comes. The sun might be shining. There might be a tornado outside. Your friends might call and invite you to go sailing. You might lose your job.

Life unfolds like a drama. Doesn’t it? Each day has a beginning and an end. There are all sorts of characters, all sorts of settings. A year goes by like a chapter from a novel. Sometimes it seems like a tragedy. Sometimes like a comedy. Most of it feels like a soap opera. Whatever happens, it’s a story through and through....

When it comes to figuring out this life you’re living, you’d do well to know the rest of the story.

You come home one night to find that your car has been totaled. Now, all you know is that you loaned it for a couple of hours to your teenage daughter, and now here it is, all smashed up. Isn’t the first thing out of your mouth, ‘What happened?’

In other words, ‘Tell me the story.’

Somebody has some explaining to do, and that can be done only in hearing the tale they have to tell. Careful now—you might jump to the wrong conclusion. Doesn’t it make a difference to know that she wasn’t speeding, that in fact the other car ran a red light? It changes the way you feel about the whole thing. Thank God she’s all right.

Truth be told, you need to know the rest of the story if you want to understand just about anything in life. Love affairs, lay-offs, the collapse of empires, your child’s day at school—none of it makes sense without a story....

If you want to get to know someone, you need to know their story. Their life is a story. It, too, has a past and a future. It, too, unfolds in a series of scenes over the course of time. Why is Grandfather so silent? Why does he drink too much? Well, let me tell you. There was a terrible battle in World War II, in the South Pacific, on an island called Okinawa. Tens of thousands of American men died or were wounded there; some of them were your grandfather’s best friends. He was there, too, and saw things he has never been able to forget....



‘But in order to make you understand,’ explained novelist Virginia Woolf, ‘to give you my life, I must tell you a story.’” (Epic, pages 2-4, 6, and 7)

FACILITATOR RESOURCES

SMALL GROUP GUIDELINES

HOW WE LOVE EACH OTHER

CONFIDENTIALITY: What is shared in the group stays in the group. Unless given permission to share, keep what is shared confidential. This must be a safe environment where people can be real, open and honest with their struggles and their victories.

TRANSPARENCY: We encourage you to share from your heart—to let your walls down, so that others can really know you. It's difficult to love someone as God calls us to do without really knowing them in a deep and meaningful way.

NO CROSS-TALK: Be considerate of others as they are sharing; don't have side conversations. Please silence your phones and leave the room if you have to respond to an urgent call or text message.

NO CONVINCING: Share your opinions—a different opinion is welcome. However, please don't try to convince others to your way of thinking. Be aware of Riverside's core beliefs. If someone is trying to convince you, offer to discuss the issue further at a later time.

DON'T FIX: Let's try to hear what people are sharing without trying to fix them. If they want advice, they'll ask for it. If you have been through a similar circumstance, it's okay to let the person know and that you're available to talk more about it later if they're interested. Very rarely does a Christian cliché or quoted scripture help right in this moment. It's uncomfortable to see someone in pain or struggling, and if we're honest with ourselves, often we speak out primarily to ease our own discomfort. Let them NEED Jesus and ASK you for help when they're ready.

DON'T RESCUE: When someone is sharing something deeply personal and/or painful, a tension builds that may feel uncomfortable for you. There can be a tendency to try to make them feel better about themselves or the situation or relieve the tension with a smart remark or quick wit. Often this will cause people to stop sharing and results in their not going as deep as they might have gone. There is a let-down, like "the moment" has passed. Resist the temptation to pass them a tissue, touch them, or remark. This is hard, but it really is loving to give people the uninterrupted time to get it all out.

LISTEN: Let's value one another during the discussion by really listening to what is being shared. Nurture your sense of curiosity about someone else by focusing on the other person, rather than trying to figure out what you're going to say next or how you're going to respond. Be aware of how much you're talking—we want to give everyone a chance to share.

FACILITATOR RESOURCES

PAUSE: After someone shares, allow a pause in conversation to give the person sharing the chance to finish and the group the opportunity to consider what was just shared before responding.

SILENCE: It is important to allow silence in the group; it provides an opportunity for someone to share and for members in the group to process the topic or question being considered.

USE “I” STATEMENTS: It’s easy to talk about the issues of others, but for our purposes, we want you to put yourself on the table. Self-reflect. This is one time that it is kind of all about you. Try to use “I” statements, rather than “we”, “the church”, “Christians”, or “us”, etc.

SELF-ASSESS: Be self-aware of how you are personally effecting your small-group environment through your words, actions, and non-verbal communication. All of this takes practice. We don’t want you to be overly self-conscious, but it’s important that you pay attention to your own behavior and how well you’re loving others as they share. For example, if you catch yourself trying to “fix” someone, call yourself out, “Oops, I just tried to fix you. I’m sorry.”

COMMIT TO RESOLVING CONFLICT BIBLICALLY: The two things that bond a group more than anything else are conflict and crisis. Nobody wants either, but this is real life. Try to view conflict within the group as an opportunity to grow closer, to learn more about each other, and to extend grace. “Travel light.” Commit to working through the conflict, rather than sweeping it under the rug or holding on to a grudge. Pretending everything is okay, putting up walls, or venting with someone else breaks down relationships and is not loving. If you’re not sure how to resolve the conflict and need help, ask your facilitator or another ministry leader.

FACILITATOR RESOURCES

VISION CAST

- This is where you remind the group why we are here and how we are going to accomplish what God has called us to do, the purpose of our small groups.
- It is important to vision cast periodically, maintaining alignment and helping the group prepare for the process of branching.

Mission of Riverside Church: To Make and Send Disciples Who Love and Live Like JESUS

- We have defined a disciple using Matthew 4:19, "*And he said to them, 'Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men'*" (ESV).
- A disciple is someone who is *following* Jesus, *being changed* by Jesus and *on mission* with Jesus.
- Our vision is to **Go, Multiply and Send:**
 - **Go** – We are gospel carriers wherever we go. We must live on mission daily and carry the hope we have in Jesus to the dying world around us.
 - **Multiply** – God gave us a mission to Make disciples and we must respond to that mission in action. We don't want to add we want to multiply for the Kingdom. Our desire is to make disciples who make disciples. It cannot stop with us.
 - **Send** – We know if we are to follow Jesus there will come a time where we must be sent. We want to be ready to be sent for the gospel. This could be branching a Life group, helping to plant a church or joining the international mission field.

FACILITATOR RESOURCES

Discipleship Process: Create Intentional Relational Environments where people grow in their relationships with God and each other.

BASIC COMPONENTS IN THE DISCIPLESHIP PROCESS

Intentional Leader

Small Group Facilitators who intentionally guide, shepherd and love the people in their groups.

Biblical Foundation

Studying & applying God's words through the stories of the Bible.

Relational Environment

Intentionally creating an environment where people can share what God is showing them, so they can grow in their maturity in Jesus.

Reproducible Process

An Intentional Leader creates a Relational Environment with a Biblical Foundation and raises up an apprentice so that the group can branch as it grows.

ICE BREAKERS

SENTENCE STARTERS

Ahead of time, cut out several sentence starters—more than the number of people you have in your group. Fold up the questions and put them in a basket or container. Pass it around the group. Each person draws out a sentence starter and reads it silently. If they don't like the one they picked, they can exchange it. Allow enough time for each person to read and finish their sentence to the group.

Or, use a random sentence starter with the group and have each person finish the sentence. If you have enough time, you might do this 4 or 5 times.

Try these Sample Sentence Starters or make up your own:

FACILITATOR RESOURCES

- Although most people don't find...
- I am...
- I have never...
- I love it when...
- I love to...
- I think I have the best...
- I would never...
- My idea of beauty is...
- The best thing I ever did for my child is...
- The best way for me to relax is...
- The best way to save...
- The biggest and best...
- The funniest thing that ever happened to me was...
- The greatest thing my child ever did was...
- The lowest...
- The most important decision I ever made in my life was...
- The most unbelievable thing...
- The thing that makes me laugh is...
- There is nothing I enjoy more than...
- When I think of prunes...

(Adapted from <http://icebreakerideas.com>)

YES, I HAVE!

Make a list of 25 or more icebreaker questions along with the game rules. Give everyone a copy. Read the rules before you get started and announce how much time you will give them. Adults circulate, asking questions until the timer goes off or someone gets a “Yes, I have” for every question. Then, you read the questions and ask people to raise their hands if they can answer, “Yes, I have” to the question.

- Rules:**
1. Ask questions in any order you want, but ask only one person at a time.
 2. Ask as many questions as it takes to get a “Yes, I have!” Then, write that person’s name next to the question and move on to someone else—only one “Yes” per person.
 3. Once they get a “Yes” from everyone, it’s a free for all. Ask away! Get as many “Yes” answers as you need from anyone and everyone—but only one person at a time.
 4. Continue the game until either the time runs out or someone gets a name next to every question. The first person to complete their list wins, or the person with the most names wins. You can use the list that follows or make one of your own.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS:

- Have you ever been to Europe?

FACILITATOR RESOURCES

- Have you ever ridden on a motorcycle?
- Have you ever lived in another state?
- Have you ever met a celebrity?
- Have you ever been to Disney World?
- Have you ever planted a vegetable garden?
- Have you ever been a car salesperson?
- Have you ever planned a wedding?
- Have you ever ridden in a limousine?
- Have you ever driven a riding lawn mower?
- Have you ever participated in a marathon?
- Have you ever gone mountain climbing?
- Have you ever been to a chiropractor?
- Have you ever been a member of a sorority or fraternity?
- Have you ever participated in a beauty contest?
- Have you ever had a dog compete in a dog show?
- Have you ever been somewhere while an earthquake occurred?
- Have you ever been somewhere while a tornado took place?
- Have you ever been somewhere while a hurricane occurred?
- Have you ever been on a college sports team?
- Do you speak a second language?
- Have you ever played an instrument?

(Adapted from <http://icebreakerideas.com>)

NEW GROUP LESSON: LIFE GROUP BASICS

VISION CASTING

FACILITATOR RESOURCES

PRAY

Before you meet, be sure to read
“Starting a New Group”
in your Life Group Leader Facilitator Guide.

ICE BREAKER

FACILITATOR

Come up with your own or choose a new Ice Breaker from the previous few pages.

GO OVER YOUR SMALL GROUP BASICS:

- When we start and end
- Our general format (Example: Fellowship, Worship, Study, Prayer Requests, Refreshments)
- Logistics
 - Where to park
 - How childcare is provided (or not)
 - Snack list (allergies?)
 - How we will contact each other
 - Pass around a notepad. Ask people to list the contact information they feel comfortable sharing with the group, so you can pass out a contact list next week.
 - Caring for each other in crisis/need (meals, hospital visits, etc.)
 - Inviting new people, etc.
- Courtesies
 - Let your facilitator know if you can't make group or if you have to leave early.
 - Keep interruptions to a minimum by silencing cell phones and answering urgent calls/texts in another room.

Pass around a sheet for each person to list the contact information they want shared with the group. Then make copies or email it out to the group.

VISION CAST

FACILITATOR

FACILITATOR RESOURCES

Be sure to refer to the “Vision Cast” section from the Life Group Leadership Facilitator Guide to help you prepare. Even if you’re not starting a new group, it’s important to review the basics from time to time. Use a great portion of your group time this week to go over these foundational concepts. Allow people to ask questions, and if you’re stumped, it’s okay to say you don’t know but you’ll find out and get back to them. It’s also okay if you don’t get through everything tonight, also. Just **be intentional about returning to the basics**:

AREAS TO VISION CAST

- THE MISSION OF RIVERSIDE CHURCH
- DEFINITION OF A DISICPLE (MATT. 4:19)
- THE 4 BASIC COMPONENTS OF THE DISCIPLESHIP PROCESS
- OUR SMALL GROUP DESIGN
- THE GUIDELINES
- LIVE SENT: BEING A GOSPEL CARRIER WHENEVER WE GO

WEEK 1

THE BURNING BUSH

Exodus 3:1-15

PRAY

If this is a new group, we strongly encourage you to use the New Group Lesson.

REVIEW GROUP GUIDELINES

How we practice loving each other

FACILITATOR

- Do this each week for the first few weeks and then again whenever there is someone new or you feel your group could benefit from a review.
- Remember to keep it conversational, eventually quizzing them, “What does it mean to be self-aware?”

RECAP

FACILITATOR

- We ended last season with The Story series where we walked through Genesis to Revelation.

TELL THE STORY

Exodus 3:1-15 The Burning Bush

REMINDERS

Vision cast it if you have new people, explaining that this is an intentional process we call Storying (Story it, Rebuild it, Read it).

- With their Bibles closed and yours open, tell the story as a story.
- Have the group open their Bibles and rebuild the story.
- Have a volunteer read the story directly from the Bible to make sure nothing is missed.

THE QUESTIONS

WEEK 1

FACILITATOR

You have the freedom to come up with HEART QUESTIONS for your group, but keep in mind that these should be FROM A PLACE OF CURIOSITY AS TO WHAT GOD IS SHOWING THEM, rather than a desire to teach them something.

SUGGESTIONS

Please don't try to cover all of these. Pick the one/s that God is leading you to ask your specific group.

- What is your response when God calls you?
- What fears hold you back from answering the call of God?
- Is there something that God is calling you to currently? What's your first step?

THE NEXT STORY

JOSHUA 1:1-9 BE STRONG AND COURAGEOUS

FACILITATOR

- Encourage the group to read the story at least once before next week.
- Unless you have just branched, **ASK IF ANYONE WILL VOLUNTEER TO TELL THE NEXT WEEK'S STORY.** Encourage and remind them that it's just telling the story, not memorizing it. Hopefully your apprentice is telling many of the stories by now, but periodically, continue to ask for a volunteer to tell the next week's story. We're always encouraging and inviting people to "get in the game," take a risk, and get out of their comfort zones. That's a huge part of discipleship.

PRAYER REQUESTS

FACILITATOR

WEEK 1

- Encourage the group to keep it personal and brief, allowing others time to share their praises and requests.
- Explain that they are invited to share if God has put something on their heart, but they don't
- have to have something to share every week.

PRAY

WEEK 2

BE STRONG AND COURAGEOUS

JOSHUA 1:1-9

PRAY

REVIEW GROUP GROUND RULES

How we practice loving each other

FACILITATOR

- Do this each week for the first few weeks and then again whenever there is someone new or you feel your group could benefit from a review.
- Remember to keep it conversational, eventually quizzing them, “What does it mean to be self-aware?”

TELL THE STORY

JOSHUA 1:1-9 BE STRONG AND COURAGEOUS

REMINDERS

Vision cast it if you have new people, explaining that this is an intentional process we call Storying (Story it, Rebuild it, Read it).

- With their Bibles closed and yours open, tell the story as a story.
- Have the group open their Bibles and rebuild the story.
- Have a volunteer read the story directly from the Bible to make sure nothing is missed.

WEEK 2

THE QUESTIONS

FACILITATOR

You have the freedom to come up with HEART QUESTIONS for your group, but keep in mind that these should be FROM A PLACE OF CURIOSITY AS TO WHAT GOD IS SHOWING THEM, rather than a desire to teach them something.

SUGGESTIONS

Please don't try to cover all of these. Pick the one/s that God is leading you to ask your specific group.

- What does it look like for you to be strong and courageous currently in your life?
- Is there an area of your life where God is calling you to be strong and courageous?
- What would change in your life if you leaned on God for your strength and not yourself or something else?

THE NEXT STORY

Daniel 6-1-28

Daniel and the lion's den

FACILITATOR

- Encourage the group to read the story at least once before next week.
- Unless you have just branched, **ASK IF ANYONE WILL VOLUNTEER TO TELL THE NEXT WEEK'S STORY.** Encourage and remind them that it's just telling the story, not memorizing it. Hopefully your apprentice is telling many of the stories by now, but periodically, continue to ask for a volunteer to tell the next week's story. We're always encouraging and inviting people to "get in the game," take a risk, and get out of their comfort zones. That's a huge part of discipleship.

WEEK 2

PRAYER REQUESTS

FACILITATOR

- Encourage the group to keep it personal and brief, allowing others time to share their praises and requests.
- Explain that they are invited to share if God has put something on their heart, but they don't have to have something to share every week.

PRAY

WEEK 3

DANIEL AND THE LION'S DEN

DANIEL 6:1-28

PRAY

REVIEW GROUP GROUND RULES

How we practice loving each other

FACILITATOR

- Do this each week for the first few weeks and then again whenever there is someone new or you feel your group could benefit from a review.
- Remember to keep it conversational, eventually quizzing them, "What does it mean to be self-aware?"

RECAP

FACILITATOR

- Our last story was about Joshua and his charge to "Be strong and courageous."
- What's something that you took away from that story, something that stands out or you had to "chew on" this week.

TELL THE STORY

Daniel 6:1-28 Daniel and the lion's den

REMINDERS

Vision cast it if you have new people, explaining that this is an intentional process we call Storying (Story it, Rebuild it, Read it).

- With their Bibles closed and yours open, tell the story as a story.
- Have the group open their Bibles and rebuild the story.
- Have a volunteer read the story directly from the Bible to make sure nothing is missed.

THE QUESTIONS

WEEK 3

FACILITATOR

You have the freedom to come up with HEART QUESTIONS for your group, but keep in mind that these should be FROM A PLACE OF CURIOSITY AS TO WHAT GOD IS SHOWING THEM, rather than a desire to teach them something.

SUGGESTIONS

Please don't try to cover all of these. Pick the one/s that God is leading you to ask your specific group.

- How are you doing with spending time alone with Jesus? What can you celebrate OR What gets in the way?
- Is there something you are asking God to rescue you from?
- Looking back on your life, when was a time that you can celebrate God rescuing you from a difficult or painful situation?

THE NEXT STORY

Matthew 27:11-26 **Jesus loving Barabbas**

FACILITATOR

- Encourage the group to read the story at least once before next week.
- Unless you have just branched, **ASK IF ANYONE WILL VOLUNTEER TO TELL THE NEXT WEEK'S STORY**. Encourage and remind them that it's just telling the story, not memorizing it. Hopefully your apprentice is telling many of the stories by now, but periodically, continue to ask for a volunteer to tell the next week's story. We're always encouraging and inviting people to "get in the game," take a risk, and get out of their comfort zones. That's a huge part of discipleship.

PRAYER REQUESTS

FACILITATOR

WEEK 3

- Encourage the group to keep it personal and brief, allowing others time to share their praises and requests.
- Explain that they are invited to share if God has put something on their heart, but they don't have to have something to share every week.

PRAY

Consider planning a Service Project to do with your Life Group
either during the winter or spring sessions.

If you need ideas, contact:

Matt Nations (941) 266-9014 Matt@RiversideChurch.org

WEEK 4

JESUS LOVING BARABBAS

MATHEW 27:11-26

PRAY

REVIEW GROUP GROUND RULES

How we practice loving each other

FACILITATOR

- Do this each week for the first few weeks and then again whenever there is someone new or you feel your group could benefit from a review.
- Remember to keep it conversational, eventually quizzing them, “What does it mean to be self-aware?”

RECAP

FACILITATOR

- Our last story was about Daniel and the Lion’s Den.
- What’s something that you took away from that story, something that stands out or you had to “chew on” this week?

TELL THE STORY

MATTHEW 27:11-26 JESUS LOVING BARABBAS

REMINDERS

Vision cast it if you have new people, explaining that this is an intentional process we call Storying (Story it, Rebuild it, Read it).

- With their Bibles closed and yours open, tell the story as a story.
- Have the group open their Bibles and rebuild the story.
- Have a volunteer read the story directly from the Bible to make sure nothing is missed.

**Here is a great video to watch as a Life Group before you dive into the sharing time! This will spark some great conversation as it is a very powerful video!

[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=RWX_EPNR4CA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RWX_EPNR4CA)

WEEK 4

THE QUESTIONS

FACILITATOR

You have the freedom to come up with HEART QUESTIONS for your group, but keep in mind that these should be FROM A PLACE OF CURIOSITY AS TO WHAT GOD IS SHOWING THEM, rather than a desire to teach them something.

SUGGESTIONS

Please don't try to cover all of these. Pick the one/s that God is leading you to ask your specific group.

- How do you respond when being mocked or attacked?
- Jesus went to the cross for the good, the bad and the ugly in our lives, what are you struggling to let God take and accept grace for?
- How does it encourage you to know Jesus willingly died for you (Barabbas)?

THE NEXT STORY

LUKE 5:1-11 DROPPING THE NETS

FACILITATOR

- Encourage the group to read the story at least once before next week.
- Unless you have just branched, **ASK IF ANYONE WILL VOLUNTEER TO TELL THE NEXT WEEK'S STORY.** Encourage and remind them that it's just telling the story, not memorizing it. Hopefully your apprentice is telling many of the stories by now, but periodically, continue to ask for a volunteer to tell the next week's story. We're always encouraging and inviting people to "get in the game," take a risk, and get out of their comfort zones. That's a huge part of discipleship.

If you haven't already, plan your Group Social or Service Project for week 6. This is a time to have fun and get to know your group better. Encourage others to invite someone new, someone who might otherwise feel a bit intimidated.

GROUP SOCIAL SUGGESTIONS:

BBQ	Progressive Dinner	Game Night	Group worship & fellowship
Bowling	Dessert Buffet	Beach Day	Campfire and s'mores
Potluck	Boating	Nature Hike	Pool Party

SERVICE PROJECT: For ideas, contact Matt Nations (941) 266-9014 Matt@RiversideChurch.org

WEEK 4

PRAYER REQUESTS

FACILITATOR

- Encourage the group to keep it personal and brief, allowing others time to share their praises and requests.
- Explain that they are invited to share if God has put something on their heart, but they don't have to have something to share every week.

PRAY

WEEK 5

DROPPING THE NETS

LUKE 5:1-11

PRAY

REVIEW GROUP GROUND RULES

How we practice loving each other

FACILITATOR

- Do this each week for the first few weeks and then again whenever there is someone new or you feel your group could benefit from a review.
- Remember to keep it conversational, eventually quizzing them, “What does it mean to be self-aware?”

RECAP

FACILITATOR

- Our last story was about the Jesus loving Barabbas.
- What’s something that you took away from that story, something that stands out or you had to “chew on” this week?

TELL THE STORY

Luke 5:1-11 Dropping the Nets

REMINDERS

Vision cast it if you have new people, explaining that this is an intentional process we call Storying (Story it, Rebuild it, Read it).

- With their Bibles closed and yours open, tell the story as a story.
- Have the group open their Bibles and rebuild the story.
- Have a volunteer read the story directly from the Bible to make sure nothing is missed.

THE QUESTIONS

WEEK 5

FACILITATOR

You have the freedom to come up with HEART QUESTIONS for your group, but keep in mind that these should be FROM A PLACE OF CURIOSITY AS TO WHAT GOD IS SHOWING THEM, rather than a desire to teach them something.

SUGGESTIONS

Please don't try to cover all of these. Pick the one/s that God is leading you to ask your specific group.

- What is your net?
- What do you need to drop in order to follow Jesus fully?
- What is your fear in fully diving in to follow Jesus?

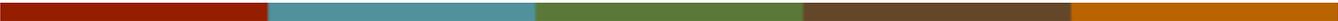
NEXT WEEK

Group Social or Service Project: Finalize your plans

PRAYER REQUESTS

FACILITATOR

- Encourage the group to keep it personal and brief, allowing others time to share their praises and requests.
- Explain that they are invited to share if God has put something on their heart, but they don't have to have something to share every week.



WEEK 5



PRAY

WEEK 6

GROUP SOCIAL (OR SERVICE PROJECT)

GROUP SOCIAL

This is a time to have fun and get to know your group better. Encourage others to invite someone new, someone who might otherwise feel a bit intimidated. If you haven't done so recently, this is also a good time to briefly vision cast.

SUGGESTIONS:

BBQ	Progressive Dinner	Game Night	Group worship & fellowship
Bowling	Dessert Buffet	Beach Day	Campfire and s'mores
Potluck	Boating	Nature Hike	Pool Party

THE NEXT STORY

ACTS 3:1-10 Healing outside the temple

FACILITATOR

- Encourage the group to read the story at least once before next week.
- Unless you have just branched, **ASK IF ANYONE WILL VOLUNTEER TO TELL THE NEXT WEEK'S STORY.** Encourage and remind them that it's just telling the story, not memorizing it. Hopefully your apprentice is telling many of the stories by now, but periodically, continue to ask for a volunteer to tell the next week's story. We're always encouraging and inviting people to "get in the game," take a risk, and get out of their comfort zones. That's a huge part of discipleship.

WEEK 6

PRAYER REQUESTS

FACILITATOR

- Encourage the group to keep it personal and brief, allowing others time to share their praises and requests.
- Explain that they are invited to share if God has put something on their heart, but they don't have to have something to share every week.

PRAY

WEEK 7

HEALING OUTSIDE THE TEMPLE

ACTS 3:1-10

PRAY

REVIEW GROUP GROUND RULES

How we practice loving each other

FACILITATOR

- Do this each week for the first few weeks and then again whenever there is someone new or you feel your group could benefit from a review.
- Remember to keep it conversational, eventually quizzing them, “What does it mean to be self-aware?”

TELL THE STORY

ACTS 3:1-10 HEALING OUTSIDE THE TEMPLE

REMINDERS

Vision cast it if you have new people, explaining that this is an intentional process we call Storying (Story it, Rebuild it, Read it).

- With their Bibles closed and yours open, tell the story as a story.
- Have the group open their Bibles and rebuild the story.
- Have a volunteer read the story directly from the Bible to make sure nothing is missed.

WEEK 7

THE QUESTIONS

FACILITATOR

You have the freedom to come up with HEART QUESTIONS for your group, but keep in mind that these should be FROM A PLACE OF CURIOSITY AS TO WHAT GOD IS SHOWING THEM, rather than a desire to teach them something.

SUGGESTIONS

Please don't try to cover all of these. Pick the one/s that God is leading you to ask your specific group.

- Do you see the power of God as something you carry around daily? Why or why not?
- Is there a time you can celebrate being healed?
- Do you tend to see spiritual needs or physical needs first? Why?

THE NEXT STORY

ACTS 16:25-34 PAUL IN JAIL

FACILITATOR

- Encourage the group to read the story at least once before next week.
- Unless you have just branched, **ASK IF ANYONE WILL VOLUNTEER TO TELL THE NEXT WEEK'S STORY.** Encourage and remind them that it's just telling the story, not memorizing it. Hopefully your apprentice is telling many of the stories by now, but periodically, continue to ask for a volunteer to tell the next week's story. We're always encouraging and inviting people to "get in the game," take a risk, and get out of their comfort zones. That's a huge part of discipleship.

WEEK 7

PRAYER REQUESTS

FACILITATOR

- Encourage the group to keep it personal and brief, allowing others time to share their praises and requests.
- Explain that they are invited to share if God has put something on their heart, but they don't have to have something to share every week.

PRAY

WEEK 8

PAUL IN JAIL

ACTS 16:25-34

PRAY

REVIEW GROUP GROUND RULES

How we practice loving each other

FACILITATOR

- Do this each week for the first few weeks and then again whenever there is someone new or you feel your group could benefit from a review.
- Remember to keep it conversational, eventually quizzing them, “What does it mean to be self-aware?”

RECAP

FACILITATOR

- Our last story was about the Healing outside the Temple in Acts.
- What’s something that you took away from that story, something that stands out or you had to “chew on” this week?

TELL THE STORY

ACTS 16:25-34

Paul In Jail

REMINDERS

Vision cast it if you have new people, explaining that this is an intentional process we call Storying (Story it, Rebuild it, Read it).

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THE QUESTIONS

WEEK 8

FACILITATOR

You have the freedom to come up with HEART QUESTIONS for your group, but keep in mind that these should be FROM A PLACE OF CURIOSITY AS TO WHAT GOD IS SHOWING THEM, rather than a desire to teach them something.

SUGGESTIONS

Please don't try to cover all of these. Pick the one/s that God is leading you to ask your specific group.

- Are you aware of who is around you that you may be influencing? How can you be more intentional with the platform God has given you? (At work, school, kid's sports teams, church, etc.)
- Does your walk with the Lord spark curiosity about Jesus? Why or why not? What is the fear that holds you back?

NEXT WEEK – TELL YOUR STORY

PRAYER REQUESTS

FACILITATOR

WEEK 8

- Encourage the group to keep it personal and brief, allowing others time to share their praises and requests.
- Explain that they are invited to share if God has put something on their heart, but they don't have to have something to share every week.

PRAY

WEEK 9

SHARE THE GOSPEL OR TELL YOUR STORY

PRAY

FACILITATOR

- Invite others to open or close the group in prayer.

REVIEW GROUP GROUND RULES

How we practice loving each other

FACILITATOR

- Do this each week for the first few weeks and then again whenever there is someone new or you feel your group could benefit from a review.
- Remember to keep it conversational, eventually quizzing them, “What does it mean to be self-aware?”

TELL YOUR STORY

FACILITATOR

- Explain that you’ll take about 15-20 minutes to share highlights of your own lives: the key things that shaped you and brought you to where you are and who you are today—**the ways God has been working in your lives.**
- If you have not done this before in your group, model by going first.
- Ask for volunteers.
- Depending on the dynamics of the group, sometimes it’s fun to let the person who tells a story pick the next “volunteer.” Be careful not to pressure someone to tell their story, though.

Why tell our stories?

It gives us the opportunity to share who we are, where we’ve come from, and how God is working and has worked in our lives over the years. It gives us compassion and understanding for others, allowing us to more easily extend grace and care for each other. This is part of how we become “family.”

WEEK 9

NEXT WEEK

SHARE THE GOSPEL WITH EACH OTHER

Practice what you learned at the Gospel Conference

OR

TELL YOUR OWN STORY

FACILITATOR

- Explain that you'll take about 15-20 minutes to share highlights of your own lives: the key things that shaped you and brought you to where you are and who you are today—**the ways God has been working in your lives.**
- If you have not done this before in your group, model by going first.
- Ask for volunteers.
- Depending on the dynamics of the group, sometimes it's fun to let the person who tells a story pick the next "volunteer." Be careful not to pressure someone to tell their story, though.

How do you tell your own story? Here are some great helps:

<http://evangelism.intervarsity.org/how/conversation/30-minutes-shareable-testimony>

<http://www.relevantmagazine.com/god/what-we-get-wrong-about-giving-our-testimony>

<http://rickwarren.org/devotional/english/share-your-testimony-of-gratitude>

<http://www.cru.org/train-and-grow/how-to-tell-your-story-worksheet.html>

Why if I've already told "My Story?"

Tell another. Our lives are full of stories, and many of them include how faithful God has been despite our weaknesses, fears, and doubts. Many include God rescuing us from our circumstances, ignorance, or rebellion. Share about God's healing touch, abundant grace, extravagant love, and forgiveness. Share about a time when God move profoundly in your life. Tell it as a story, God's redemptive story working in your own life to change you.

WEEK 9

PRAYER REQUESTS

FACILITATOR

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PRAY

WEEK 10

SHARE THE GOSPEL OR TELL YOUR STORY

PRAY

FACILITATOR

- Invite others to open or close the group in prayer.

REVIEW GROUP GROUND RULES

How we practice loving each other

FACILITATOR

- Do this each week for the first few weeks and then again whenever there is someone new or you feel your group could benefit from a review.
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TELL YOUR STORY

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PRAY

The Fall Story Set will be ready on September 3rd.