

THE ONE

Week 1 Leader Guide

THE WIN

The group member will demonstrate understanding of their own identity in Christ and responsibility to the lost as a Christ-follower by describing and explaining the perspectives of The One.

SERMON RECAP: WHAT DID THE TEXT MEAN? WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

The sermon this week described how accessible Jesus was to everyone around Him. People are drawn to Jesus and Jesus loved being with people who were lost to the Father. However, we also learned that Christ-followers can, at time, have a difficult time avoiding isolating the lost. Unfortunately, it's easy to get caught up in self-righteousness when the lost doesn't act like, talk like, smell like, or look like our own preconceived idea of a Christ-follower. Instead, Christ-followers must overcome their tendency towards isolation and engage the lost.

3-5
minutes

WARM UP

Take a look at your relational circles. On a scale of 1-10, where do you have the most influence?

Relational Circle:

My family _____

My Circle _____

My recreational groups _____

Among people I don't know _____

My church community _____

My co-workers _____

My neighborhood _____

35-40
minutes

THE TEXT: WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR ME?

HAVE SOMEONE READ:

Matthew 28:18-20

Leader Tip: Don't forget to thank the group member for reading.

SAY THIS:

We read that Jesus commands the church to go make disciples. If we break these verses down we begin with an intense command. Go make disciples. The process of making a disciple begins, as you might imagine, with engaging someone who is not yet a disciple. For example, Joe doesn't know Jesus as Lord and Savior. This means we must share the good news of Jesus with Joe and pray the Holy Spirit of God will convict him of his sin and then if it is in the Lord's Will, Joe will come to a saving faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior. Until this happens, Joe cannot become a disciple and we have not been faithful to Jesus' command in Matthew 28:18-20.

ASK THIS:

Sounds easy right? Wrong. Let's face it. At times, when we begin praying for our "Joe" it's easy to pray for him but difficult to spend time and invest in him. Right? Why do you think that is?

Leader Tip: You're looking for answers that center around "Joe doesn't talk like us. Think like us. Live like us. Smell or dress like us. That makes us uncomfortable because we don't want to offend Joe and tell him he's wrong or that we just don't do those things."

- Knowing what you know about Jesus and his view on people like Joe, how should we address our feelings of difficulty to spend time and invest in the lost?
- What struggles do you face when trying to fight against selfishness?

SAY THIS:

I think in our culture it's easy to feel that it's okay to isolate ourselves from the lost unless they are directly involved in our everyday life. I mean, we're busy. We live in a busy society. Accomplishment is a good thing. We are to work as unto the Lord...so a question I want to pose is "Are we off the hook in reaching the lost, The One, just because we're busy?"

ASK THIS:

Maybe we can quickly agree that we're not off the hook and we need to reprioritize our life to reach The One. That's an easy conclusion though. I wonder if we don't intentionally invest and go after The One because we feel we're better than them and we don't want to mess up our own world. After all, when we pursue those who are far from God we can expect them to act ungodly, and that can be messy.

- So, how would you defend yourself if someone accused you of ignoring The One because you think you're better than they are and like your world the way it is?

SAY THIS:

I know these questions are intense and personal but if you consider that eternity is at stake, we cannot avoid these questions. I know natural feelings of defensiveness maybe be welled up inside of you after addressing these questions. So, I'd like for us to watch this 8-minute video and get some perspective on our own efforts to keep our daily lives mess-free and Jesus' role in purchasing our freedom.

Leader Tip: Please make sure you have some Kleenex available. The video may be quite emotional for some group members. Watch the ENTIRE video.

https://youtu.be/RwX_EpNR4CA

ASK THIS:

- What emotions do you feel right now?

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- How often do you think we forget what it took for Jesus to purchase our freedom and offer us forgiveness?

Let's take the next 2 minutes and go around the circle: Think back to when you were lost and didn't know Jesus.

- If Jesus avoided you because you didn't look like, act like, smell like, talk like, or live like He did, where would you be today?

Leader Tip: Make sure to gently press group members to answer. Don't let people escape by avoiding eye contact.

SAY THIS:

Jesus' sacrifice should cause gratitude to fill our hearts and spur us on to reaching those who were just as we were.

HAVE SOMEONE READ:

1 Corinthians 6:9-11

ASK THIS:

- Did you notice the past tense used in v. 11b some of you "were?"
- If we follow Paul's thinking, what is Paul trying to communicate?

SAY THIS:

The Scripture is clear, we were once just as the lost, and there should be nothing preventing us from chasing after them to share the Gospel. Let's watch 1 final video that describes things in a different way.

Leader Tip: Don't let the conversation drift to world religions, but rather stay focused on the general state of people far from God where we live, work, and play. Watch the ENTIRE video.

<https://youtu.be/vrBEfcgbK2U>

How often do you view yourself as a beggar pleading with someone to accept Jesus?
Does viewing yourself as a beggar help or hinder your understanding of reaching The One?

SAY THIS:

Let's go back to our opening exercise. Find the top 2 relational circles that have the highest score.

ASK THIS:

- Think about the answer to this question: What is keeping me from going after "Joe" in these circles?
- What am I willing to rearrange in order to invest in "Joe?"

CLOSE BY SAYING THIS:

At the end of the day we each must decide do we want "Joe" with us worshipping Jesus or not. The same Jesus that died for Barrabas died for you, and died for Joe.

3-5
minutes

DIGGING DEEPER

READ THIS:

As a Russian priest (1829 – 1908), Father John (Sergiev) Kronstadt first thought he wanted to be a monk in the remote areas of Siberia – but after a vision, he realized God wanted him to be a missionary right where he was – in the hustle and bustle of the big urban city of St. Petersburg. While most priests remained in the safe confines of their cathedrals, Father John would go out into the noisy, dirty, crime-ridden slums and back alleys of the city. He would find someone down and out in the gutter, sleeping off the effects of the previous night's drink and activities. Father John would cup his chin; look him in the eyes and say, ***"This is beneath your dignity. You were created to house the fullness of God."*** Wherever he went, people found new hope and optimism because they discovered, or were reminded, of who they were.¹

¹ <http://www.48days.com/are-you-living-beneath-your-dignity>
