



Intellectual **Honesty**

Evidence that demands a verdict.

Week 1: March 31 – April 6

Introduce Guests/Share Life: *How has this week been going? Good? Bad? Ugly? Things to celebrate?*

Open in Prayer: *Include any prayer needs that came up while you were sharing life together.*

Recall the Guidelines: *Ask: "What is the purpose of the guidelines?" Answer: To be relational!*

Share the Vision: *We cannot grow spiritually if we are not using what we have to help others grow spiritually. In group, we share transparently because we know it will help others do the same and grow.*

Hook Question: What would it take for you to believe that someone was a prophet sent by God?

Ask someone from your team to read or tell the following background for the story:

Today's story takes place at the beginning of Jesus's time in ministry. So early that He had not yet settled on who the twelve disciples were going to be.

Before you hear this story, you need to understand two concepts about Jewish culture. Remember, Jesus was born a Jew in His humanity and He lived among the Jewish people – God's chosen nation.

The first concept about Jewish culture is synagogues. Synagogues were places constructed for worship (much like church buildings today). Synagogues created a way for Jewish people to gather together to hear the reading of the Scripture (the Old Testament). In these meetings they would learn important truths from God's Word – including the promise of a coming Messiah who would overthrow their enemy and redeem them back to God. What they did not know is that these prophecies in Scripture spoke of Jesus.

The second concept about Jewish culture is their social statuses. Jews considered themselves to be better than others because they were God's people, children of Abraham. Within their own people, Jews considered women to be of a lower class. One of the lowest classes in Jewish culture would be a widow. So, a person of the least regard or importance to a Jew would have been a non-Jewish woman who was a widow. In today's story, Jesus uses an example from the Scriptures to remind the Jews in the synagogue that in the Old Testament God chose a non-Jewish widow to bless a prophet named Elijah and help keep him alive. The prophet left Israel to find this woman. You will see how the crowds react to this story! This is because they felt insulted by Jesus's comparison. With this, our story begins!

Tell the story from Luke 4:14-30: *Use different storytellers. Teach your group to share God's Word.*

Rebuild the story: *Group members retell the story based on what they remember.*

Read the story from Luke 4:14-30: *Ask the group to read these verses.*

Discussion Questions: learn to talk about God's Word with others...

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| Head Questions:
Quicker tempo. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What do you like or dislike about this story?• Why do you think Jesus read a passage from the Old Testament Scriptures and said it was about Him?• What does this story teach us about people?• What does this story teach us about God? |
| Heart & Hand Questions:
Slow down & wait! | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How do you think God wants you to change when it comes to the way you relate to the Bible?• What do you think God is trying to show you right now? How do you need to change?• Who could retell the story for us right here one last time? |

Thank your storyteller for sharing the Word. Ask for a volunteer storyteller for next week.

Close in prayer.



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Week 1: The Group Guidelines

Group Guidelines: Introduction

Our small group guidelines are there to create a relational environment. Relational environments are where real-life relationships can start and grow. Environments like this require transparency, authenticity, and security. Relational environments require intentional leadership.

When any one of the guidelines are violated it makes the group feel unsafe. When the group feels unsafe, they will not be transparent or authentic – effectively killing real-life relationships. So how do we prevent this from happening? The intentional leader must understand the guidelines, practice the guidelines, and lead the group to hold one another accountable to practice the guidelines.

Consider these questions...

- Which of the guidelines is hardest for you to practice?
- Which of the guidelines are you most grateful for?
- How have you personally witnessed a group becoming unsafe because the guidelines were not followed?
- What do you think small group would be like if we did not have guidelines to help us create a relational environment?

Over the next few weeks, in this coaching guide, we will take time to look more closely at several of our guidelines for group. Part of our job as intentional leaders is to understand and enforce the guidelines.

If you have questions about the guidelines, or if you are struggling to enforce a guideline in your small group, talk with your coach. They want to help you lead your group to a place where real-life relationships can form.

If you haven't been satisfied by the level of real-life relationships in your group step back and examine it. Have you been enforcing the guidelines? Have you been sharing transparently? Have you eliminated the threats that make the group unsafe?

Next week we will take a closer look at our first specific guideline!