



Week 1 (March 4-10): Lesson Guide

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

Hook Question: Who do you know that, if they died right now, they would spend forever in hell because they do not know Jesus? Tell us about your relationship with them. (Make a list of each person in your group and the names they share – this is the start of your group's IMPACT List for March.)

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

You will feel a deeper connection to today's story if you understand how emotional this story really is. It was the weekend that Jesus would die, and He knew it. He had just entered Jerusalem riding on a donkey while the people shouted and praised Him. He knew that many of those same people would be crying out for His crucifixion just a few days later. It was a somber time for Jesus. He was fully aware of why He had come, and that He must die with the sins of the world placed on Him to complete His purpose in coming. He also knew that His disciples could not fully comprehend what was about to take place. His heart was heavy. His soul was troubled. He was suffering already.

Jesus had come to die for the sins of the world, and to offer mankind a new life in Him. Throughout His ministry, He indicated that He had come first for the Jews. However, He knew that His death would bring salvation to all the nations. It is important to remember that people are divided into two primary people groups in the Bible: Jews and Gentiles or Greeks. Gentiles, or Greeks, were non-Jewish people. Jesus came for everyone. His death on the cross would offer a sufficient sacrifice to God for the sins of the whole world. Through Him, all peoples could become children of God. God would bring this about and accomplish His purposes through the suffering of Jesus. The task was just ahead. Jesus was about to endure more suffering than any person who has every lived because He would not only suffer and die in His body, but He would take the sins of the world to the grave. This is where our story begins...

Tell the story from John 12:20-33: Change up the storyteller often!

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

Read the story from John 12:20-33: Ask the group to read together.

Discuss these questions:

- What stands out to you in this story? What do you like or dislike?
- What does this story teach us about people?
- What does this story teach us about God?
- Who do you relate to in this story? Why?
- We all suffer every day. How are you suffering right now? How do you need to let God use your suffering to accomplish His purposes in your life and in the lives of others?
- Ask someone to retell this week's story one last time.

Head

Questions:
Quicker
tempo.

Heart Questions:
Slow down & wait!

Action

Pray for the names on your IMPACT List.

Recruit a storyteller for next week.



Week 1: Coaching Guide

Sharing with the Spiritually Dead

Over the past five weeks, we were reminded of the Discipleship Process – the process every disciple of Jesus encounters as they grow into Christlikeness and spiritual maturity. As we begin the new series and start into IMPACT Month, we will take four weeks to remember key truths and strategies for sharing with those who are spiritually dead. Then, during Mission Month in April, we will put those strategies to work as we reach out and share with those who don't know Jesus. We start with this reminder: the greatest need for those who are spiritually dead is for someone to *share* with them.

Not Trying to Make a Sale

The typical church member will die without leading a single person to a life-saving relationship with Jesus Christ. Disciple-making starts with sharing the gospel.

Religious groups of all kinds roam through neighborhoods, searching for converts. Their missionaries knock on doors, eager to tell us that we are lost and that we need their particular beliefs to find God. How do you feel when you open the door to one of those missionaries? Do you feel excited and eager to hear what they have to say? The first few minutes of conversation sets the tone. These missionaries work hard to steer the conversation toward a question or concern that leaves the person feeling helpless and in need of their teaching.

If you have ever had a “missionary” at your door, how did you feel? Check the boxes that apply:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Irritated | <input type="checkbox"/> Talked at, not talked to |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cared for | <input type="checkbox"/> Supported and understood |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Frustrated | <input type="checkbox"/> Suspicious |

Many people report feeling frustrated or even attacked. The word *share* communicates relationship. *Sharing* implies give and take. It also means that the person we are talking with has a choice. The disciple-maker respects a person's ability to “take it or leave it.” Unlike the person who comes to the door ready to argue and debate, we listen and discuss. We do not come to “make the sale,” “close the deal,” or “force a decision.” We trust that God is playing His role, drawing people toward relationship with Him. We are not trying to do their part or God's part, just our part.

Our part is important. It is born out of compassion and concern for their life. We realize what is at stake. The first place to respond is passionately to God in prayer. Ultimately, spiritual life never comes from us, but from Him. We will cooperate together in passionate prayer during our solemn prayer assemblies at the end of every service in March (IMPACT Month). Come ready to pray and to lead your group to pray. Ask the Lord to burden your heart, and carry that passion into prayer with others.