

transformed.

Week 1 (April 1-7): Lesson Guide

Introduce guests.

Cast vision and share guidelines. Ask: "What is the purpose of the guidelines?" Answer: To be relational!

Open in prayer.

Testimony: On week one, the group leader should share their testimony. See the coaching guide for details on sharing your testimony in group. Contact your coach for help developing your testimony.

Hook Question: Does anyone have any questions for me about my story? Would you like to know more about something I said or shared?

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

Everyone is searching for substance, for something that will bring them satisfaction. Many believe that if they had more money, more time, more energy, more stuff, more relationships, more you name it... that having more or being more would finally make them feel happy or satisfied.

We are about to hear a story about a man who had all he could ever dream of and was still not satisfied. Zacchaeus was extremely wealthy. In a society where most were living in poverty, he would have been filthy rich. As the chief tax collector, Zacchaeus had reached the top of his career, and he had spent his life collecting more and more money (often by extorting money from the weak). Yet all this collecting and advancing still left Zacchaeus wanting something more.

Enter Jesus. Jesus is God in human flesh. Jesus understands our emptiness, and He knows that we are looking for what only God can satisfy. Jesus cares for people. He cares for each one of us. Jesus has the power to transform a person's life from feeling empty and unsatisfied to being filled with joy. Zacchaeus, a seeker, was looking for more. He heard about Jesus, and he heard Jesus was coming to visit his town of Jericho. He wanted to see Jesus. This is where our story begins...

Tell the story from Luke 19:1-10: Change up the storyteller often!

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

Read the story from Luke 19:1-10: Ask the group to read together.

Discuss these questions:

- Head Questions:** Quicker tempo.
- Jesus said He came to seek and save the lost. How do you think Zacchaeus was lost?
 - What does this parable teach us about people?
 - What does this parable teach us about God?
 - How do you relate to this story?
- Heart Questions:** Slow down & wait!
- Has Jesus transformed your life like He transformed Zacchaeus? If yes, in what way? Be specific. If no, are you looking for Him like Zacchaeus? Would you like this group to help you find him right now?
- Action**
- Ask someone to retell this week's story one last time.
 - **Reminder:** There are people we all know who need to connect to Jesus and His Church. Invite them next week for our second week of *Transformed*. We will also hear _____'s testimony next week!

Recruit a storyteller for next week.

Close in prayer.

transformed.

Week 1: Coaching Guide

Testimonies in Group during Mission Month

Mission Month begins this Sunday on Easter. The theme for the month is *Transformed: Stories of Broken People Restored by God's Grace*. The audience for this theme is first and foremost the guests that we will all be working to invite to our groups in April. It is important your group gets this memo.

The curriculum outline for each group meeting will be similar, but we are adding a new element:

- Introduce guests.
- Guidelines.
- Prayer.
- **TESTIMONY.**
- Hook Question.
- Background.
- Story.
- Discussion.
- Prayer.

On week one, you, as the group leader, are tasked with the responsibility of sharing your testimony with your group. When you share your testimony, be *brutally* honest. Get *very* transparent. Show the people in your group how Jesus has *transformed* your life. **Here are the basic questions that you will need to consider and answer as you share your testimony:**

1. Who were you without Jesus and the gospel? What was your childhood like? Your years of sin? How was sin your master in your past? How did it control you?
2. Enter Jesus. When did you meet Him? What was your condition? How did you meet Him? What happened?
3. Who are you now because of Jesus? How has He transformed your life? What do you think your life would have been like without Jesus?
4. How has this group helped you grow in maturity and in your relationship with Jesus? What role has this group played in your fight for faith in Jesus and the gospel? How has Jesus been using this group to minister salvation to you on a regular basis?

Your coach is available to help you refine and develop your testimony if you need help. To effectively share your testimony, you must reflect on your past and ask God to help you understand how Jesus has transformed your life based on truth from His Word. It is out of this understanding that you will articulate your story.

After you share your story on week one, it will be your job to recruit someone to share their testimony on weeks 2, 3, and 4. As the intentional leader, you must make yourself available to help them develop their testimony, just like your coach is available to you. You need to share this page

with them, and you should ask them to share their testimony with you before they share it with the group. If part of their testimony isn't clear, you will need to coach them to share their story as clearly as possible.

This takes a little extra work. It is part of laboring in the gospel with Jesus and with one another. I urge and admonish you to not allow this part of Mission Month to fall through the cracks. Use this as an opportunity to help people in your group learn how to share their story about what Jesus has done. He has transformed our lives, and He wants to use us to tell the world about Him.

Important Tips and Reminders for Welcoming Guests:

- Start your meeting on time. Encourage your group to be on time to welcome any new guests that might attend.
- Make sure the environment is right for people when they walk in. Clean. Pleasant. Smells good. Possibly a few refreshments, or at least something to drink.
- When you introduce a guest, do your best to make it relational. Don't make them feel like they are engaging in public speaking. Just ask them questions about things like how they heard about the group, what they do, where they are from originally, their family, and if they have any background in church.
- Review the guidelines every week. If you have a guest, be sure to ask people to explain what the guidelines mean for group. Always remind people of the purpose of the guidelines.
- Keep the tempo moving. Guests don't want to be in group for two hours straight. Hook questions and head questions should move along pretty fast. Slow down for heart questions.
- Choose a great storyteller. Ask storytellers to spend time in preparation and to make the story great for guests.
- Help any group members who sign up to share their testimony be ready to share clearly.
- Add guests to your group chat so they can share life with your group throughout the week.
- When you close, ask guests if you can pray for them in any specific way.
- Follow up with guests during the week. Shoot a text thanking them for coming and asking if you can pray for them in any specific ways. If they were added to the group chat, do this in that format so your group can watch you connect the unconnected.