

SPOKEN.

WHEN WORDS CHANGE THE WORLD

Week 8 (October 25-31): Lesson Guide

Open In Prayer

Welcome/Introductions

Ask the group to recall the guidelines for discussion that we use to create a safe environment.

Ask someone to retell last week's story from Acts 19:11-20 (the exorcism gone wrong).

Ask someone on your team to read the Hook Question – Ask, “What are some words that have had a profound impact on your life? (Words of a leader, friend, enemy, book, Bible verse, etc.)”

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

Proverbs 18:21 says that death and life are in the power of the tongue, and Jesus taught in Luke 6:45 that it is out of the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaks. Words are powerful and can be used for both good and evil.

Today's story is part of the first story of the Bible. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. With His Words, God spoke forth all of creation and gave life to every living thing. When He finished, God saw everything that He made, and it was very good. Adam and Eve were the first humans, created perfectly in the image of God. They had perfect communion with God, with each other, and with all of God's creation. Sin and its consequences were absent from the world.

In the garden, God gave Adam and Eve rights to eat fruit from every plant, but God expressly asked them to not eat the fruit from the tree in the midst of the garden. God had transferred authority to Adam and Eve to rule over all the earth, but He asked them to honor His Word as God. Enter the devil. With words, Satan (disguised as a serpent) spoke deception and led Adam and Eve to doubt God and choose to ignore God's authority. Where God had spoken life and provided all they needed, Satan spoke death through deception and tempted Adam and Eve to rebel against God. This is where today's story begins...

Tell the story from Genesis 3:1-13

Rebuild the story – (Group members tell the story based on what they remember)

Read Genesis 3:1-13 – (Ask the group to read these scriptures)

SHARE THE REST OF THE STORY: “When sin entered the world, the punishments for sin entered with it. Adam and Eve lost their perfect communion with God. They would have to leave the garden. Death, pain, and hardship entered the world. The consequences for their sin was devastating, but God also showed compassion (Gen. 3:21).

Discuss these questions:

- What do you like about this story, and is there anything you dislike?
- What level of power was there in Satan's words? Where did the power of his words stop?
- What does this story teach us about people?
- What does this story teach us about God?
- What lies has Satan been trying to get you to believe?
- What has God spoken that you need to believe today?

Ask for a volunteer to retell the story one last time.

Ask for a volunteer to tell the story next week.

Prayer Requests (ask someone in the group to take notes so you can email the requests to the group)

Pray (don't feel the need to mention every request in prayer again, just pray for the group and send the email)

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Week 8: Coaching Guide

Leading [learn to facilitate your group more effectively]

- There is the way of this world and there is the kingdom way. As believers, we must learn to live out and teach others the kingdom way of living! Over the next several weeks, we will look closely at **seven essentials** for living out the kingdom way in our lives. (This specific material will be new for many of you, so keep up in your reading and talk things through with your coach!)
- **1st Essential: WE WILL ABIDE IN CHRIST**
 - Our Goal: That every person in our church family has a relationship with Jesus that transforms the way they live in the church, home, and world.
 - As group leaders, we are committed to lead our group as people who are filled up spiritually. We resolve to be kingdom warriors who live out the life of Christ through our humanity. Galatians 2:20 says it beautifully: "I have been crucified with Christ, it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life that I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me."
 - As ministry leaders, we will see ourselves and those we lead as spiritual beings first. Before we move to problem solving, goal setting, and strategy, we will seek to lead our teams to connect to the Lord through prayer and seeking a deeper understanding of God's Word, as well as connecting to one another in spiritual relationships.

Shepherding [know the sheep, feed the sheep, lead the sheep, protect the sheep]

- The believers on our team need more than a weekly group meeting to learn who they are in Christ and how to abide in Him. This is especially true of those who are still spiritually immature (see the discipleship process outlined on the discipleship wheel).
- In order to effectively make disciples of Jesus who know how to abide in Christ, we must be intentional in our training with our team. This means that the group meeting should never be seen as the end all for disciple making! The group meeting is a launching point for sharing life, growing relationships, and creating opportunities to coach those who are growing in Christ. The end goal is that each member of the body would abide in Christ and learn to teach others how to abide in Him.

Developing [grow as a disciple yourself]

Are you abiding in Christ? Let's examine two different factors concerning the idea of abiding in Christ...

- First, abiding in Christ is not primarily wrapped up in exercising spiritual disciplines. Galatians 3:2 says, "Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?"
 - It is not primarily what you do that leads to abiding in Christ! You came to Christ through the Spirit, and your will grow and abide in Christ by continued faith in the Spirit. You will never finish through human efforts what was started in you through the Spirit!
 - Abiding in Christ means understanding who you are in Christ and the new identity you have received from Him. It has nothing to do with working yourself into better standing with God.
- There is another side to this coin. Though we could never finish in our flesh what was started in the Spirit, abiding in Christ includes living out our spiritual life in our flesh. This means seeking a connection with God in both body and spirit.
 - We seek to understand the Bible because we want to live out our humanity by faith in the Spirit
 - We pray not to achieve right standing with God, but to connect with God through the Spirit
 - We grow closer to Christ in relationships through His church because we are one body in Christ and spiritual beings joined together through Him
- So while abiding in Christ can never be achieved through human works, spiritual disciplines are biblical ways for us to learn how to live out our faith through our humanity (the life that I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God).
- Essential #1 – you cannot be an effective disciple maker without abiding in Christ.