



FIRST BAPTIST ARLINGTON

# NINE FOUNDATIONAL TRUTHS

*But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.*

*1 PETER 3:15*





# Lesson 1: The Trinity

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|---------------------|---|
| Big Idea/Main Point | A correct understanding of the Trinity is essential to right worship of God.  |
| Purpose             | To help groups understand that God is three persons (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), that each is fully God, and that there is only one God. |
| Bible Passage       | 2 Corinthians 13:5-14   |

## Leader Notes

Today's lesson is about the Trinity, which is a complicated subject, but is essential to understanding our Christian faith! As you prepare for this lesson, you may be tempted to utilize images that you've seen before to explain the Trinity – like an egg, a three-leaf clover, or the separate phases of water (solid, liquid, gas). We encourage you to avoid these images as they often portray the Trinity in a way that is not in line with historic Christian teaching. For example, the three parts of an egg can be separated (shell, white, yolk), but the Trinity cannot. Water occurs in phases or modes, but the Trinity does not. In fact, one of the historic Trinitarian heresies is called, 'modalism,' or the belief that the Father, Spirit, and Son are just one thing occurring in separate phases, but this isn't what we believe. We believe the Father, Son, and Spirit are co-eternal. The historic, orthodox language to describe the Trinity is three persons, one being.

Please remember that it's important to use clear, consistent, and accurate language when talking about the Trinity.

## Opening Activity

Begin your class by letting them know that you're going to have a little 'True/False' quiz about God. Remember, the point of this quiz isn't to shame people who get the wrong answers, but to open up dialogue for renewed understanding about biblical and theological truth.

Give each participant a green paper for true and red for false. When you read the question, have them hold up the corresponding color.

OR

Have each participant hold a thumbs up for true and a thumbs down for false.

### True/False Quiz

1. The word Trinity is found in the Bible. (False)
2. There is one God. (True)
3. The Father is fully God. (True)
4. God has always existed as three persons. (True)
5. God the Son only came into existence when Mary became pregnant. (False)
6. The Son is not the Father. (True)
7. The persons of the Trinity each have distinct roles. (True)
8. God the Father died on the cross for our sin. (False)

After the quiz, encourage your class, reminding them that we're here to learn and grow together. The lesson that follows is meant to provide corrective teaching for any wrong answers that people gave.

## Teaching

### Pray

Ask God to help you teach this lesson faithfully and clearly, and ask that God be with you in this time.

### Teach

Trinity is not a Bible word. Try as you might, you'll never see the language of 'three-in-one' or 'Trinity' explicitly written in the Bible. That language came from faithful Christians who examined Scripture centuries ago, and attempted to explain a complex mystery.

As you examine 2 Corinthians 13:5-14, work through these five main ideas:

1. There is only one God. (Deut. 6:4)
2. God is three persons. (2 Cor. 13:14)

3. Each person is fully God. The Bible speaks of the Father as God (Phil. 1:2), Jesus as God (Titus 2:13), and the Holy Spirit as God (Acts 5:3-4). Emphasize that each person is fully God, not one-third of God.
4. Each person of the Trinity is different from the others. Because the Father sent the Son into the world (John 3:16), the Father cannot be the same person as the Son. Likewise, after the Son returned to the Father (John 16:10), the Father sent the Holy Spirit into the world in the Son's name (John 14:26; Acts 2:33).  
Therefore, the Holy Spirit must be distinct from the Father and the Son.
5. The three persons of the Trinity relate eternally as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Tell your class that in these verses, Paul is challenging the Christians in Corinth to live obedient lives for God's glory. Paul ends this letter with a verse that has become very well-known and is often said as a prayer in church: "May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all." Paul mentions the three persons of the Trinity in this verse; there are three whos and one what!

In this prayer, Paul is trying to show the Corinthians how important God is for their lives and relationships with one another. Explain to your class that in this verse we see something of the distinct roles of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Paul first identifies Jesus, God the Son, as the one who displays God's grace clearly in his life and death. Grace is kindness shown to someone who does not deserve it. Jesus Christ is the person of the Trinity who reveals God's grace to us. Remind them that God shows sinners great grace by allowing the Lord Jesus to take the punishment for sin that was due to them. Those who've experienced such grace should show grace to others.

Paul then prays that the Corinthians would know the love of God the Father. Paul is describing the love of a Father that is known by those who have been brought into a relationship with him through the sacrificial death of Jesus. Highlight to your class that as those who know the great love of God as Father and those who are made in his image, they should be characterized by love.

Finally, Paul prays that the Corinthians would know the fellowship of God the Holy Spirit. Explain to your class that it is the Spirit who brings sinners into friendship with God and into friendship with one another.

Finish by telling the group that the experience of grace, love, and friendship is the result of being in a relationship with God. The triune God exists in three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Each one demonstrates for us a certain characteristic in this verse. Jesus shows us the grace of God. The Father shows us love. The Holy Spirit draws us into fellowship. These three are one.

## Discussion Questions

- Why do we believe this doctrine if the word Trinity isn't used in the Bible?
- How does an understanding of the Trinity shape your life?
- What does it mean that persons of the Trinity related eternally as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

## Closing Reminders

1. There is only one God.
2. The Father is God.
3. The Son is God.
4. The Holy Spirit is God.
5. The Father is not the Son.
6. The Son is not the Holy Spirit.
7. The Holy Spirit is not the Father.

## Activity

- Use the white board to write out the roles and distinctions of each person in the Trinity.

## Closing Prayer

## Lesson 2: Christ Our Redeemer

**Big Idea/Main Point** Christ died willingly in our place to deliver us from the power and penalty of sin and redeem our relationship with God. Christ paid this price because he is the only one worthy and capable of being our Redeemer.

**Purpose** To help groups understand that Jesus Christ alone is the Redeemer of sin, and that redemption is possible only through the substitutionary death of Jesus.

**Bible Passage** 1 Timothy 2:1-7; Colossians 1:15-23

### Leader Notes

When people are confronted with the concept of being wrongly punished for something they did not do, they are often deeply offended. This belief makes it difficult for people to comprehend why a sinless Jesus would be punished for their wrongdoings. Helping people understand that God was pleased for his fullness to dwell in Jesus and that Jesus knew the purpose of his life and death should help them better understand the need for Jesus substitutionary atonement.

People also live in a pluralistic society where truth can be relative. This reality means that although many believe there is a God, they also believe that there are many ways to reach or know him. This lesson should help people understand that Jesus is not simply the Christian route to God, but that he is the one and only Redeemer.

### Opening Activity

Ask the class to write down on a notecard their most valuable or meaningful possession. Take up the cards and have the class imagine that their prized possession has been stolen and is being held for a ransom. Lead a discussion based on the following questions:

- How much would you be willing to pay to have the item returned?
- Why would you pay the ransom?

- What would you do if the ransom was more than you could afford?
- How would you feel if the item was never returned? Was returned?

Return the cards to the class and ask them to use them as a reminder this week of their need for redemption and that redemption is costly.

Ask the class if they have ever had to ask someone for help with something. Lead a discussion based on the following questions:

- Why do people ask for help?
- Why is it sometimes hard to ask for or accept help?
- Have you ever asked for help, but then rejected the help? Why?

Asking for help is often difficult for a variety of reasons. Often you believe you can do something on your own, sometimes you are embarrassed to admit your inability, or you simply do not like being told how to do something. Have someone read John 14:6 and ask the class why this verse might be hard for a non-believer to hear. How does our struggle with asking or accepting help possibly make it harder to believe only Jesus can provide salvation?

## Teaching

The Old Testament helps us to understand our sin rebellion and thus our need for a redeemer. Throughout the Old Testament you see the relationship between the Creator and creation described as a covenant that was broken. These covenants describe a relationship defined by law, sacrifice, and ceremony, but these sacrifices were insufficient as summed up in Romans 3:23 and 6:23. All people have sinned, the punishment for their sin is death, and any sacrifice from their hand is inadequate because of their sin.

### 1 Timothy 2:1-7

This passage helps us to see that God provided redemption through his Son, erasing the sin of creation, and restoring the relationship between the Creator and his creation.

### Read 1 Timothy 2:1-4

These verses help us to see that God desires for all to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. The verses also instruct the church that we should be concerned for all who are lost by praying and interceding for their redemption.



Ask

- Why would God desire redemption for creation?
- What are some practical ways you can be intentional about being concerned for the lost?

Read 1 Timothy 2:5-7

These verses help us to see that there is only one mediator or redeemer between God and man. These verses also show us that Jesus willingly gave himself as a ransom to free us from sin and the penalty of death. Paul reminds us that this information is so important that he was appointed to teach and spread this truth so that all might be saved.

Ask

- What makes Jesus qualified to be our Redeemer? Focus on the ideas that he was fully God, fully man, and lived a sinless life.
- Read Philippians 2:7-9 and discuss the differences between man and Jesus? Focus on his obedience, how he honored God, immaculate conception, and his humility.
- How might Jesus' humility, love, and sacrifice affect the way you live your life?
- How can we use these verses to help others understand that they need a redeemer, and that Jesus is the only one capable of fulfilling that need?
- What might you say to someone who struggles with John 14:6 now that you have studied this passage?

Colossians 1:15-23

This passage will help us to see that our Redeemer, Jesus, is supreme over all creation. The supremacy of Jesus is illustrated through the truth that everything was created by him and because of this fact and his supremacy, all creation can be redeemed by him. These verses also reveal that even though God did not have to provide redemption, he provided Jesus out of his love, see also John 3:16.

Read Colossians 1:15-18

These verses focus on expounding about the supremacy of Christ. This passage uses ideas such as "image of God", "firstborn", "creator of all things", "before all things", "all things hold together through him", "head of the church", and "firstborn among the

dead” to illustrate Christ’s supremacy. Each of these ideas point to what separates Christ from man and makes him the only truly worthy redeemer.

Ask

- How do these verses give you the confidence to trust Jesus as your redeemer?
- How would you explain the supremacy of Jesus to someone who has no church background?

Colossians 1:19-20

This passage focuses on God being pleased. He was pleased for Jesus to be fully God and for Jesus to be a substitutionary sacrifice for all creation.

Ask

- Discuss what it means for God to be pleased in this passage. Why would he be pleased? Was he pleased because it was part of his plan? Was he pleased in his son? Was he pleased to have a restored relationship with his creation?
- Read Mark 10:45. How would you help someone understand that Jesus willingly took the punishment you deserved?
- Do you think people understand the depth of the sacrifice Jesus made? Spend a few minutes discussing as a group how you might explain what Jesus was willing to do for you.

Read Colossians 1:21-23

This passage reminds us of our need for a redeemer, what the redeemer did, and how redemption has changed creation. The verses finish with an expectation that the redeemed would continue in the faith found in the gospel.

Ask

- Spend a few minutes discussing what creation has done to alienate itself from God. What does alienation from God mean? How does it affect our life?
- What does our new, redeemed life look like? How does it compare to our old life?
- How do we continue to live out our faith found in the gospel?
- How does this passage challenge us to live differently?

## Closing Prayer

As you close in prayer, ask God to give you opportunity, conviction, and words to share with someone about our need for a redeemer and why Jesus is the only one worthy of being our redeemer. Pray this lesson would help you better understand the magnitude of what Jesus did on your behalf and that knowledge would help you live The Jesus Way.

## Lesson 3: How Does the Holy Spirit Help Us?

**Big Idea/Main Point** God the Holy Spirit is at work in his people convicting them of sin, helping them understand and apply God's Word, and helping them pray.

**Purpose** To help groups understand how the Holy Spirit helps Christians in everyday life.

**Bible Passage** Ephesians 6:10-20

### Leader's Notes

The individuals in your group will understand that various people in their lives play different roles. They regularly see people such as parents, bosses, and doctors perform their particular duties and responsibilities. This lesson should help everyone understand the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of a Christian and illuminate the kind of work that the Holy Spirit does in equipping, enabling, nurturing, and teaching God's people.

Here are a few things to keep in mind as you prepare and teach:

- Many of your group members may already have a good grasp of who the Holy Spirit is and what his role is. Try to stretch them while also being sensitive to those who are struggling to comprehend.
- Remember that some have a personal faith and others do not. Be sure to communicate that the indwelling of the Spirit occurs at the moment of conversion.

### Opening Activity

On the white board, create three titled sections: Teacher, Parent, and Coach. On sticky notes or painters' tape, write out the following 15 phrases (adjust accordingly based on the number of people in your group, ensuring that everyone is able to participate).

1. Teaching children to read
2. Organizing school events
3. Develop classroom strategies
4. Planning lessons
5. Training players
6. Developing ball skills
7. Teaching team members how to be good sports
8. Giving pointers on how to score
9. Planning match tactics
10. Providing pregame nutritional advice
11. Doing the laundry
12. Cooking meals
13. Teaching children to serve others
14. Comforting children when they have a bad dream
15. Keeping the family safe

Pass the phrases out to the class and allow them to place them on the white board under the section where their action is most consistent with the role. The goal is to connect the idea of roles and responsibilities with a job title.

Ask

Were there any actions that were challenging to place?

Ask

How does seeing these roles and responsibilities compare to what we've talked about with the roles of God the Father, God the Son, and now God the Holy Spirit?

## Teaching

Begin the teaching time with prayer.

God the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity. He has a vital role in bringing people to faith in God and also in helping God's people to live for him in the world. The Holy Spirit indwells Christian believers the moment they put their trust in Jesus, and from that time onward he is at work in Christians, helping them to understand more about Jesus and to become more like Jesus.



## Activity

Ask your group to divide into small groups (2-4 people) and assign them each one of the following verses. Depending on the size of your group, you can give each small group more than one passage, or you can give multiple groups the same passage.

John 14:16

John 14:27

John 15:26

John 16:7-8

John 16:13

Romans 8:11

Romans 8:26

Give the group a few minutes to read through their passage and discuss together what that passage shares about the role of the Holy Spirit. Once everyone has had sufficient time to discuss, ask each small group to share with the large group what they read and what it means about the Holy Spirit's role. Write on the whiteboard each role of the Spirit that the passages highlight.

Ask

Was anything confusing or surprising to you?

Review for the group all the different things that were detailed on the Holy Spirit's job description from the passages, emphasizing how significant he is for Christians. Remind the group that the Holy Spirit convicts people of their sin, helps Christians to pray, and helps them understand the Bible.

Read Ephesians 6:10-20

<sup>10</sup> Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. <sup>11</sup> Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. <sup>12</sup> For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. <sup>13</sup> Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. <sup>14</sup> Stand

firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place,<sup>15</sup> and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.<sup>16</sup> In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.<sup>17</sup> Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

<sup>18</sup> And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.<sup>19</sup> Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel,<sup>20</sup> for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

In this passage, Paul is writing to the Christians in Ephesus and is preparing them to contend for Jesus in the world. He uses the imagery of Roman armor to help them understand how to equip themselves for a war against the Devil, who works to keep people away from Jesus. Paul writes about putting on the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes of peace, the shield of faith, and the helmet of salvation.

Ask

- How do each of these pieces that Paul describes protect us from spiritual attacks?
- Paul also speaks about taking up the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. This is the only weapon Paul identifies as necessary for facing the battle. Why do you think it's the only weapon listed?
- What is a sword capable of?
- What do you think Paul is saying by describing the Bible as the sword of the Spirit?

Read Hebrews 4:12

For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

Ask

How does this passage describe the Bible?

Read 2 Peter 1:20-21

<sup>20</sup> Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things. <sup>21</sup> For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

Ask

What does this passage tell us about the source of scripture?

The sword of the Spirit comes from God. God's Word protects Christians from spiritual attacks as they study it and believe God's promises. It cuts away the truth from the lies told by the world.

Ask

How has God's Word protected you from the lies of the world?

Paul also commands the Ephesian Christians to pray in the Spirit. This is a great reminder that the Holy Spirit is an essential component of a Christian's prayer life. To pray in the Spirit means to pray in a way that is consistent with God's Word.

Ask

- What are ways that people might pray that are not consistent with God's Word?
- What are examples of ways to pray in line with God's Word?

We know that the Holy Spirit lives in each Christian and that he also prays for each Christian. God knew that his people would struggle with prayers, so he didn't leave his people without help. As discussed earlier, the Holy Spirit intercedes on our behalf when we don't know what to pray (Romans 8:26).

Ask

In what ways is the intercession of the Spirit especially powerful?

God sent the Holy Spirit to teach, encourage, and expose the hearts and minds of Christians. He leads, instructs, and inspires the prayers of Christians.

## Discussion Questions

During this time, you can think through the questions as a large group or break into small groups to discuss these questions more in depth.

- Why do I need the help of the Holy Spirit?
- What is the difference between the Holy Spirit and my conscience?
- What does it mean to you knowing that the Spirit aids you in prayer?
- Why do I need to pray if the Holy Spirit is praying for me?
- Can you remember a time that the Spirit convicted you of sin? Helped you understand a biblical truth? Helped you pray?

## Closing Prayer

Invite a volunteer to lead the group in prayer, asking God to use his Holy Spirit to convict us of sin, to help us pray, and to make us more honest and loving, even when it isn't easy.

## Lesson 4: Creation of Humanity/Sin

**Big Idea/Main Point** Humans are created by a loving God with purpose. However, they have been separated from this Creator by their sin.

**Purpose** To help Christians understand God's distinction, care and purpose when he created them; and to understand the sin that disconnects them from God's original intent.

**Bible Passage** Genesis 1:26-31; 1 John 3:4-10

### Leader Notes

These two topics may seem like “no brainers” when discussing in church, but people who have not grown up with these truths may not know how to articulate them. Take care to present them afresh and help your class to take them seriously for the life-changing truths that they are: They are purposefully created by a God who loves them (vs. a cultural norm that says we are created by accident or statistical anomaly). Yet, their own sin keeps them from right relationship. (Again, we exist in a culture that does not want to acknowledge the idea of sin and absolute truth at all!) Indeed, this is an important Sunday!

### Opening Activity

- Ask your class to make a list of qualities that make humans distinct from the rest of creation.
  - (Examples include: our ability to reason, to have dominion over an environment, moral conscience, etc.)
- Now, ask the class to get their phone out and read some of the headlines in their go-to news apps. How quickly do they see people engaging in lawlessness?

### Teaching

Begin this time with a prayer asking for God's help, and that this lesson would be taught faithfully and all might learn and be formed into more faithful Jesus-followers.



Humanity:

Introduce the idea of human creation by acknowledging that there are many people in the world today who do not believe in God and therefore do not believe that humans were created but rather developed accidentally over a long period of time. This obviously stands in contrast that human beings were created by God, the Creator of all things.

Ask the class to discuss the difference between thinking that you are alive because of a random development and knowing that you were created by a loving and good God. Ask them how this makes a difference in how one views their worth, value and purpose in life.

The Scriptures clearly tell us that God made humanity not because he was lonely or needed help, but because he is loving and relational. He didn't need people, but chose to create and use people as part of his plan for his world.

Read Genesis 1:26-27

Explain that in the Ancient Near East, a king would often set up an image or statue of himself to show his rule over an area. This image would communicate that the king was in charge of the land.

Genesis 1:26-27 declares that God made humans in his image and placed them in his world to rule over all other created things. Humans were given authority by God to rule over all the earth.

Humans are the pinnacle of God's creation, not mere accidents. Nothing else was created in God's image! This means that we will be like God in many ways – as God's representatives on earth, we will reflect his image. Some of those ways are by being:

- Creative: God is creative. He instructed Adam and Eve in Genesis 1:28 to use their creativity to rule over creation.
- Communicative: God is a God who speaks and wants to communicate, so we are too made to communicate.

- Relational: God is in perfect relationship as the Trinity, and being made in his image means that we are relational too. Ultimately we are made for relationship with God.
- Loving: God's purpose in creating human beings was love, and so we are called to live and rule showing God's loving character to the world.

Sin:

Explain to the class that although we were created to be in relationship and bear God's image, our sin has marred that relationship.

Romans 3:23 says that "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Explain that sin is "missing the mark" that God has set for our lives. When we fail to live in the way that God intended us to, we break his law and our sin separates us from God. Breaking God's law leads to sadness and destruction.

Read 1 John 3:4-10.

John reminds those he's writing to that every time they sin, they are breaking God's law. Sin is a conscious decision to choose to do things your own way instead of God's way. It says "I know best" instead of "God knows best". Challenge your class to think to themselves about ways they are living like this right now.

Remind the class that, as John said, we do not have to be separated from God by sin or face death and destruction because of sin. Only Jesus, the only sinless man to ever live, can deal with our sin. He submitted to God in every way - in thought and deed, and because of this perfection, he is the only one who can restore our relationship to our Creator God and bear our punishment.

## Activity

Invite someone to share their testimony about either topic today - perhaps an experience finding their purpose they were created for. Or someone overcoming sin and experiencing restoration and forgiveness.

## Discussion Questions

- Can we really believe that human beings were created by God?
- How did God actually make people?
- Are some sins worse than others?
- Personal Reflection / Challenge: How can you reflect God's image in the world?
- Personal Reflection / Challenge: In what ways are you striving to flee from sin and live in forgiveness?

## Closing Prayer

Give thanks to God for creating you and ask that God might help you glorify him. Ask that God help you grow in understanding that you are immeasurably precious in the eyes of the Lord. Also thank God for his forgiveness for your sins. Ask that in light of these truths, that he might help you show love more and more in his image!

## Lesson 5: How can we be saved?

**Big Idea/Main Point** “Apart from Jesus Christ we are incapable of doing anything to attain salvation!”

**Purpose** To bring a comprehensive understanding to the doctrine of salvation and reiterate that Jesus Christ is the only way through which a person can be saved. Through the justification of our faith in Jesus Christ, God by means of grace forgives us of our sins.

**Bible Passage** Ephesians 2:1-10

### Leader Notes

We are living at a time when due to the emergence of technology and social media, spiritual pollution has become prevalent in the Christian faith. In this society of pluralism we are living in, the question of a person’s salvation, and if Jesus alone is enough is now more blurred than before. It is therefore paramount that they are reminded that no amount of works of service, moral good, or personal holiness can attain anyone salvation outside of believing in Jesus Christ (John 14:6).

Salvation is not earned by means of personal effort or merit but by the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ. This is the gift of the cross: That Christ loved us so much that he gave up his life to die for our sins, which we deserved judgement for. Christian freedom requires a true understanding of the doctrine of salvation. Guide them to a place of understanding and revelation of what it truly means to have your identity and hope anchored in Christ for your salvation!

### Opening Discussion

Big Idea Questions:

- Have you ever done something bad and knew that you deserved to be punished, but instead did not get punished for it?
- How did you feel?

- What does the word “*justification*” mean to you?

Give your group the opportunity to reflect, think through, and share their thoughts on these three questions. Then share your own thoughts and the theological definition of what justification means (see below) after everyone has given their feedback.

At this point you can explain that in Christian theology, “*Justification is the act by which God moves a willing person from the state of sin (injustice) to the state of grace (justice)*”. (The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica).

Tell them that for today’s lesson with the help of the book of Ephesians, we are going to be learning together why it is ok for us to be confident in the Gospel as the basis of our salvation. We should be bold in believing that our salvation is found by faith alone in Jesus Christ. He is the justice of the injustice of our sins.

## Teaching

### Pray

Ask God to empower you and give you the wisdom to teach this lesson. Ask him to open the hearts and minds of your group, so that they can have a true understanding of how they can be saved in Jesus Christ alone!

### Teach

Read the Bible passage together. You can opt to read the whole passage to them yourself or opt to divide it between the group members.

After the passage is read explain to them that you are going to share some background information of the text with them.

### Context

During the Apostle Paul’s second and third missionary journeys he stopped by the city of Ephesus and preached there. People received the gospel and believed in Jesus Christ; therefore, he established a church in Ephesus. However, when he writes this letter, from which we just read our scripture passage, he is in a Roman prison. Paul could not be there in person with the believers in Ephesus because of his imprisonment, so he wrote this letter to them. The purpose of the letter was to instruct



and encourage them in their faith by reminding them of the Christian good news and its implications.

Even though this letter and passage was written to first century Jewish and Gentile believers, it still applies to the believers of today. This is because we are still wrestling with similar issues that the believers in Ephesus were dealing with too. They were surrounded by many pagan religions that challenged and threatened their faith constantly, even to the point of persecution. Even though most believers of today are not facing the threat of persecution because of their faith, they must still navigate challenging complex issues reflective of the spirit of the times (culture). Christians of today are trying to live out their faith in a pluralistic world that tells them that believing in Jesus alone is not enough.

So many things are pulling our attention away from Jesus and trying to convince us that there is more we need to do in order to be truly saved. However, in Ephesians 2:1-10, Paul reminds us why Jesus is enough and why we need him to be saved. Not only from society and everything else challenging our faith, but even from ourselves.

Focus on the following three main points as reminders from Paul in Ephesians 2:1-10 about why we need Jesus for our salvation.

- Apart from Jesus Christ we are incapable of doing anything to attain salvation. (Verse 3)
  - We are inherently sinful people by nature, a nature that we inherited from our great ancestor Adam when he rebelled against God in the garden of Eden. As a result of that sin, we were spiritually dead and separated from God. The only way back to God is Jesus Christ because he paid for our sin with his blood.
  - This is the biblical diagnosis of a broken humanity in broken societies everywhere which is in desperate need of a Savior. Through the miraculous work of Jesus Christ, God revived us from our spiritual death that had resulted from sin.
  - It is interesting that even though Paul is in prison, he is more spiritually alive and free than some of the people he is writing this letter to,

reminding us that physical freedom is not always an indication of spiritual freedom or Christian liberty.

- The depth of God's love and mercy for us is greater than our inclination towards sin. (Verse 4)
  - John 3:16 reminds us that God loved us so much beyond our fallenness and the wrath that we rightly deserved, that he gave us his son Jesus Christ who shed his blood as a sacrificial death for our sins.
  - This is the greatest sacrifice for our salvation! There is no other sacrifice more worthy than his blood. We are not saved by works, merit, or moral goodness but by the grace of God through our faith in Jesus. We are saved because the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us not by anything we do but by God's grace towards us. So much so that when God looks at us, he no longer sees sinful creatures but the righteousness of his Son covering them. To be righteous is to be blameless before God.
  - The price of our sin was paid in full by Jesus Christ's death. Salvation is a free gift from God. All you have to do is accept it and believe that Jesus loved you so much that he gave up his life for you. Unfortunately, due to spiritual blindness and lack of revelation many Christians live outside of the fullness of that gift of Christ's death for us, as if their level of salvation is moderated by their efforts. There is a constant fear of losing their salvation or adding more to it that is not part of the Christian doctrine or freedom. We must remember that no amount of personal restraint, holiness, moral good, or church activities can make us better Christians or better human beings outside of what Christ has already done for us on the cross.
  - Paul's righteousness before Christ was not bound by his adherence to the law, but in Christ his righteousness was in liberty through his faith in Jesus. The Bible tells us that to be a disciple of Jesus Christ your righteousness must exceed that of the Pharisees (Matthew 5:20).

- Only the grace of God suffices to transform us into better people despite our sinful nature. Whenever we are overcome by sin, God's requirement is for us to confess and repent of those sins, not to condemn ourselves back to spiritual death by our own personal efforts to try and save ourselves. Paul reminds us of this in Galatians 3:3.
- We must understand the truth of what salvation in Christ truly means so that we do not overwhelm ourselves with the constant worry of whether we are truly saved, after accepting Jesus Christ as our Lord and savior through confession and baptism.
- We are God's workmanship created in Jesus Christ for good works. (Verse 10)
  - Salvation is not our own achievement but the achievement of God working through us by means of sanctification. Sanctification (the process of being set apart/transformed for God's special use) is an ongoing process not a one time event. A person who has surrendered their life to Jesus Christ is more inclined towards doing good works than sin. The grace of God working in them gives them a new power to overcome sin through Jesus Christ. Salvation gives a person an eternal hope that transforms their mindset and makes them a disciple of Jesus Christ.
  - The great German theologian, Martin Luther, believed that the soul of a person (which he referred to as the inner man) could only be nourished by the "*Word of God*" and nothing else. According to Luther the nourishing Word of God ideal for the soul is the gospel of Jesus Christ.

## Discussion Questions

- What does it mean to be saved, and why is that important to us as Christians?
- What does Christian freedom look like and mean to you?

## Closing Prayer

# Lesson 6: How do we talk with God?

**Big Idea/Main Point** We talk with God by praying and reading the Bible.

**Purpose** To help people understand that a personal relationship with God involves two-way conversation, primarily through prayer (listening and speaking) and Scripture (reading and reflecting).

**Bible Passages** Matthew 6:5-13; Ephesians 3:14-21;  
Hebrews 4:12-13; 2 Timothy 3:15-17

## Opening Discussion

- What is “communication”?
- How do people communicate with each other?
- What is your favorite type of communication?

## Activity

Divide the group into 2 teams for a game of “charades.” Teams alternate with 60 seconds to guess a correct word (each team is given 3 tries total). Suggested words: hungry, birthday, flashlight, shadow, coffee cup, ladder, trampoline, window, measure, waterfall, clown, balance

- Round 1... verbal hints - a team member acts out a word *and* can share verbal hints.
- Round 2... no sound - a team member acts out a word, but *cannot* make any sound.
- Round 3... no sound, eyes closed - a team member acts out a word with no verbal hints, and another team member must watch and describe what the person is doing to the rest of the team who have their *eyes closed* and cannot see what’s happening.

## Ask

- What does this activity show us about “communication”?
- Are you a good listener? Why is listening just as important as talking?
- What do you typically do with a “personal letter” from someone you love?

## Teaching

Matthew 6:5-13

Jesus taught us to pray practically and personally to our heavenly Father. Private prayer is intimate and vulnerable. We come to God humbly, with awe of his majesty and certainty of his love. Our desire is for his will to be done in our lives. We trust him to meet our needs each day and to shape our character to be more like his.

Ask

- When and where do you typically talk with God?
- What do you have a hard time talking with God about?

Ephesians 3:14-21

Paul's prayer for the Ephesians shows the incredible depth and expanse of what our relationship with God should be about. There's so much more at stake than our individual happiness or comfort! We are part of a "family of faith" that is engaged in taking the Good News about Jesus to the world. God's power at work within us should have eternal consequences.

Ask

- Has there been a time recently when you were amazed and overwhelmed by "how wide and long and high and deep" God's love is?
- Has there been a time recently when God did "immeasurably more than you asked or imagined"?

Hebrews 4:12-13

God speaks to us through Scripture. God's Word is living, active, and personal. God's Word reveals our true thoughts and motives. God's Word shines a light on everything inside us and around us. We are accountable to God for what he says to us in his Word.

Ask

- Has there been a time recently when God's Word has clearly "shown a light" on something for you?
- Why is it important for us to know God's Word?

2 Timothy 3:15-17

God teaches us through Scripture. God's Word helps lead us to salvation through faith in Jesus. God's Word helps us know what's right in each situation. God's Word corrects us when we're wrong. God's Word equips us to serve him with our lives.



## Ask

- Who is primarily responsible for ensuring that “from infancy” a child knows “the holy Scriptures”?
- How does God’s Word “make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus”?

## Discussion Questions

- What do you think Paul means in 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 when he writes: “Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus”?
- What do you think Paul means in Ephesians 6:17-18 when he writes: “Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints”?
- How do you express your heart to God?
  - Prayer
  - Singing
  - Writing
  - Creative Arts
  - Letting the Holy Spirit speak on your behalf (Romans 8:26-27)
- How do you hear God express his heart to you?
  - Listening Prayer
  - Bible reading
  - Meditating on God’s truth
  - Music
  - Creation

## Closing Prayer

## Lesson 7: The Church

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| Big Idea/Main Point | God has called people with saving faith in Jesus to unite together as a body called the church. |
| Purpose             | To help individuals understand what the church is as well as its purpose.                       |
| Bible Passage       | 2 Thessalonians 2:13-17   |

### Leader Notes

If you ask people what the church is, many will start by describing a building. This is easy because we often talk about going to church like it is simply a place. However, the church is not just a building! It is a body of believers. This discussion aims to aid our understanding of the church as more than just a building.

Remember to use clear language that points to the church as a people, not just a place. Additionally, remember to demonstrate that the church belongs to God but is for ALL believers.

### Opening Activity

Have everyone in the group give their favorite place to take their family or friends. Examples could be theme parks, a favorite restaurant, a park, a baseball game, etc.

Now ask everyone what makes their particular place their favorite for hanging out with family and friends.

Finally, ask if these favorite places would be as great if someone went by themselves.

Explain that most places or activities are made better because of the people that join you, not the place or activity itself.

## Teaching

Begin the teaching time with a prayer asking for God's help. Ask that the lesson would be taught faithfully and that the group may learn what God has for them during this time.

Ask the group if they remember the process of being chosen for a team on the playground. Some people loved this because they were always picked first; others hated this process because they were always chosen last. The process of being chosen for a team was usually influenced by athletic ability, popularity, or relationships – that is what makes it such a tricky process. The Bible tells us that the way that God builds his church is by choosing people to be on his team, to become members of his family. But being on God's team has nothing to do with how good we are at anything, how popular we are, or who our friends are. Instead, it has everything to do with Jesus Christ and his sacrificial death and resurrection on our behalf and our recognition of and submission to his lordship over our lives. God calls us to put our trust in Jesus for forgiveness of sin and the gift of new life; when we do that, we automatically become members of God's church.

Read 2 Thessalonians 2:13-17

Take a moment to introduce the group to Paul's letter to the Thessalonians; explain that Paul was writing to the church in Thessalonica, and that meant he was writing to the people there and not the building they met in.

Tell the group that God's purpose in his world is to draw together a people for himself. In this passage, we can see how God works. The first thing to notice in verse 13 is that God chose the people who became part of his church in Thessalonica or, as Paul says it, "firstfruits." They are saved from God's judgement; they have put their faith in Jesus and have the hope of eternal life. Paul says this process occurs as the Holy Spirit works in their hearts as they hear the truth of the gospel and realize they need a personal Savior. This is God's gospel call to share in the joy and hope of being a member of God's family. God is still building his church today! He is gathering together a people for himself, and the process is just the same. God calls people, and by his Spirit opens their eyes to the truth of the gospel.

Explain to the group that when we are united to Jesus, we become united to one another in the church. This means we get new brothers and sisters, a whole new family! As Christians, we have family all over the world, most of whom we have never met or ever will meet in this life. That is the universal church or “Big C” Church. The Big C includes the body of all believers globally, past, present, and future. As members of the universal church, believers like us meet in smaller groups that we call the local church.

Ask the group what kind of people, then, are members of the church. The answer is all kinds or sorts! Young and old, rich and poor, people from all different ethnicities and cultures, people with different jobs, you name it! Everyone who confesses Jesus as Lord is part of our church family. The church is like a big family meal where people from all walks of life gather to break bread together. The most diverse potluck ever if you will.

In a letter that Paul wrote to the church in Corinth, he described the church as a body (1 Corinthians 12). A body is made up of all different parts, but each part is essential for the body to work well. The church is just the same; we are all different, but when we come together to love each other and serve with the gifts God has given us, the church works well.

God desires for his church to do three things:

1. To love and worship God.
2. To love and encourage each other as we live for God.
3. To love those outside the church and show them the grace of God.

Help the group understand that coming together as members of God’s church is really important. The church is where we learn to love God more, where we can love and encourage one another well, and where we can understand how to love those in the world in the same sacrificial way that Jesus did.

## Activity Options

- Using a white board or something similar, draw a person. Label each part of the person with a particular role that a person can play for the church. The mouth could be the pastor, the hands could be the missions team, etc.
- Have each member of the group consider and describe what they believe their role is in the body of the church.

## Discussion Questions

- What would be some fun or cool places that we could be a church?
- How can we better love our brothers and sisters in our own church?
- How might we explain to someone what the church is?
- What are some unconventional ways that we can be the church?

## Closing Prayer

Encourage the group to thank God for his church and ask him to help them love and serve his people inside and outside the church more.

## Lesson 8: What is Baptism and the Lord's Supper?

**Big Idea/Main Point** There are two ordinances of the New Testament Church – baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptism is an outward sign of an inward reality – cleansing from sin. The Lord's Supper is to nurture thankful remembrance among God's people.

**Purpose** To help groups understand what baptism and the Lord's Supper are and that Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper so that Christians would remember all that Jesus achieved through his death on the cross.

**Bible Passage** Matthew 28:16-20; 1 Corinthians 11:17-34

### Opening Activity

Create a slideshow or print a group of logos of businesses, brands, or sports team. Here are some ideas:

|            |                        |
|------------|------------------------|
| Nike       | Amazon                 |
| Shell      | Mitsubishi             |
| Apple      | Pepsi                  |
| McDonalds  | Coca Cola bottle shape |
| Chevrolet  | Mastercard             |
| Volkswagen | NBC                    |
| Batman     | Dallas Cowboys         |
| BMW        | Texas Rangers          |

Show these logos, one at a time, to your class to see how many can easily identify them. You might use some lesser-known ones, as well.

Ask for some feedback about how some of those brands make those in your group feel. For some, they may elicit excitement (Texas Longhorns), some may crave a cheeseburger, and others it may bring back a childhood memory.

Then, take a moment to talk about how symbols represent something that is much larger than simply a logo/graphic. The symbol is a part of the whole, but it often tells a story of sorts.

Share that today we will discuss two symbols in the church that represent something much larger and tell of a grand story of redemption. These are, in a sense, the “graphic” of a much larger, beautiful story of what God allows to take place in the lives of individual people.

## Teaching

There are two ordinances in the New Testament church – baptism and the Lord’s Supper, or communion. The English word “ordinance” is derived from the Latin verb *ordinare* meaning to place in a right row or order to do what has been established or commanded. We believe that Jesus established two things for churches to do to proclaim the essences of salvation available through Him. Participation in these two realities is only meaningful for believers in Jesus Christ, those who have accepted Jesus as Lord of their lives.

Today we will discuss both ordinances of the New Testament Church beginning with baptism. Baptism is an outward sign and expression of obedience to God that someone is following Jesus Christ as Lord of their life.

Read Matthew 28:16-20

This passage, which ends Matthew’s Gospel account, happened after Jesus had been crucified and before he ascended back into Heaven to sit at the right hand of God the Father. This is the moment that Jesus ordains baptism as a sign for all believers. Up until this point in the Bible, various people had been baptized, but now at this point in salvation history, Jesus commands that all those who trust in him for the forgiveness of sins should be baptized.

The word baptize simply means to immerse, dip or submerge, or more generally, cleanse; the word is used of someone coming under water and paints a picture of cleansing and new birth.

Baptism creates a “picture” of a person dying to their old self and rising to new life in Christ. Baptism simply symbolizes that a Christian is united with Christ, someone who has been made new by the Holy Spirit and has turned away from his or her old ways.

Baptism is an outward sign with a powerful message! It shows that righteousness is by faith alone, but water baptism doesn’t make someone a Christian. The only thing that can save a person from God’s righteous anger and judgement is Jesus’s substitutionary atonement on the cross, received by faith.

We follow the command of Jesus, baptizing in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – the three members of the Trinity. This is important because it emphasizes the role and work of all members of the Trinity in the life of a believer.

Being baptized is a sign that shows the world that salvation is by grace through faith in Christ alone. In salvation, a person’s sins are forgiven, and he or she is adopted into God’s family.

Look back at the passage in Matthew 28 – notice the evangelistic emphasis of Jesus. As followers of Jesus, we are called to go to the ends of the earth, proclaiming the good news of Jesus and baptizing people in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God calls his church to go out and make disciples; this is a command for each one of us!

As we consider the Lord’s Supper, remember that this is also an ordinance of the church. Both ordinances are outward signs of the miraculous work of God within the lives of those that follow Jesus.

Read 1 Corinthians 11:17-34

1 Corinthians is a letter written by the Apostle Paul to believers in the city of Corinth. It seems from these verses there was a problem among the Christians when they gathered to celebrate the Lord’s Supper. Paul is rebuking some of the Christians for eating before others; he is saying that the Lord’s Supper should be eaten together as the family of God.



In verse 23, Paul starts to remind the Corinthian Christians what the Lord's Supper is. Paul clearly declares that the tradition of the Lord's Supper came from the Lord himself; he instituted it for his church. In these verses, Paul relates the details of the Passover meal that Jesus celebrated with his disciples on the night before he was put to death.

Read verses 23-25 again.

This is obviously a special meal, Jesus explained to his disciples what would happen to him in his death. His body would be broken and his blood would be shed. Jesus didn't use this meal to teach the disciples but to create a practice for his church that would help them to remember him until he comes again.

Jesus describes the breaking of bread and the drinking of wine as a sign of the new covenant. The new covenant is the promise that God makes with mankind declaring that he will forgive sin and become friends with all those whose hearts are turned toward him. Jesus Christ is the Mediator of the new covenant, and his death on the cross is the foundation of the promise.

The Passover Feast (Exodus 12) helped the Jewish people remember how they had been delivered by the blood of the lamb. The Lord's Supper helps Christians remember we have been delivered by the blood of Jesus.

So Paul reminds the people of the new covenant that they should remember Jesus's death by eating bread and drinking wine together. God's people continue to celebrate the Lord's Supper to remember Jesus and his death on their behalf.

As with baptism, the Lord's Supper is a celebration that has a symbolic meaning and is appropriately taken only by believers in Jesus.

## Activities

- Use the white board to write out some common misconceptions about baptism and the Lord's Supper.
- Invite those in your class to share about their baptism or the first time they took the Lord's Supper.

## Discussion Questions

- Why is it important that the church continue to perform these two ordinances?
- How might we explain why we practice the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper to unbelievers?
- Why do we, as Baptists, practice baptism by immersion?

## Closing Prayer

## Lesson 9: Evangelism

**Big Idea/Main Point** God leads us to those he wants us to reach.

**Purpose** To show groups that effective evangelism is primarily a work of the Spirit in the lives of believers open to His movements.

**Bible Passage** Acts 16:6-34

### Opening Discussion

Question: What is one of the strangest dreams you've ever had? What about one of the best dreams you've ever had?

Tell your class that today's passage starts with a strange dream that led Paul on an incredible journey of evangelism. Though we might find it strange that God could lead us through dreams, it is not without precedent in scripture, nor is it exactly uncommon in other parts of the world. God can use all kinds of things to get a hold of us. The question is whether we are in a position to listen for his voice and respond in obedience. When it comes to sharing our faith, we must be vigilant and listening for how God might be leading us and prompting us.

### Teaching

Start the teaching time by instructing the group to open to the key passage for today: Acts 16:6-34. Since this is an exciting story, go ahead and have the class read it all the way through in one go. To keep attention, break up the passage and have multiple readers (perhaps reading 3-6 verses at a time).

Missionary and author of the book, "The Insanity of God", Nik Ripkin, lived out his ministry in some of the most persecuted places on the planet. In writing his book, he travelled to various parts of the world where even greater persecution took place to interview faithful Christians there. In all his years of doing missionary work, a key reflection he has shared is that "Evangelism is 2/3rds listening and 1/3rd sharing."

It can be easy to get that reversed or think that evangelism is a slick presentation that convinces people to be saved. Instead, effective evangelism is rooted in listening – to the Holy Spirit first and to those you're engaging second.

When we look over these stories, what are some examples of people listening?

- Paul with the dream of the Macedonian man (16:9-10)
- Lydia listening to the preaching of the word (16:13-15)
- Prisoners listening to Paul and Silas singing praise (16:25)
- The Jailer listening to Paul and Silas urging him not to kill himself (16:28)
- The Jailer listening to the Gospel (16:31-34)

It would appear that God moves when people are listening. Some people can be listening specifically for His voice, like Paul. Others can, by the power of the Holy Spirit, find themselves listening and open to the word of the Gospel (Lydia and the Prisoners).

It is probably fair to say that the mission trip to Macedonia didn't go as Paul or Silas expected. There were days between converts (16:12), they were interrupted (16:16), they were persecuted and imprisoned, and ended the trip with a miraculous jail break. Yet, all along Paul and Silas were being obedient to the call of God to be in the community and share with the people that God has placed them near - whether that be a group of women, prisoners, or their jailer.

Paul and Silas listened to and trusted God. In response, God led them to the people they needed to reach. What can we learn from their example?

- Are we putting ourselves in a position to listen to God each day?
- Are we open to him leading us outside of our comfort zone to share consistently (16:12) with people?
- Are we listening to the voice of the Holy Spirit to be witnesses wherever we find ourselves (16:25)?

One of the key reasons that people don't share their faith is fear. Fear of not knowing how or fear of rejection.

Fear of not knowing enough:

- If you know enough to be saved and have a relationship with Jesus, you know enough to share. Your testimony is your greatest evangelism tool! When was the last time you thought through:
  - Who you were before you met Jesus?
  - What happened that prompted you to put your trust in him?
  - How has your life been different since?
    - If you can determine a 2 minute version of your story that includes those 3 points, you have a compelling tool to share with someone about how your life was changed by Jesus.

- This fear of not knowing enough can be a tempting excuse, but don't fall for the temptation. We live in the information age where a myriad of trainings exist on how to effectively share the gospel with someone. If we take time to learn to pray, read our Bibles, or any other spiritual discipline, we should also take time to learn how to share the gospel with someone.

When it comes to the fear of rejection – that is normal as well. No one likes rejection or feeling less than. However, we mustn't let our pride or fear halt us from obeying the Great Commission. If we share with love, kindness, and sensitivity it is unlikely that we will face outright hostility.

In his book, “Beyond Awkward”, Evangelist Beau Crosetto advocates for believers to be bold, but not pushy with their faith. A key way to do this is by checking the “Curiosity Pulse” of people to see if they're open to the conversation.

Some example questions:

- “Did you grow up in church?”
- “Do you have a spiritual background?”
- “Are you looking for a church?”

Breaking the ice with someone is not pushy. It's simply checking to see if this is something they want to talk about. It is always on the witness to break the ice and potentially “pay the awkward bill”. If the relationship is a genuine one, it can survive you checking the curiosity pulse. If they say that they're not wanting to talk about that, respect their response and let them know that if they ever want to talk about it or have questions, you'd be happy to chat. Then trust the spirit.

If they seem open to the conversation, ask questions to better hear their story. Take time to listen to them. Listening is a skill, not a passive exercise. If we take a moment, we can probably remember a time when someone took time to truly listen to us. When we are listened to, we feel loved. To be an effective witness, we must be skilled listeners. Skilled listeners listen to understand rather than listen to only respond.

Listening to Respond

- Focused on the question, “How do I come in? How can I insert myself?”
- It is selectively listening for the things that connect to yourself
- It is self focused

Listening to Understand

- Focused on the person speaking
- The goal is to truly understand the person

- We ask clarifying questions to hear more, “Tell me more about \_\_, How did that impact \_\_\_, Why do you think that happened?”
- We are comfortable with silence

When you take time to truly listen to someone in response to the curiosity pulse question, you’re in a great position to witness. Perhaps this person just needs someone to listen, to encourage, and pray for them in this time. That’s ok – that’s a powerful witness. However, there comes a time when we should be bold and share the gospel or at least invite them to a space like church where they will hear the gospel.

“You won’t find a single person in the New Testament who came to faith in Jesus without hearing the gospel from another person.” – Beau Crosetto

If you’re listening to the Holy Spirit and taking time to listen to another person, it is likely that the Holy Spirit will prompt you to share the gospel with this person. Listen to their story and when the timing feels right in your spirit, ask if you can share your story. In 2-3 minutes, share your testimony.

Then move to a presentation of the gospel. A great transition is something like, “Everything changed for me when I finally understood the gospel. Do you mind if I explain it to you?” If given permission, use a method that clearly and concisely explains the Gospel in about 3-6 minutes. (A great tool is called “Three Circles.”)

When you finish sharing the gospel, ask them if they want to follow Jesus as well or if they have any questions. If they want to follow Christ, the ABC’s are a great tool to use to lead someone in a prayer to receive Christ:

- A – Admit that you need a savior. You can’t live the life God designed for you on your own.
- B – Believe that Jesus is the son of God. He was who he said he was. He died and rose again and in doing so, he paid the penalty for *your* sin.
- C – Commit your life to Jesus. Turn from your old way of doing life and ask Jesus to be the one in charge of your life from now on.

A helpful way to summarize this method:

- Their story (response to spiritual question)
- Your story (testimony)
- God’s story (gospel)

Ultimately, it is not up to us to save anyone. That’s the work of the Holy Spirit. What we need to be is faithful to listen, patient to share, and trusting God to open hearts to

his word. May we be people who pray for B.O.B. - Burden for the lost, Opportunity to share, Boldness to share.

## Activities

- Have people pair up and share their short story of who they were before Christ, how they met Christ, and how their lives have been different since.
  - Those listening should practice Listening to Understand questions
- Have people get into small groups and brainstorm ways to pray for and set up the curiosity pulse with the people they know in their lives.

## Discussion Questions

- How can you take time to truly listen to God this week?
- Is there someone in your life that you need to take time to hear their story? Who are they and how will you set up time to do so?
- What gives you pause about sharing your faith?
- Who are three people you can pray for so that God moves in their lives and gives you (or someone) an opportunity to clearly present the gospel?

## Closing Prayer

Pray for B.O.B as a community.

B.O.B. = Burden for the lost, Opportunity to share, Boldness to share



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