



The Kind of People He Invites

THE INVITATION: SESSION 1

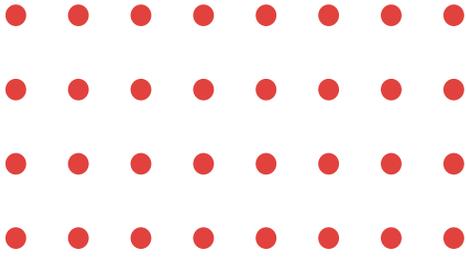
Overview:

This first session is not designed to be highly catechetical, but rather to spend the majority of time getting to know one another, building trust and creating an environment in which dialogue about the faith can happen. The key takeaway will be that Jesus' invitation is for everyone.

Theme Scripture

MATTHEW 4:18-22

As he was walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter, and his brother Andrew, casting a net into the sea; they were fishermen. He said to them, 'Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men.' At once they left their nets and followed him. He walked along from there and saw two other brothers, James, the son of Zebedee, and his brother John. They were in a boat, with their father Zebedee, mending their nets. He called them, and immediately they left their boat and their father and followed him.



A Key to Using this Guide:

ANYTHING IN ITALICS: Important information for leaders. Not necessary to share with the group.

REGULAR FONT: To be shared aloud with the group.

LEADER TIPS: Check out the “Leader Tip” boxes in the margins for helpful hints.

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Writer credits: Annie Grandell, James Forina, Ross Gillespie, Jessica Beckman

Connect

For many, this will be the first time your group meets. Take time to get to know one another and make people begin to feel comfortable. We have provided an optional activity to facilitate this process. Activities are always optional. Another good idea is doing something like playing a sport together.

1. Optional Activity

GET TO KNOW YOU

Supplies:

- Pens/Pencils
- A sheet of paper or index card for each group member
- A sheet of paper (or white board) with the following list written on it:
 - Name
 - Address
 - Phone Number
 - Email Address
 - Birthday
 - Parent(s)' and siblings names
 - Favorite thing to do
 - A long-term goal
 - A little known fact about yourself

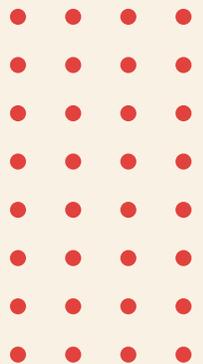
Have each person fill out the information on a separate sheet of paper. When they are done, have them turn them into you, face down. Mix the papers/cards up and explain that you will read aloud only the last 3 items. It is their task to guess who the list belongs to from just those three clues.

LEADER TIP

Snacks are the secret ingredient to a good small group! Bring them yourself or have families take turns.

LEADER TIP

Keep these papers or snap a quick photo of each of them with your phone for future reference. Always check in with your parish coordinator before communicating with a minor to make sure you are in compliance with certain policies.



2. Group Guidelines

*If this is your first time meeting, it is important to set expectations for behavior right away. We recommend 3 simple guidelines. **Investment, Honesty, Respect.** Consider sharing the following:*

Welcome to *your* discipleship group. This is your group - not the church's, not mine, but yours - and how it goes is up to you. Our first guideline for this group is **Investment**. Like investing money, what you put in is what you're going to get out. In fact, you often get more out than you put in. If you are open to others and what God has in store for you, you could gain so much. But this requires you to be invested - listen to what everyone has to say, pay attention to the videos, and engage in discussion.

The second guideline is **honesty**. We want to hear what you think, not what you think we want to hear. Let's be real with ourselves and each other.

The third guideline is **respect**. Respect can be simple: not talking over other people, not making fun of someone's answer, listening. I would also ask that you respect what each other share in this group by agreeing to refrain from talking about it outside of this group.

NOTE: It is important to leave yourself out of the last statement. If a minor is in danger, you are required by law to share it. Bring it to your parish leaders and they will help you handle it properly.

LEADER TIP

Check out the YDisciple website for more tips on setting guidelines for your group.

3. Opening Prayer

Read the theme verse Matthew 4:18-22 (found on the first page of this guide) and then lead them in a prayer thanking God for the opportunity to be together and the opportunity to grow in faith. Invite the Holy Spirit to open everyone up to hear Jesus' invitation to follow him. Conclude with a prayer together such as the Our Father, Glory Be, or Hail Mary.

LEADER TIP

Always bring a real Bible and read verses from it directly instead of from this guide. You will demonstrate the importance of scripture.

Discuss

Share with your group: This group is called a Discipleship group. It is more than a class or even just a regular small group. A disciple is someone who follows Jesus. Over the course of the next four weeks/meetings we will be answering the question: What does it mean to follow Jesus, what does it look like in real life?

Play Video Segment #1: Nick's Story

In this first segment, we are introduced to our first presenter, Nick Redd. He will tell us his personal testimony, his story of how he came to follow Jesus. Stories are powerful. Jesus told 30 unique parables, stories, in the gospels. Stories build empathy and open us up to the truth that will be later shared.

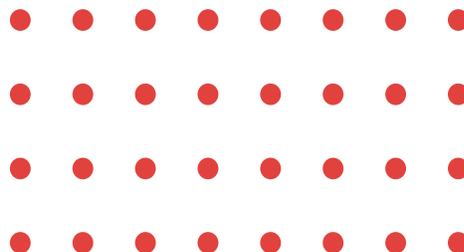
Questions

- **AT THE END OF THE VIDEO, NICK ASKS THE QUESTION: “WHY ARE YOU HERE? AND WHAT ARE YOU HOPING TO GET OUT OF IT?” HOW WOULD YOU RESPOND TO HIS QUESTIONS?**

Answers may range from, “I want to grow closer to Jesus,” to “I don’t want to be here. My parents made me do it.” Make sure to thank everyone for sharing regardless. Now is not the time to correct bad attitudes, but simply to meet the young people where they are at.

- **WHAT IS ONE THING THAT STOOD OUT TO YOU IN NICK’S STORY?**
- **WAS THERE ANYTHING IN PARTICULAR THAT YOU FELT YOU COULD RELATE TO?**
- **NICK WAS INVITED BY FR. SHAWN FIRST SIMPLY TO HAVE LUNCH, BUT ULTIMATELY TO SAY ‘YES’ TO FOLLOWING JESUS. HAVE YOU EVER HAD THE EXPERIENCE OF SOMEONE IN YOUR LIFE INVITING YOU TO GO DEEPER IN YOUR FAITH?**

If they hesitate, clarify that it doesn’t have to be in the same, dramatic way it happened with Nick.



Play Video Segment #2: The Kind of People He Invites

Questions

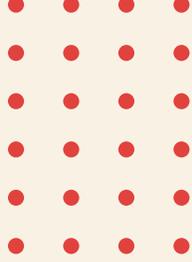
- **WHAT IS ONE THING THAT STOOD OUT TO YOU?**
- **NICK TALKED ABOUT HOW PEOPLE WERE CHOSEN TO BE DISCIPLES FOLLOWED THEIR RABBIS AND DID EVERYTHING LIKE THEM. WHO ARE SOME OF YOUR ROLE MODELS, HEROES? WHAT IS IT ABOUT THEM THAT YOU WANT TO IMITATE?**
- **DO YOU EVER FEEL PRESSURE TO BE A CERTAIN WAY, OR ACHIEVE A CERTAIN GOAL? WHERE DO THOSE PRESSURES COME FROM?**
- **HOW DOES IT MAKE YOU FEEL THAT JESUS DID NOT ASK THE BEST OF THE BEST TO BE HIS DISCIPLES?**
- **REREAD THE THEME VERSE FOR THIS SESSION (MATTHEW 4:18-22) AS A GROUP. AFTER HAVING HEARD NICK'S EXPLANATION OF THE CONTEXT OF THIS STORY, WHAT STANDS OUT TO YOU?**
- **WHAT MIGHT HOLD AN AVERAGE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT BACK FROM FOLLOWING JESUS?**
- **WHAT IS YOUR REACTION TO JESUS' INVITATION: "COME, FOLLOW ME?" DO YOU HAVE ANY HESITATIONS?**

Again, this is not the time to "correct" any negative opinions. We want them to have the space to be honest. As your group grows in trust, you will have many opportunities for correction and redirection.

LEADER TIP

We usually provide many more questions than you will need. Don't try to get through them all. Choose which ones will be best for your group. If a good conversation is happening around one question, stay with it.

Commit



1. Takeaways

Go around the circle and ask each person to share:

Share one take-away from this session. In other words, share something that you heard in this session, either from the video or from one of our members, that made an impression on you.

Remind everyone that what is shared in the group is meant to be confidential. This is essential to building trust.

Tell your group: At the end of every session together we will make some sort of commitment to apply what we talk about to our lives. This time, I'm just going to ask that you commit to coming back next time so we continue our conversation.

LEADER TIP

Invite them to start bringing their Bibles every week. If they do not have a Bible of their own, it can be a great gesture to give them one yourself.

2. Closing Prayer

Begin with the Sign of the Cross, then reread the theme verse (Matthew 4:18-22). Invite them to share aloud anything they would like to pray for (people, circumstances, etc.). Conclude with a rote prayer such as the Our Father.

3. Follow Up

Either hand out or email the Participant Journal if you haven't already done so.

After every single meeting, send an email to parents. Thank them for helping make the group a priority. Always attach or copy and paste the Parent Sheet (available in English and Spanish). If you are using a streaming service, share the link to the videos.



The Invitation

THE INVITATION: SESSION 2

Overview:

This session is designed to represent the heart of the Gospel message: God loves you; sin divides you from that love; Jesus's life, death and resurrection bridges the divide between human brokenness and God's love; and we are invited to respond to this truth.

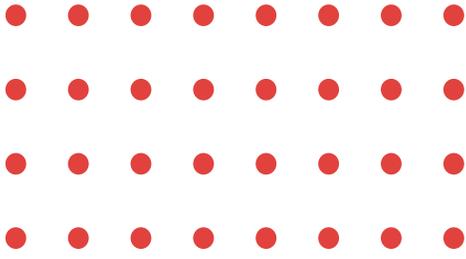
It may seem overly simplistic, but from the person newest to the faith to the greatest of saints, we all need to come back to this basic proclamation again and again. Pope Francis said:

"This first proclamation is called "first" not because it exists at the beginning and can then be forgotten or replaced by other more important things. It is first in a qualitative sense because it is the principal proclamation, the one which we must hear again and again in different ways, the one which we must announce one way or another throughout the process of catechesis, at every level and moment." (*Joy of the Gospel*, 164.)

Theme Scripture

1 JOHN 4:9-10

In this way the love of God was revealed to us: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might have life through him. In this is love: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as expiation for our sins.



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Connect

1. Check In

It is always good to check-in and ask, "How was your week?" demonstrating that you care about what is going on beyond your small group. You can ask generally or have them share "Highs and Lows." (High - best part of your week; Low - worst part)

2. Optional Activity

GOOD NEWS

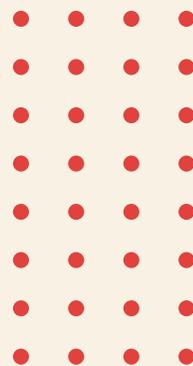
Here's another chance to get to know one another in a creative way. As they fill in the blanks to the statements provided, you get to learn about preferences, important relationships, and goals.

Go around the circle and randomly choose a statement to ask each member. (Tip: You can drag your finger along the list and have them call "Stop!" or you can Google "Random number generator" and give the range of this list. Read the statement associated with the random number generated.)

See following page for list.

LEADER TIP

Provided Activities are always optional. Try simply playing a sport or sharing a meal together.



- 
1. Good news, you just won free tickets to a _____ concert.
 2. Good news, a package arrives; you open it and find _____.
 3. Good news, a pizza arrives and the toppings are _____.
 4. Good news, you have won an all-expense-paid trip to _____.
 5. Good news, four years from now you will be _____.
 6. Good news, you see your news feed to find all the stories are reporting _____.
 7. Good news, the cast from the cancelled TV series, _____, are having a reunion show.
 8. Good news, you got a \$1000 gift card to shop at _____.
 9. Good news, you won first place for _____.
 10. Good news, its a night out with a friend to go _____.
 11. Good news, you won the Olympic gold medal in _____.
 12. Good news, the phone rings and you (actually!) pick it up to hear _____ 's voice?
 13. Good news, you get to move to _____.
 14. Good news, you open the freezer to find your favorite ice cream, _____.
 15. Good news, you get offered your dream job of _____.

Share with your group: Good news. Did you know the word “gospel” means “good news”? In this session we are going to be wrestling with the question, “What is the gospel and what does it have to do with my life?”

3. Opening Prayer

Read the theme verse, 1 John 4:9-10 (found on the first page of this guide) and then lead them in a prayer thanking God for the opportunity to be together and the opportunity to grow in faith. Invite the Holy Spirit to open everyone up to hear Jesus' invitation to follow him. Conclude with a prayer together such as the Our Father, Glory Be, or Hail Mary.

LEADER TIP

Always bring a real Bible and read verses from it directly instead of from this guide. You will demonstrate the importance of scripture.

Discuss

Play Video Segment #1: Nick's Story

In this first segment, we will get to know more about the presenter, Nick Redd. He will talk to some random people on the street about the Gospel and share his own story of realizing that Jesus is real.

Questions

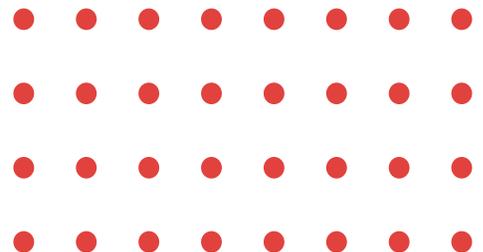
- **AT THE END OF THE VIDEO, NICK ASKS THE QUESTION: “WHO IS JESUS TO YOU?” HOW WOULD YOU RESPOND TO HIS QUESTION?**

There will be a wide range of answers. The goal is not to correct bad theology, but to get a sense of where your group is at. If you find that answers are straying far from Church teaching, you may find C.S. Lewis’ theory of “Liar, Lunatic or Lord.” helpful, which you can find in a simple Google search.

- **WHAT IS ONE THING THAT STOOD OUT TO YOU IN NICK’S STORY?**
- **WAS THERE ANYTHING IN PARTICULAR THAT YOU FELT YOU COULD RELATE TO?**
- **NICK DESCRIBES A MOMENT AT MASS WHEN HE REALIZED THAT THE EUCHARIST WAS REALLY JESUS AND THAT JESUS WAS A REAL PERSON. DO YOU FIND IT EASY OR DIFFICULT TO THINK OF JESUS AS A REAL PERSON?**

LEADER TIP

We usually provide many more questions than you will need. Don’t try to get through them all. Choose which ones will be best for your group. If a good conversation is happening around one question, stay with it.



Play Video Segment #2: The Kerygma, Part 1

Questions

- **WHAT IS ONE THING THAT STOOD OUT TO YOU?**
- **HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE LOVE? WHAT DOES THAT LOOK LIKE IN YOUR LIFE?**
St. Thomas Aquinas defines love: "To love is to will the good of another."
- **WHAT IS YOUR REACTION WHEN YOU HEAR THE WORDS, "GOD LOVES YOU"?**
- **NICK SHARED THIS QUOTE FROM POPE BENEDICT: "BEING CHRISTIAN IS NOT THE RESULT OF AN ETHICAL CHOICE OR A LOFTY IDEA, BUT THE ENCOUNTER WITH AN EVENT, A PERSON, WHICH GIVES LIFE A NEW HORIZON AND A DECISIVE DIRECTION." HAVE YOU EVER HAD AN EXPERIENCE OF THAT SORT OF ENCOUNTER?**
Some teens may have stories. Others may not have had an encounter experience yet. Regardless, now is a good time for you, Leader, to share your own experience of encountering God.
- **WHAT DOES IT MEAN WHEN HE QUOTED THE LION, THE WITCH, & THE WARDROBE, DESCRIBING GOD AS GOOD, BUT NOT SAFE? HOW DOES THAT SIT WITH YOU?**

Play Video Segment #3: The Kerygma, Part 2

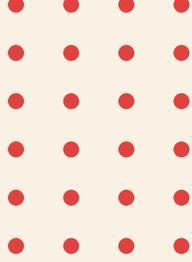
Questions

- **WHAT IS ONE THING THAT STOOD OUT TO YOU?**
- **NICK TALKED ABOUT BROKENNESS IN THE WORLD. WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF BROKENNESS YOU SEE AROUND YOU?**
- **THERE WAS A STORY OF A MAN NAMED G.K. CHESTERTON WRITING THAT HE WAS WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE WORLD. HOW DO WE CONTRIBUTE TO WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE WORLD?**
- **NICK TALKS ABOUT HOW JESUS SAID TO PEOPLE, "YOUR SINS ARE FORGIVEN." CAN WE EXPERIENCE THIS MERCY TODAY? HOW?**
Talk about the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- **HE ALSO SAID THAT JESUS OFFERS FREEDOM. DOES THIS ALIGN WITH HOW YOU THINK OF GOD? IF NOT, WHAT IS DIFFERENT?**
- **TAKE A MOMENT AND THINK ABOUT YOUR ANSWER. ON A SCALE OF 1-10 HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH YOUR CURRENT RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD? (1 BEING NOT SATISFIED, 10 BEING PERFECTLY SATISFIED)**

LEADER TIP

"[Going to confession] can be difficult and may cost us a great deal of effort at first. But it is one of the greatest graces that we can receive again and again in our life - it truly renews the soul, completely unburdens it, leaving it without the debts of the past, accepted in love, and equipped with new strength. God is merciful, and he desires nothing more earnestly than for us, too, to lay claim to his mercy. Someone who has gone to confession turns a clean, new page in the book of his life." (YouCat #226, See also the Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1422-1424)

Commit



Share with your group: Pope Francis said, “I invite all Christians, everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ, or at least an openness to letting Him encounter them; I ask all of you to do this unflinching each day. No one should think that this invitation is not meant for him or her, since ‘no one is excluded from the joy brought by the Lord’” (*Joy of the Gospel*, 3).

THIS WEEK’S COMMITMENT: MAKE A PERSONAL COMMITMENT TO JESUS

1. Closing Prayer

Share with your group: For our closing prayer this week, I am going to lead us in a prayer giving you the opportunity to make a personal commitment to Jesus, inviting him into your life in a deeper way. If you’re ready and willing, pray with me in the silence of your heart.

This prayer is on your Participant Journal, so you can pray it on your own later this week if you prefer. I will pray a line and pause so you can repeat it in your own heart.

LEADER TIP

You will be tempted to skip this. Pray for courage and boldness.

Let’s pray in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

“Jesus, [pause]

I thank you for the love you have for me, [pause]

and for dying for me on the Cross. [pause]

I’m sorry for my sins, [pause]

and any choice I’ve made that has separated me from you. [pause]

I invite you into my heart and in my life [pause]

and I choose you to be Lord of my life. [pause]

Amen.”

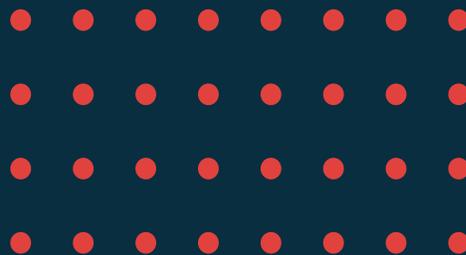
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After every single meeting, send an email to parents. Thank them for helping make the group a priority. Always attach, or copy and paste the Parent Sheet (available in English and Spanish). If you are using a streaming service, share the link to the videos.

LEADER TIP

Another great tool is THE FOUR bracelets and our "How to Share the Gospel" Booklet on YDisciple.com





The Cost

THE INVITATION:
SESSION 3

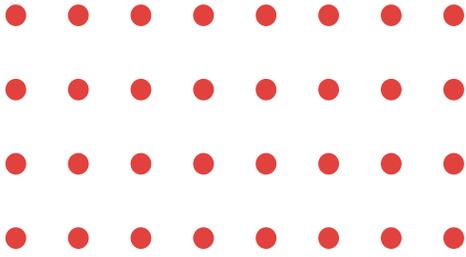
Overview:

Any kind of greatness comes with a price tag. And Jesus didn't hide from people that following him would come at a cost. This session discusses what it means to "take up our cross" and how Jesus is close to us in our suffering.

Theme Scripture

MATTHEW 16:24

Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself,
take up his cross and follow me.



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Connect

1. Check In

It is always good to check-in and ask, "How was your week?" demonstrating that you care about what is going on beyond your small group. You can ask generally or have them share "Highs and Lows." (High - best part of your week; Low - worst part)

2. Optional Activity

HOT SEAT

Say:

As we continue to get to know our group, we are going to give everyone the chance to be in the "Hot Seat" for two minutes. In that time we'll get to ask several questions in order to find out more about him/her. You can ask any question from "What's your favorite pizza topping?" to "What is something that people often get wrong about you?" Of course, you are always free to pass on any question you don't feel comfortable answering. After two minutes we will move on to the next person, and we'll continue until everyone has had the opportunity to be the center of attention. Remember, what is shared in our group stays in our group.

LEADER TIP

Activities are optional. Play a board game, a sport, or go for a walk instead.

3. Opening Prayer

Read the theme verse, Matthew 16:24 (found on the first page of this guide) and then lead them in a prayer thanking God for the opportunity to be together and the opportunity to grow in faith. Invite the Holy Spirit to open everyone up to hear Jesus' invitation to follow him. Conclude with a prayer together such as the Our Father, Glory Be, or Hail Mary.

LEADER TIP

Always bring a real Bible and read verses from it directly instead of from this guide. You will demonstrate the importance of scripture.

Discuss

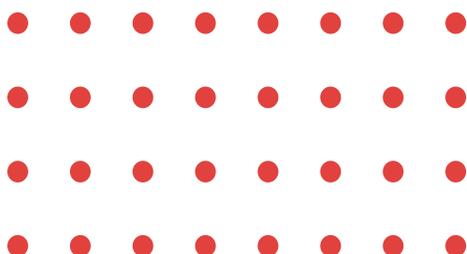
Play Video Segment #1: Chika's Story

In this first segment, we will be introduced to a new presenter, Chika Anyanwu. She will share her conversion story and how suffering relates to the Christian life.

Questions

- **WHAT IS THE THING THAT HOLDS YOU BACK FROM FOLLOWING JESUS MORE FULLY?**
- **WHAT ELSE STOOD OUT TO YOU?**
- **WAS THERE ANYTHING IN PARTICULAR THAT YOU COULD RELATE TO?**
- **WHAT IS SOMETHING THAT YOU HAVE HAD TO WORK HARD FOR?**

We'll be talking about this in the next session.



Play Video Segment #2

Questions

- **WHAT IS ONE THING THAT STOOD OUT TO YOU?**
- **TELL A STORY OF A TIME WHEN YOU MADE A SACRIFICE TO GAIN SOMETHING GREATER. IT COULD BE A SMALL OR BIG. WHY DID YOU MAKE THAT SACRIFICE? WHAT DID YOU GAIN FROM IT?**
- **REREAD OUR THEME VERSE. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO DENY YOURSELF? WHAT ARE SOME HEALTHY WAYS WE CAN DO THIS IN EVERYDAY LIFE?**
- **WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO A FRIEND WHO SAID THEY DIDN'T BELIEVE IN GOD BECAUSE OF ALL THE SUFFERING IN THE WORLD?**

The key to Catholic doctrine on suffering is that God does not cause suffering. Since God has given us free will - the ability to choose - there will be evil things. But as Catholics we believe that since Jesus, who is God, suffered, he is not distant from our suffering and we can unite our suffering to his on the Cross.

- **CHIKA SAID BEFORE THAT BEING A CHRISTIAN DOES NOT MEAN THE ABSENCE OF SUFFERING, BUT SEEKING GOD IN OUR SUFFERING? WHAT DO YOU THINK THAT MEANS?**

Play Video Segment #3

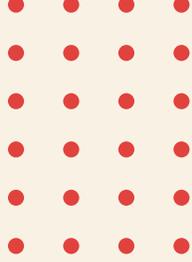
Questions

- **WHAT IS ONE THING THAT STOOD OUT TO YOU?**
- **CHIKA ENDED WITH A QUOTE FROM ST. POPE JOHN PAUL II. IT BEGAN, "IT IS JESUS WHOM YOU SEEK WHEN YOU DREAM OF HAPPINESS..." WHAT MAKES YOU HAPPY?**
- **WHY MIGHT JESUS FULFILL OUR DESIRE TO BE HAPPY? WHY MIGHT IT BE DIFFICULT TO BUY THAT JESUS IS REALLY WHAT WE SEEK?**
St. Augustine wrote in his Confessions, "You have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in yours."
- **SHE SHARED A QUOTE: "JESUS SUFFERED UNTO DEATH NOT THAT WE MIGHT NOT SUFFER, BUT THAT OUR SUFFERING MIGHT BE LIKE HIS." (GEORGE MACDONALD) HOW CAN OUR SUFFERING BE LIKE JESUS'?**
*"By his passion and death on the cross Christ has given a new meaning to suffering: it can henceforth configure us to him and unite us with his redemptive passion."
(CCC 1505) We can "offer up" our sufferings - from minor annoyances to life-threatening illnesses as a prayer, uniting them with Jesus on the cross.*
- **SAINT PAUL CALLS ALL THINGS "TRASH" COMPARED TO WHAT HE HAS GAINED IN CHRIST. WHAT IS SOMETHING YOU CHERISH VERY MUCH? WHY DOES SAINT PAUL CALL EVEN THE ITEMS WE LOVE "GARBAGE"?**
- **CHIKA LIKES TO SAY THAT WHAT DISCIPLESHIP REALLY COSTS US IS FEAR, DOUBT, AND SIN; THAT THE COST IS OFTEN SOMETHING THAT WE DON'T NEED OR IS NOT GOOD FOR US. WHY MIGHT WE BE TEMPTED TO HOLD ON TO THOSE THINGS INSTEAD OF CHOOSING JESUS?**

LEADER TIP

At one point Chika says that being a Christian does not necessarily mean you will be tortured and killed, but she will be the first to remind you that Christians being tortured and killed for their faith is a real thing. We call them *martyrs*. Look up stories of martyrs on the internet or even search "martyrs" on YDisciple.com.

Commit



Share with your group: Let's go around and share one thing we want prayers for this week. Remember, we talked about how Jesus is close to us in our suffering.

FOR OUR COMMITMENT THIS WEEK, LET'S COMMIT TO PRAYING FOR EACH OTHER AT LEAST ONCE DURING THE WEEK.

1. Closing Prayer

Begin with the Sign of the Cross, then reread the theme verse (Matthew 16:24). Invite them to share aloud anything they would like to pray for (people, circumstances, etc.). Conclude with a rote prayer such as the Our Father.

2. Follow Up

Either hand out or email the Participant Journal if you haven't already done so.

After every single meeting, send an email to parents. Thank them for helping make the group a priority. Always attach, or copy and paste the Parent Sheet (available in English and Spanish). If you are using a streaming service, share the link to the videos.



You Are Not Alone

THE INVITATION: SESSION 4

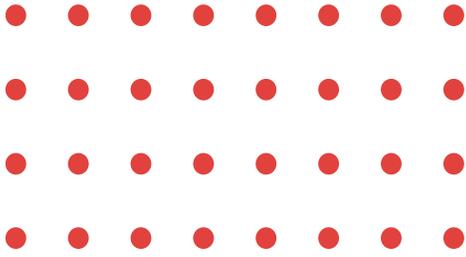
Overview:

Discipleship is not done in a vacuum. In order for our 'yes' to Jesus to have staying power, we need the support of community; in particular, faithful mentors and virtuous friendships. In this final session, young people will also be exposed to the concept of accountability.

Theme Scripture

PROVERBS 27:17

Iron is sharpened by iron; one person sharpens another.



A Key to Using this Guide:

ANYTHING IN ITALICS: Important information for leaders. Not necessary to share with the group.

REGULAR FONT: To be shared aloud with the group.

LEADER TIPS: Check out the “Leader Tip” boxes in the margins for helpful hints.

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Writer credits: Annie Grandell, Chika Anyanwu, Jake DeBolt, Jessica Beckman, James Forina, Brianna St. Amour, Emma Chaplin

Connect

1. Check In

It is always good to check-in and ask, "How was your week?" demonstrating that you care about what is going on beyond your small group. You can ask generally or have them share "Highs and Lows." (High - best part of your week; Low - worst part)

LEADER TIP

There are a lot of sports references in this one. You may also want to try playing a sport together in place of the Connect activity below.

2. Optional Activity

THE CAMPFIRE

What is the best or worst camping experience you have ever had? (If someone in your group has not been camping before, ask them to tell another vacation or travel story.)

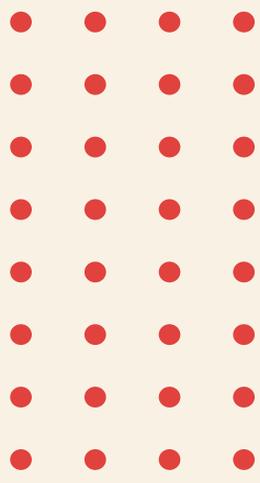
Share with Your Group: Now, imagine we are at a campfire. It is getting late and the embers are left still burning strong and giving off lots of heat. Someone pushes one of the embers out of the fire.

What happens when one ember is separated from the others? *(Wait for their responses.)*

Left alone the ember slowly fades and does not keep the warmth of the fire. The same can be said of us. We have discussed personal response and even a personal relationship with Jesus. But without an intentional community of others, we will surely fade.

LEADER TIP

Leader note: This conversation can be even more effective if you are able to have it outdoors around a real campfire. Not only does it relate to the subject at hand, but sharing time around a campfire can build community and make sharing go deeper.



3. Commitment Check

How did your commitment to pray for one another at least once go? Anyone want to share a story of a success or a struggle?

This session ends with a discussion on this very practice, holding one another accountable. This is your first foray into it, but expect this to be a part of all your small group sessions from here on out.

4. Opening Prayer

Read the theme verse, Proverbs 27:17 (found on the first page of this guide) and then lead them in a prayer thanking God for one another and how each person has been and will continue to be a support to one another. Invite the Holy Spirit to open everyone up to hear Jesus' invitation to follow him. Conclude with a prayer together such as the Our Father, Glory Be, or Hail Mary.

Share with your group: This is our fourth and final session of this series on Discipleship. We will be talking about how the people around us help us live as disciples.

Discuss

LEADER TIP

This session has 4 segments; you may want to consider splitting it over 2 weeks. Don't cut off a good conversation for the sake of "getting through it."

Play Video Segment #1

Questions

- **WHO BRINGS OUT THE BEST IN YOU?**
- **WHAT STOOD OUT TO YOU?**
- **IS THERE ANYTHING IN PARTICULAR THAT YOU CAN RELATE WITH?**

Play Video Segment #2

Questions

- **WHAT STOOD OUT TO YOU?**
- **CHIKA MADE A REFERENCE THAT WE ARE THE AVERAGE OF THE 5 PEOPLE WE SPEND THE MOST TIME WITH (*JIM ROHN*). WHO ARE THE PEOPLE YOU SPEND THE MOST TIME WITH?**
- **WHAT IS SOME EVIDENCE THAT YOU, IN FACT, HAVE BECOME THE AVERAGE OF THEM?**

- **CHIKA TALKS ABOUT HOW CONNECTED WE ARE VIA OUR PHONES, THE INTERNET, ETC., BUT THAT NEARLY HALF OF AMERICANS DESCRIBE THEMSELVES AS LONELY. WHY DO YOU THINK THIS IS?**
- **WHO IN YOUR LIFE KNOWS YOU BEST?**
- **CHIKA DESCRIBED 3 TYPES OF FRIENDS: FRIENDS OF UTILITY, FRIENDS OF PLEASURE, AND FRIENDS OF VIRTUE. FRIENDS OF VIRTUE ARE THE TYPES OF PEOPLE WHO CALL US TO BE GREATER. WHAT ARE SOME QUALITIES OF A FRIEND OF VIRTUE?**
- **DO YOU HAVE FRIENDS OF VIRTUE?**
[Explain that this group is meant to fill that need.]
- **WHY DO YOU THINK FRIENDS OF VIRTUE ARE NECESSARY WHEN IT COMES TO FAITH?**

Play Video Segment #3

LEADER TIP

Is conversation flowing well? Keep going with it! You can finish the remaining segments another time.
Dialogue > Videos

- **WHAT STOOD OUT TO YOU IN THIS VIDEO?**
- **WHO HAS BEEN A POWERFUL ADULT INFLUENCE IN YOUR LIFE? THINK OF A COACH OR TEACHER. WHAT MADE THEM INFLUENTIAL?**
- **CHIKA DESCRIBED THAT PART OF THE NAZI TACTICS WAS WINNING OVER YOUTH, THAT YOUNG PEOPLE ARE POWERFUL. DO YOU AGREE WITH THIS? HOW ARE YOUNG PEOPLE POWERFUL?**

[Share that this is your goal to be a sort of a coach - not someone who just tells them what to do, but one who runs alongside them.]

Play Video Segment #4

Questions

- **HOW WOULD YOU EXPLAIN ACCOUNTABILITY TO A FRIEND WHO DIDN'T JUST SEE THIS VIDEO?**

"To be accountable means to own up to an expectation or a standard we are trying to reach. We take account of where we are in meeting that standard. To do this with another person keeps us honest....Discipleship and discipline come from the same root word. If we are going to be disciples, we need to cultivate some important disciplines in our own life. And we need help to achieve these." (from Segment 4)

- **REREAD OUR THEME VERSE. HOW CAN ACCOUNTABILITY HELP US TO SHARPEN ONE ANOTHER?**

- **CHIKA LAYS OUT 5 THINGS A DISCIPLE SHOULD BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE FOR:**

5 S'S OF ACCOUNTABILITY

- SERVICE
- PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE
- SACRAMENTS
- OVERCOMING SIN
- SHARING JESUS WITH OTHERS

LET'S START WITH SERVICE. WHY IS SERVING IMPORTANT IN FOLLOWING JESUS?

- **WHAT ARE SOME WAYS WE CAN SERVE IN OUR EVERYDAY LIVES?**

- **WHAT ABOUT PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE? DO YOU FIND IT EASY OR DIFFICULT TO READ THE BIBLE? WHAT KEEPS YOU FROM READING IT MORE?**

LEADER TIP

Have you started bringing a Bible to read the verses from? Trust us, it will make an impression.

LEADER TIP

Check out the 30-Day Walk with Jesus on YDisciple.com to help them set and follow a prayer routine.

- **THE NEXT ONE IS SACRAMENTS. POP QUIZ: WHAT TWO SACRAMENTS CAN YOU RECEIVE EVERY DAY?**

Eucharist and reconciliation.

- **HOW DO YOU THINK SACRAMENTS ARE DIFFERENT FROM OTHER TYPES OF PRAYER?**

Prayer is conversation with God. Sacraments make that relationship tangible. They are visible signs of invisible realities. "The sacraments confer the grace that they signify. They are efficacious because in them Christ himself is at work." (CCC 1127)

- **WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR US TO RECEIVE THESE SACRAMENTS?**

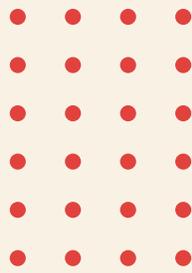
"The Church affirms that for believers the sacraments of the New Covenant are necessary for salvation... The fruit of the sacramental life is that the Spirit of adoption makes the faithful partakers in the divine nature by uniting them in a living union with the only Son, the Savior." (CCC 1129)

- **OVERCOMING SIN: HOW CAN ACCOUNTABILITY HELP US OVERCOME SOME OF OUR WEAKNESSES?**

- **SHARING JESUS WITH OTHERS: WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO TALK ABOUT OUR FAITH?**

"If Jesus has changed our lives - given us hope or purpose or freedom from sin - we should want to share that, right? It would be like having the cure to cancer and not sharing it with anyone. And yet, it's not always so easy. We get afraid of what others will think of us. We get afraid of being rejected. Having someone pushing us outside our comfort zone to speak directly about the difference Jesus has made in our lives will not only help us grow as disciples, but could also give people in desperate need of hope or purpose or freedom answers they are looking for." (from Segment 4)

Commit



Share with your group: Rather than just talking about accountability, let's each choose one of those 5 things that we know needs work. They do not have to all be the same. Take a minute to choose one and we will share it with the group. When we get together next, we will check in with each other and see how our goals have come along.

Give them time to look over the 5 S's quietly. After a minute, have them share theirs with the group.

LEADER TIP

The role of the mentor is to help them set achievable goals. Example: Commit to praying with scripture 5 minutes a day, not an hour.

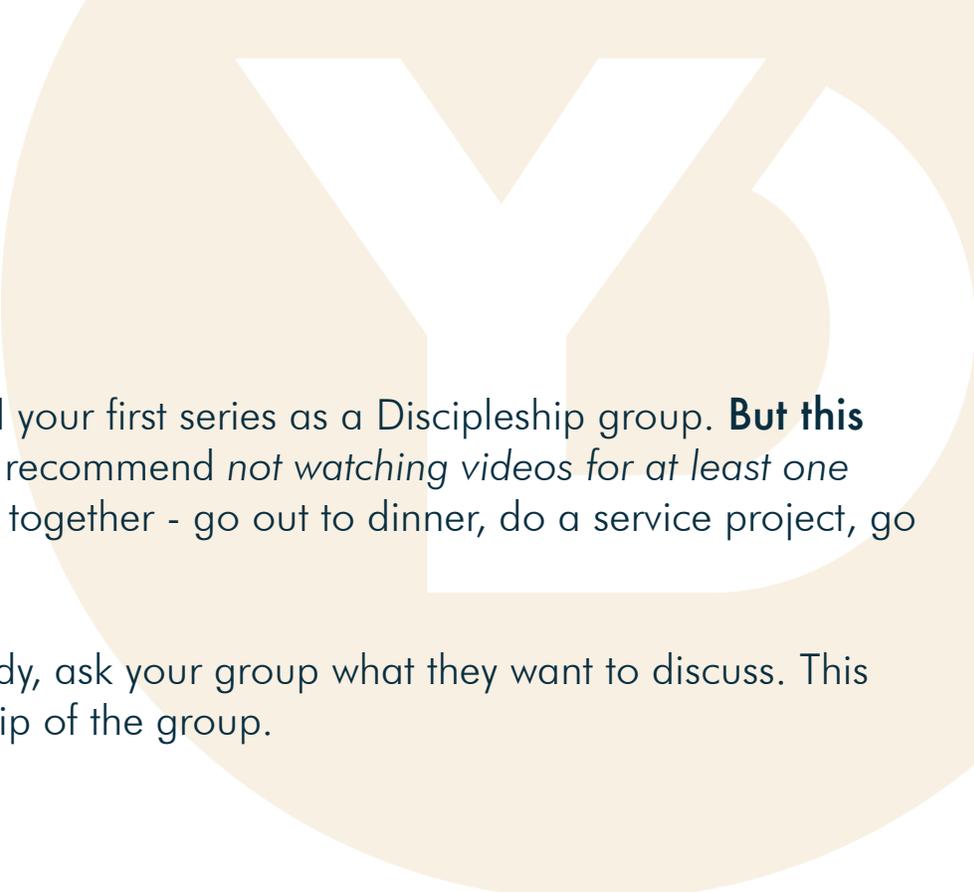
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What's Next?

Congrats! You have finished your first series as a Discipleship group. **But this is only the beginning.** We recommend *not watching videos for at least one week*. Instead do an activity together - go out to dinner, do a service project, go to Mass together, etc.

Before you start another study, ask your group what they want to discuss. This will help them take ownership of the group.

