

LET'S GO

LOVE · LISTEN · LEAD

LEAD · LESSON 2 · LEADER GUIDE

VIDEO SEGMENT 1

BREAKOUT SESSION *Play the video until asked to pause.*

Ask each group to discuss the first question. Give them a few minutes to do so.

1. Take a few minutes to discuss what it is about personal stories that makes them so powerful.

In a world of manufactured truth and fakeness, people will always value what is authentic.

Good stories are ones we can relate to. They have the main character, trouble/conflict (with whom we can empathize), a key moment or action, and resolution (that we celebrate).

Read question 2 to the entire group. Then, give them 3–5 minutes to write out their stories.

2. Stories and testimonials are a powerful way to share how the gospel has changed your life. Take a few minutes to write out your story. If time seems short, or if writing out the whole thing seems intimidating, consider sketching out the high points. For example: How you came to faith. What it was like before knowing God or having a church home. What life is like now after knowing the full forgiveness you possess in Christ? How does knowing Jesus change your everyday?

Read question 3 to the entire group. Then, give a bit of background on the first story (Acts 22:1–21) before either reading it or having it read. Then give a bit of background on the second story (Acts 26:11–23) before either reading it or having it read. After both have been read, ask the group to identify any differences in the way Paul told his story.

3. You are probably somewhat familiar with the apostle Paul's conversion from persecutor of Christians to missionary for Christ. The Bible records two times when Paul shared his story with others. In Acts 22:1–21 he addresses the crowd in Jerusalem and in Acts 26:11–23 as he addresses King Agrippa.

Let's take a few minutes to read both accounts. As we do, note any differences you see.

Chapter 22 Background: Acts 22 describes Paul's testimony to a Jewish mob in Jerusalem after he had been falsely accused of defiling the Temple.

Chapter 22 is a testimony before a hostile audience of Jewish leaders. Here Paul emphasizes his "Jewishness" and his faithfulness to the Law of Moses.

Chapter 26 Background: Paul is testifying before King Agrippa and Governor Festus before being sent to Rome to stand trial.

Chapter 26 is a defense to a less hostile audience (King Agrippa and Governor Festus) and emphasizes the message to the Gentiles and leaves out words and details that would only be understood by the Jews (Nazareth, God of our Fathers, etc.)

4. Why is it important to tailor your story to the person to whom you are telling it?

To make sure they are able to understand it.

To emphasize points that will be most meaningful for them.

5. Agree/Disagree: Personal stories of God's grace focus too much on the person and not enough on God.

Focusing too much on ourselves can certainly be a danger. However, Paul and other believers have used stories of how God has worked in their lives to help convey the truths of God. Stories are memorable and relatable.

 **VIDEO SEGMENT 2**

 **BREAKOUT SESSION**

Play the video until asked to pause.

Lead participants through the questions one at a time.

1. What would be some of the challenges of following Jesus in the first century?

Leaving your home (in the case of the 12 disciples).

Being looked down on by respected religious leaders.

After Jesus' ascension, followers were often persecuted (loss of income, freedom, life).

2. What do you think are some of the challenges for someone to come to your church for the first time?

Feeling out of place.

Not knowing what to do, where to go, or when to stand or sit, etc.

Feeling too guilty to be in church.

Not understanding some of the language being used. (Word of God, sacraments, Lord's Supper, bulletin, etc.)

3. What might you do to help them overcome each of the challenges you identified?

Speak with them ahead of time to give them an idea of what to expect.

Introduce them to others.

Explain what is happening during the worship service.

Assure them they are not the only one who has ever felt the way they do.

4. What challenges you most about inviting people to church?

5. What might be some things you can do or remember to help you overcome these challenges?

Jesus promises to go with us.

Jesus wants all people to be saved.

The Holy Spirit is the one who changes people's hearts.

The main message I am inviting them to hear is good news. It will not be a burden for them but a blessing.

After the group has finished discussing, restart the video.

 **VIDEO SEGMENT 3**

 **GROUP DISCUSSION**

Have each person in your group share the name of an unchurched person God has brought into their life, how they will show love to that person in the near future and how they plan to lead them to the gospel. In the coming weeks, encourage others in your group by asking how their plan is going and sharing your own story.

The entire group may wish to continue meeting on a regular basis to share their outreach stories with one another and encourage each other to continue loving, listening, and leading.