

SHARING THE GOSPEL ONE SOUL AT A TIME



Facilitator Notes

One by One is a Bible study based on Pastor David Rosenau's keynote presentation at the WELS National Conference on Lutheran Leadership in January of 2020. Using powerful personal stories and drawing from his wealth of experience both as a detective and a parish pastor, Pastor Rosenau helps Christians understand why it is so important to see every soul as a treasure and why we want to be willing to spend the time and effort necessary to share the gospel with each one.

One by One is designed to be used by large or small group Bible studies. Large groups will want to divide into smaller discussion groups as they work through the questions in the study guide. The study encourages conversation as participants share their experiences sharing the gospel and discuss ways they can apply the lessons learned from Pastor Rosenau.

One by One is divided into six parts. Facilitators should feel free to use the parts in the fashion that best suits their setting. For groups that have less than an hour per session or those who wish to have more time for discussion, the study could last six sessions. For those who would like to limit discussion and focus primarily on Pastor Rosenau's presentation, the material could be covered in as few as two sessions. This, however, would necessitate the removal of most of the questions in the study guide. The facilitator is encouraged to look carefully at the length of each video section, the number and kind of questions asked in each section, and the nature of the group (i.e. are they a talkative group or rather reticent to share their thoughts) to decide how many sessions will be used to cover the material.

Each session consists of a video of a portion of Pastor Rosenau's presentation and a study guide sheet. Facilitators are encouraged to ask participants to glance at the questions prior to viewing the video so they have some sense of what to be listening for while viewing the video. It is wise to discourage participants from writing answers while viewing the video as this may distract them and they may miss important pieces of information. Once the video is finished, the facilitator leads the participants through the questions in the study guide, allowing for plenty of discussion. If the group seems interested in a particular topic, it is perfectly acceptable to spend extra time there. Allow the participant to drill down on the things that most interest them.

PART ONE: EVERY SOUL IS UNIQUE



VIDEO 1 (7 MINUTES)

Every soul is an individual with their own past, their own questions, their own concerns. Only by listening carefully and caring deeply about that soul will we be able to connect with them and connect them with the gospel.

1. What are some things we might learn from the way Pastor Rosenau interacted with the three newcomers on his first Sunday?

He greeted them warmly even before they entered the building.

She said she was Methodist but didn't care where she went. He didn't lecture her on why she should care, etc.

Her sister and her husband said they were nothing. He used humor to say that it was his first Sunday and that he had prayed that God would send him a Methodist and a nothing and here you are.

2. Joann said she would not be back the next week because she didn't have the courage. What does this tell us about the challenge of an unchurched person walking into a church?

It's scary. It takes courage for them to do so.

How did Pastor Rosenau address her fear?

1) He said he would see her next week, setting an expectation. Most people don't want to let others down.

2) He offered something that would lessen her fear by saying he would walk in with her.

3. Joann said she did not believe there was a heaven. What would likely have happened if Pastor Rosenau had immediately corrected her?

An argument or she may have shut down and not shared her story

4. Her husband, Dick, didn't believe there was a God and said that men wrote the Bible, not God. How did Pastor Rosenau's reply demonstrate both humility and confidence?

He said he could not convince Dick (humility) but that God could (confidence).

5. After Joann died, why could Pastor Rosenau's wife say that what they had sacrificed for him to become a pastor would have been worth it if it was just for Joann?

Because Joann's precious soul is in heaven. What could be more valuable than that?

Apply: Think of a person you know who is unchurched. What do you know about the person's past experience (especially their experience with Christianity) that is particular to them? If you don't know, think of how you might learn more about them. Share your thoughts.

**PART TWO:
EVERY BELIEVER IS PERSONALLY
PREPARED TO BE A WITNESS**



VIDEO 2 (15 MINUTES)

God has guided your life in a unique way. One of the reasons he has brought you to where you are is so that he might use you as his witness to reach souls with the gospel.

1. What are some ways God prepared Pastor Rosenau to be a pastor when he was...?

A mortician

He learned how important it is to be professional, personable, to know the names of people, to be respectful, etc.

A detective

He learned to work hard, how hard people's lives often are, etc.

2. What were some things Pastor Rosenau and his wife sacrificed for him to serve as a detective?

*They couldn't be seen together in public.
Time with his family. He sometimes worked 24/7.
He was severely injured multiple times.*

3. List at least three ways the Lord influenced Pastor Rosenau to eventually become a pastor.

*Parents of SS kids he was teaching
His pastors' encouragement
A pastor he didn't know at a homicide scene
MLC second career committee
MLC second career students
Deutschlander class
Deutschlander sermon in chapel
Women's Choir in chapel
A man at MLC, who said, "I think you need to be here."*

Apply: You are a unique saint. What are some ways God has shaped your life to prepare you to share your faith (personality traits, past experiences, unchurched people with whom you have come into contact, etc.)? Share at least two.

**PART THREE:
GOD PROVIDES COURAGE TO DO WHAT IS
UNCOMFORTABLE AND INCONVENIENT**



VIDEO 3 (7 MINUTES)

Jesus never said being his witness would be comfortable or convenient. But he did promise to give Christians the courage to do what is uncomfortable and inconvenient.

1. What question did the Chief ask Pastor Rosenau when they were in the duck blind that makes it clear that Pastor Rosenau had let his light shine while serving as a detective?

The chief asked, "What makes you different?" The way Pastor Rosenau had lived demonstrated a difference.

Share some ways you and other Christians can let their light shine while living in twenty-first-century America.

Speaking truthfully, not using foul language, not drinking too much alcohol, listening carefully to others, not gossiping, attending worship, helping our neighbors when there is a need, etc.

2. When Pastor Rosenau told the chief that, "...the important thing for guys like us is to know that Jesus is our Savior" and the chief replied, "You have no idea who I really am." What do you suppose he meant?

He thought he had done too many wrong things for God to forgive him.

3. How did Pastor Rosenau demonstrate true love the day after the chief called him?

He flew to Michigan and went to the hospital to tell him about Jesus.

4. How else did God use Pastor Rosenau's visit to the chief to reach souls?

Pastor Rosenau held the chief's funeral and he was able to share the gospel with a church packed with law enforcement officers.

Apply: Share a time when you were uncomfortable or inconvenienced sharing your faith. If you are willing, share a time when your discomfort or inconvenience kept you from sharing your faith.

**PART FOUR:
A ONE BY ONE APPROACH
TO GROWING A CHURCH**



It is tempting to think that the church must grow by bunches, that large efforts to lots of people is the key. The truth is that God often grows his Church bit by bit, one soul at a time.

EXAMPLE #1 - VIDEO 4A (12 MINUTES)

During his vicar year, Pastor Rosenau and his congregation prayed that God would fill their building with people. Then, they enacted a simple plan to reach the lost.

1. When Pastor Rosenau began his vicar year at the mission church, what were some things that would have seemed to limit the success the church could have reaching the lost?

They were in a rented facility with no real altar and no pews. Pastor Rosenau had no idea how to do evangelism.

2. Although he didn't have any real knowledge of how to do evangelism, what did Pastor Rosenau tell his people he had plenty of?

Courage

3. What did Pastor Rosenau promise his people he would do whenever they put him into contact with someone?

Visit that person

4. Although he said he had plenty of courage, what did Pastor Rosenau discover as he sat in his car before going out to knock on doors?

He was terrified even though he had done far more frightening things as a detective.

5. What two things did Pastor Rosenau tell people they could expect when he invited them to church?

His church wasn't much to look at or listen to. But they would be amazed at what the Word of God would do for them.

6. Almost everyone has something or somethings that they don't like about their church. This can keep us from inviting others. Instead of focusing on those things, what ought we focus on that will encourage us to invite others?

The Word of God

EXAMPLE #2 – VIDEO 4B (5 MINUTES)

Assigned to his first church, Pastor Rosenau enacted the same simple approach he had used when he served as a vicar.

1. Rather than a program, what tool did Pastor Rosenau say God would use to grow the church?

The Word of God

2. What tactic would God use? How would God spread that Word?

One by one. One soul at a time.

3. How many Bibles had the congregation given away as a result of their Christmas booth?

None

4. How many people had become active in the church as a result of the Christmas booth?

None

5. What was Pastor Rosenau's alternate idea?

He and the man he was speaking with would invite people to come to church.

6. Identify the basic evangelism plan at Pastor Rosenau's church.

- *Worship will be good every week.*
- *They would hold as many Bible classes as necessary to serve new people.*
- *Members would be salt and light to the people in their lives.*
- *Members would invite people to church.*

7. What do people who knew nothing about WELS say about it after becoming active in Pastor Rosenau's church? Why?

This is the best church I have ever attended. They feel so welcomed and hear the gospel so clearly.

PART FIVE: THE IMPORTANT ROLE OF THE PASTOR



VIDEO 5 (13 MINUTES)

1. What two simple things does Pastor Rosenau tell people he meets and invites to church?

He will remember their name and be waiting for them in the parking lot when they come.

2. Doing those two things not only makes the people he invites more comfortable when they visit, what added benefit for outreach is there for his church members?

They can confidently tell people they invite that the pastor will warmly greet them when they visit.

3. What impact do you think it has on someone who has visited when they receive a handwritten card and/or a phone call from Pastor Rosenau the following week?

No doubt it makes them feel special. In many churches, people do not receive such personal attention from the pastor. Handwritten cards are increasingly rare and tend to stand out even more in our digital age.

4. Pastor Rosenau encourages his members to invite friends not only to worship but also to Bible classes. What assurances does he give so that people can know they don't need to be afraid of being embarrassed if they come to Bible class?

*He will not make them read anything out loud.
He will not put them on the spot.
They can just relax and be spiritually fed.*

5. How does Pastor Rosenau remind himself to make visits and hold himself accountable for making visits?

He schedules them and has a goal for how many he wants to make. He reports to his council every month.

Apply: Do you think non-WELS people who visited your church would say that WELS is the best church body they have ever been a part of? If so, why? If not, why not? If not, what could you do to help create a congregation where people would say this?

**PART SIX:
THE STARFISH STORY,
HARD WORK, & A SIMPLE PLAN**



VIDEO 6A (5 MINUTES)

1. Jot down the point of the starfish story in your own words. Share when you are done.
2. You cannot save every soul. But think of one soul who is unchurched with whom you could share your faith.

VIDEO 6B (8 MINUTES)

3. What are some benefits of a pastor sharing outreach stories with his members?
It gives them confidence. It gives them an example. It gives them encouragement.
4. What question does Pastor Rosenau encourage his members to ask people they meet?
“Do you have a pastor who visits you?”
5. What makes this question so effective?
If you ask whether they have a church, many will say yes even if they are not active. It also communicates that your church is a place that cares about their soul.
6. Envision what it would look like if everyone in your congregation worked as hard to spread the gospel as Pastor Rosenau used to work as a homicide detective. Discuss what you envision. Be as specific as possible. What would you see? What would you hear? What would you feel?

7. In what specific way does Pastor Rosenau greet worshipers on Sunday mornings? Why does he do it this way? What pitfalls is he trying to avoid?

He stands in the parking lot and greets people. It immediately tells the visitor they are welcome. He doesn't want to only speak with a few people which might happen if he were inside.

8. Pastor Rosenau says that having too many people greet visitors would be “weird.” What do you think he meant? Why is this important to avoid?

It can be overwhelming for a guest. Or it could even seem fake. Either way, a guest is extremely unlikely to return if this is their first impression.

Apply: Evaluate your congregation's Sunday morning experience, especially for guests. What could be improved? Make a list and discuss how each item might be addressed.