

Leader's Prep Guide

The Leader's Prep Guide is a one-page glimpse of the stuff you need to know to begin preparing to teach the Large Group Session.

Session Overview

The Session Overview is a glance at some of the big picture details of each session.

- **Session Title:** The Ultimate Exchange
- **Session Purpose:** To wrap up *Exchange* with a hopeful look at the future God has promised where the brokenness of this world is once-and-for-all exchanged for the perfect beauty of a restored Creation.
- **Scripture Passages:** Hebrews 12:1-3, 1 Peter 4:12-17, Revelation 21:1-5
- **Session Snapshot:** This final session helps remind students that living the exchanged life is difficult. It's not easy. Some of this comes from dealing with our sin nature. Some of this comes from dealing with the persecution of others. It's tough. But the Bible never says it would be any other way. We can take hope from this. But ultimately, our greatest hope is from the final exchange God will make when He ushers in a perfect eternity with Him, free from sin and suffering. This fact alone should help us make it when times are tough.

Session Specifics

Session Specifics are just that: important aspects of the session outline that you need to keep in mind as you prepare.

Details on Large Group Session Outlines

- Here's the overall flow of each Large Group Session. (This way you'll know where you're headed as you think about tailoring this outline to fit your needs.)
 - **Session 1:** Theme pitch: Introducing Christ's Great Exchange
 - **Session 2:** The powerful truth about the new life this exchange purchased for us
 - **Session 3:** A look at what living the "exchanged life" looks like, practically speaking
 - **Session 4:** A hopeful look to the future when God exchanges this broken world for a perfected one

A note about Small Groups

- In Small Group Session 4, students will be covering the exchange of comfort for call, urging students to be brave in following God's leading over choosing to stay comfortable with what they know.
- Small Group Session 4 Passages are as follows:
 - **Main Scripture:** Matthew 28:16-20
 - **Supplemental Scripture:** Acts 1:8, 1 Corinthians 9:19-23, Romans 1:16, Romans 10:14-15
- You can allude to these passages if you choose. But mostly, just keep them in mind, so if you "freelance" a bit you won't steal any of the Small Group Leader's thunder.

DETAILED Large Group Speaker Outline: Session 4: The Ultimate Exchange

This DETAILED outline is specifically designed to give lots of tools to craft a great Large Group talk. For every talking point, we've provided some optional content for you to use, if you choose. (If you'd like a more streamlined outline, please see the **SIMPLE Large Group Speaker Outline**.)

Session Intro

In this section you'll see some **suggestions** to help you intro the session. Use as is, add to them, or come up with your own!

Intro Option 1: Content Intro

- Take the opportunity to review what you've learned so far, as you see fit. You shouldn't feel the need to go too in depth, but you might want to consider hitting the high points of your Large Group Sessions up to this point.
- Then, explain to students that this lesson will focus on one last exchange that God has in store for all people. This exchange helps us deal with a hard truth: living the exchanged life can be a real struggle at times.
 - **Consider saying something like:** The last thing we need to do is to gloss over the fact that living for Christ is difficult at times. As we finish up our time in exchange, let's look at what makes the exchanged life tricky, and how we can take hope for those times when things get tough.

Intro Option 2: Thematic Intro

- Instruct students to think about the last thing they worked really, really hard for.
- Have them picture this in their head.
 - If you're in a smaller sized group, have students share what they are envisioning.
- Explain to students that most anything worth having is worth the hard work it takes to attain it.
 - **Say something like:** Think about how hard you worked to become a starter on the team, or to make the squad, or to beat that guy or girl in that match. Think about how much work you put in to make the band, or get that part you wanted. You worked hard to save the money for whatever it was you were saving your money for! In most cases, you wouldn't have known what it feels like to get what you wanted had you not put in the hard work required to earn it. And even when we work hard and come up short, there's still a tremendous lesson to be learned in giving it our all.
- Be prepared to share your own story of working hard for something.
 - **Then, consider saying something like this:** As we wrap up our time in *Exchange*, I want to challenge you to consider something: living the exchanged life isn't easy. It's hard, for several reasons. And though succeeding in living the exchanged life doesn't exactly come through your hard work, there is a lot to be said for giving Christ everything you are to become more like Him. Let's take a look at why the exchanged life is so challenging.

Bible Study

In this section you'll find the heart of your Large Group Session content, the Bible Study. This section gives three Teaching Points with supporting, optional content suggestions. All of the optional content is designed to help you **customize** how you will teach the session. Teach it as is or tailor it to allow for your personality and experience.

Teaching Point 1: Living the exchanged life isn't easy.

- Explain to students that you're aware that living the exchanged life isn't easy, a fact they already know if they've been following Christ for any length of time.
 - **Consider saying something like:** The struggle we all deal with is with our sin nature. We are flawed people trying to live in a manner that is befitting of Jesus, the perfect Son of God. And though we have the Holy Spirit in us to empower us to live the exchanged life, we still struggle to live as Christ-followers in this world. God knows this, and gave us encouragement to help us as we go.
- Instruct students to turn to Hebrews 12:1-3.
- **Then, read Hebrews 12:1-3 aloud.**

- Explain to students that the author of Hebrews is using the image of a runner as a metaphor to describe devoting ourselves to living the exchanged life.
 - **Say something like:** When the author says to throw off everything that hinders us from living the exchanged life, and the sin that gets in our way, he's doing two things: 1) He's acknowledging that living our lives as Christ-followers is hard, and 2) he's pointing out what's hard about it. The "stuff" of life *does* entangle us, getting in our way as we try and focus on living a godly life. Sin *does* "slow us down"! But he also gives us the solution to sticking with it when the going gets tough. He says, "No matter how bad it gets, don't take your eyes off Jesus. He's been through this race, too. And He did it so you could do it."
- Explain that Jesus joyfully took on the cross especially for us, an overwhelmingly awful situation to embrace. Explain that this fact alone should give us strength when things get tough.

Transition Statement:

Living the exchanged life isn't just tough because of our sin nature; it's tough because of outside pressures, as well.

Teaching Point 2: Living the exchanged life will put you at odds with the world.

- Explain to students that living the exchanged life can call a lot of attention to them. The closer they walk with Christ, the less they will look like the world around them. Explain that this will only make things tougher.
 - **Consider saying something like:** If you were looking for a way to become popular, following Christ isn't it. If you were trying to identify ways to make and keep lots of friends, living the exchanged life wouldn't be your best bet. Following Christ, *truly following Him*, puts you at odds with the world. But then again, the Bible says all along that this would be the case.
- Instruct students to turn to 1 Peter 4:12-17.
 - Before reading the passage aloud, explain that 1 Peter was one of two letters written by Peter, one of Jesus' disciples and a leader of the early church, to Christ-followers who had begun to experience persecution because of their faith.
- **Then, read 1 Peter 4:12-17 aloud.**
 - Explain to students that these verses hold a few important truths about the reaction caused by living the exchanged life.
 - **Say something like:** Verse 12 gets right to the point. Peter basically says, "If your life is sometimes tough because you're living the exchanged life, don't worry. It's tough for everyone in your shoes." He doesn't try to sugar coat it. He actually says you should consider it a positive, because they treated Jesus the same way. Peter makes it clear: if we find life hard because we're living the wrong way, we should be ashamed. But if we're finding life tough because we live the exchanged life, we should throw a party! We're living the exact life Jesus called us to live.

We've provided an option for you to use to supplement this **Teaching Point**, if you choose. Use the one we've provided, or provide your own!

Option: Going Deeper: Suffering

- Explain that the idea of maintaining any sort of positive feeling in the midst of suffering is completely foreign to almost everyone who doesn't follow Christ.
 - The Bible's command to see suffering because of our faith as a positive is unique. But it's a common thread in Scripture. Explain that you'll take a closer look as a way of wrapping your collective heads around this counter-cultural ideal.
- **Read John 15:18-21 aloud.**
 - **Then, say something like:** Jesus doesn't beat around the bush here. He makes it pretty clear: the world hated Him, and if you identify yourself as a Christ-follower, the world will hate you too. If the world sees enough of Christ in us, we will at some point find ourselves having to stand up for our faith. But, we can take heart knowing that Jesus went before us.
- **Read James 1:2-3, 12 aloud.**
 - **Then, say something like:** James calls us to something that seems impossible. He urges us to see joy in the fact that we are being treated poorly simply because we identify with Christ. But James also speaks to what we gain by

sticking with our devotion to Christ. Staying true to Christ is evidence of genuine faith. And we know that genuine faith means eternal life with God.

- **Read John 16:33 aloud.**
 - **Then, say something like:** Jesus helps us understand that no matter how hard it gets, He has ultimately conquered the world. This presents a great segue into our final teaching point.

Transition Statement

Living the exchanged life is challenging. And at times it's not exactly fun. Jesus knew this firsthand. But the amazing thing is that God gives us a hope for the future that enables us to persevere through it all.

Teaching Point 3: We can take hope because God already knows how it ends.

- Explain to students that as you wrap up your look at *Exchange*, it's only fitting to point out that there is a final exchange the Bible points to, one in which God sets everything right again. For good.
- Instruct students to turn to Revelation 21:1-5.
 - Before reading the passage aloud, explain that John wrote Revelation around 60-70 years or so after Jesus died.
 - Revelation is the result of a vision God allowed John to have, in which John saw the way it's all going to go down when Jesus returns to earth.
 - Jesus' return sets in motion God's plan to rid the world of sin, and to usher in an eternity in which God is with us and we are with Him.
 - This is the final exchange God will make, exchanging our broken, sinful world for eternity in perfect union with Him.
- **Then, read Revelation 21:1-5 aloud.**
 - **Say something like:** Look what an amazing picture this is. Is there a better verse than verse 3? How incomprehensible is it to think that there will be a day when we will be with God, literally in His presence? That should make all of our hearts skip a beat. But verse 4 makes this even sweeter. When we're finally with God, there will be no more suffering. No pain. No need. No sadness. All will be perfectly perfect! This hope should empower us to make it through life's tough times. God is with us today. And there is a future coming that is brighter than anything we could imagine.

We've provided an option for you to use to supplement this **Teaching Point**, if you choose. Use the one we've provided, or provide your own!

Option: Are We There Yet?

- Arrange to show the "Are We There Yet?" Scene from *Shrek 2*.
 - Clips like these come and go on YouTube. As of the writing of this outline, a good version of the clip was available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4vUBsTJYK28>
 - You can find the clip on YouTube by searching for "Shrek are we there yet?"
 - There are a lot of options. Find one that's high quality enough to show your group.
 - Or, you could always purchase/rent the movie from iTunes or rent/stream it from Netflix.
- Explain to your students that the classic question, "Are we there yet?" has been asked in numerous movies and on countless family vacations.
 - **Then, show the *Shrek* clip of Donkey driving everyone nuts.**
- When you've finished, explain that Donkey suffers from what every child suffers from on every road trip of any distance: a lack of perspective.
 - **Consider saying something like:** Donkey is an example of not having the right perspective. See, Donkey didn't know where *Far, Far Away* was, just like your younger siblings might not know where the beach is. They don't know how to prepare themselves mentally for the trip because they don't know how long the trip is. All they know is that they have been in the car for a while. And so the question inevitably comes. "Are we there yet?"
- Explain that we can sometimes suffer from this same lack of perspective. We can become too fixated on our lives today. We can make too much out of our struggles, especially those related to following Christ. We don't have the same excuse as Donkey had, though. We should know where we're headed.
 - **Say something like:** The Bible makes it clear. Life on this earth is an amazing blessing, full of rich experiences and vibrant memories. But it's not the ultimate experience. It's merely a blip on the timeline of history before we join

God in relationship forever. We have God's Word. We know the ending. We can see that God will one day make all things new. We aren't there yet, but we can certainly see where the end of the line is. And the end of this trip is just the beginning.

CLOSING

Option 1: *Exchange* Closing Video

- Arrange to show the *Exchange* closing video to your group.
 - The video does an excellent job of wrapping up the weekend.
 - It ends on an encouraging, uplifting note, but not without a bit of a challenge.
- You can let the video speak for itself, or you can choose to focus on one aspect of it and flesh it out a bit more.

Option 2: Closing Challenge

- Wrap up your time in *Exchange* by challenging students to embrace and apply all they have learned during this time.
- You'll have a sense of how to challenge them based on how your time has gone.
 - Make it personal and heartfelt.
 - Be sure to close in prayer, asking for the Spirit to empower and convict them as they go out from your event.