

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:** Jesus Is The Gate
- **Session Purpose:** To remind students that Jesus is the only pathway to salvation and a life of purpose.
- **Scripture Passages:** John 10:7-10
- **Session Snapshot:** Jesus is the only source of salvation. This might be a basic truth, but we're wrong if we think students don't need to be reminded of it, especially in a world where absolute truth claims are often mocked and disregarded. Reinforcing this truth is powerful. But this lesson will also help your students consider what Jesus is saving them *to*. By following Christ, we are led down a path God has chosen for us, a path with our good and God's glory in mind. Following Christ opens up powerful possibility for us. This lesson will help your students understand that their truest purpose can be found pursuing God and His ways.

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, plus a look at Jesus as the perfect leader worthy of following.
 - **Session 2:** Jesus is the gate. If we follow, it leads to "green pastures."
 - **Session 3:** Jesus laid down His life for us. He is active in leading us.
 - **Session 4:** When we come to faith in Christ, we are forever safe in Him.

A note about Small Groups

- In Small Group Session 2, students will be defining what it means to follow Jesus.
- Small Group Session 2 Passages are as follows:
 - **Main Scripture:** Matthew 16:24, John 12:25-26, Matthew 3:1-10, Matthew 10:37-39
- Keep them in mind, so if you "freelance" a bit you won't steal any of the Small Group Leader's thunder.

Large Group Speaker Outline [SIMPLE]: Session 2: Jesus Is The Gate

*This SIMPLE outline is specifically designed to give you a streamlined outline for your Large Group talk. We've suggested some talking points that provide a nice roadmap for teaching the passage. But feel free to tailor them as you see fit. (If you would like a more in-depth outline complete with optional content for each point, please see the **DETAILED 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!

Review

- Start by reminding students of what you talked about last session. Use the following teaching points from Large Group Lesson 1 to review:
 - **Jesus Is The Only Person Suited To Lead You.**
 - **Jesus Knows You. And He Wants You To Follow Him.**
 - **Jesus Goes Ahead Of You. He Is Leading You Out.**
- Then, consider using one of the following intro options to set-up this session's theme.

Intro Option 1: Content Intro

- Explain to students that this session will build off the same passage you looked at in Large Group Session 1.
- Explain to students that this is in the midst of a section of John's Gospel where Jesus is really in the thick of His confrontations with the Pharisees.
- Jesus was proving He is the Messiah through His miracles and His teachings. But the Pharisees were unwilling to see Jesus for who He was, even though many other people accepted Jesus as the true Son of God.
- Remind students that you're looking at the Good Shepherd narrative.
 - Consider saying something like: **We're going to see Jesus continue to use the shepherd analogy to describe His role with us, His children. In this session, we'll see how Jesus sets Himself up as the only way to salvation and a full life. Let's look closer.**

Intro Option 2: More Than One Way

- Ask students to think about the following scenario: imagine they wanted to get a message to someone. How many ways do they have at their disposal to do so?
 - Before your talk, do a Google image search for as many different ways of getting a message across as you can think of.
 - Prepare to show the images in a slideshow as you make your points.
 - Consider Google searching for: texting, Facebook message, phone call, email, writing a letter, etc.
 - Consider getting creative. Do a Google image search for skywriting, express mail, Morse code, etc.
- Once you have finished going through the list of ways you can send a message, make the case that we have a richness of ways to communicate.
 - Say something like: **In our current society, communication is one example of something where there are dozens of different ways to do it. There is no "one way" to get a point across. You can basically use as many ways to communicate with people as your imagination will allow. But there are some things in life where that's not the case. There are some things where there is only a few ways to do something. And still other ways where there is only ONE way to do something. Today we'll be looking at one a concept that truly has only one way to go about it.**

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 and a Closing activity.

Teaching Point 1: Jesus Is The Gate, The Only Way To Salvation.

- Remind students that the focus of *Follower* is the idea of living out an authentic faith. Real faith requires a relationship with God.
 - Consider saying something like: **We talked last lesson why Jesus was worthy of following. Jesus makes that point extremely clear in the verses we're about to read.**
- Instruct students to turn to John 10:7-10.
 - Before reading the passage aloud, remind students of the context for the Book of John.
 - Explain that John is one of the Gospels, the four books of the New Testament that contain the stories of Christ.
 - Remind students that John was one of Jesus' most trusted disciples who would go on to write 1, 2, and 3 John and Revelation.
 - Explain that Jesus had just finished healing a man who was born blind, and a group of Pharisees were confronting Jesus about His identity. They doubted that He was the Son of God. And so He delivered the Good Shepherd narrative to make the case for His true identity and mission.
- **Then, read John 10:7-10 aloud.**
- Explain to students that you want to start by focusing on verses 7-8. Re-read verses 7-8.
 - Explain this verse reinforces the first teaching point. If you haven't already mentioned it, do so now.
- Explain that Jesus switches metaphors here in this verse.
- Remind them that Jesus had been referring to Himself as the shepherd. Now, He refers to Himself as the gate.
 - Say something like: **When you think of a gate, what do you think of? An entrance of some sort, right? In this verse, Jesus has been talking about the sheep pen as a place where His sheep, or His followers, were gathered. If we run this metaphor out, it makes sense why Jesus refers to Himself as the gate. Jesus is the only way we can access eternal life. Through faith in Jesus, our sins are forgiven and we have peace with God. There is no other gate, no other way to be right with God.**
- **Then, read Acts 4:12 aloud.**
 - Explain to students that this verse supports what Jesus is saying here.
 - Say something like: **There are many other passages of Scripture that make this point. When we consider all of them, it's clear: Jesus is indeed the only way to salvation.**

Transition Statement:

Explain that Jesus is the only way to salvation. But following Christ opens up other meaningful blessings for us as well.

Teaching Point 2: Jesus Leads Us To Safe Pastures

- Explain to students that you want to shift their attention to verse 9.
- **Re-read verse 9 aloud.**
- Share Teaching Point 2, if you haven't already.
 - Then consider saying something like: **Jesus reiterates His message of salvation through Him alone. But then He goes deeper. He paints this picture of sheep coming and going from the pen to the pasture. This is an awesome metaphor for our life as followers. In life, there will be times where we need to seek the comfort and safety of the pen, protected by Christ's presence as our great shepherd. But life is lived in the pastures. We go out into the world, following Christ's lead, experiencing life with Him as our guide. He leads us to safe pastures, where we find all that we need to thrive.**

Transition Statement

Jesus does indeed take care of all of our needs. He provides for us. And He provides abundantly. Which leads us to our final point.

Teaching Point 3: Following Jesus Results In A Full Life

- Explain to students that the last point is found in verse 10.
- **Re-read verse 10 aloud.**
 - Share Teaching Point 3, if you haven't already.
 - Then consider saying something like: **If you recall from our first session, Jesus was originally talking to the Pharisees. Jesus had earlier compared them to thieves. Here He is comparing Himself to their kind of leadership. People had been following these leaders who used legalism and religious ritual to burden people with a works-based righteousness. Jesus is lifting up His leadership as the way to a full, rich life, both eternally and while we're here on earth.**
- Explain to students that following Jesus is what we were created to do. Only in following Him will we find our true purpose in this life.
 - Remind them that through seeking God and His will for us, and submitting our lives to follow Christ, we gain meaning, joy, and fulfillment living out God's mission day-by-day.
- Explain to students that John 10:10 is a popular verse. It's a verse that helps us understand that Jesus didn't just save us from our sins, He saved us to a full life. But what does this mean exactly?
 - Say something like: **One of the biggest misconceptions about living life as a Christ-follower is that it's somehow limiting. People think if you follow Christ you have to stop having fun. They think it's the end of your individuality, or the end of an adventurous life. But the opposite is true. When you follow Christ, your life will have more purpose and more meaning. Your life will impact other people and the world. Think about the opportunities Christ-followers have to impact their city, country, and far reaches of the world. Following Jesus leads to a full life.**

CLOSING

Option 1: Public Time Of Response

- Different churches and faith traditions will have different ways of handling a time of responding to the message.
- If you want to facilitate a time for students to respond to your message, make sure you plan ahead of time to have other leaders present to meet with any students who want to talk.
- As appropriate, and according to how your church normally facilitates this time, allow a chance for students to ask any questions about coming to faith in Christ, or about their state of their current relationship with God.

Option 2: Private Time Of Response

- Encourage students to take the time to reflect on their spiritual lives.
- Encourage them to ask questions of any adult if they need to, whether that's about coming to faith in God or about where they are in their faith.
- Challenge students to spend time reflecting on the purpose Jesus made possible for them and how their lives reflect this purpose.
- Challenge them, if they've not considered or acted on coming to faith in Jesus, to really reflect and take serious the message. Challenge them to search Scripture and to give God a chance to prove to Him that He is indeed all He claims to be.