

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 Shepherd Who Goes With Us
- **Session Purpose:** To remind students that Jesus is not a passive leader. He has been active to insure their salvation, and He remains active in guiding them as they follow Him.
- **Scripture Passages:** John 10:11-16
- **Session Snapshot:** Jesus' willingness to lay down His life for us, His sheep, paved the way for us to follow Him. Jesus is active in leading us. He was active in coming to earth to live, die, and rise from the dead, securing our salvation. He is active now, confronting the "wolves" in our lives as we follow Him. We are not on this journey alone. Jesus is the shepherd who cares deeply for us. He has a true love and concern for our well being. This will be an encouragement and comfort to your students.

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 3, students will be reminded that following Jesus is not without its cost.
- Small Group Session 3 Passages are as follows:
 - **Main Scripture:** Luke 9:57-62, John 15:18-21, John 16:33
- 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 3: The Mighty Shepherd

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!

Review

- Start by reminding students of what you talked about last session. Use the following teaching points from Large Group Lesson 2 to review:
 - **Jesus Is The Gate, The Only Way To Salvation.**
 - **Jesus Leads Us To Safe Pastures**
 - **Following Jesus Results In A Full Life**
- 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 continue to focus on the John 10 passage you looked at in Large Group Session 1 and 2.
- Remind students why Jesus was making the statements He makes in this passage. Remind them that the Pharisees were challenging Jesus' authority and doubting His identity. Jesus was proving through this teaching that He was the Messiah, but the Pharisees were unwilling to see Jesus for who He was.
- Remind students that you're looking at the Good Shepherd narrative.
 - Consider saying something like: **In this session, we're going to see that Jesus isn't some spectator observing our journey from the sideline. Jesus is actively involved with leading us out in our lives.**

Intro Option 2: Thematic Intro: Rock Climbing

- Ask if any students have ever rock climbed.
 - Arrange to show a video from YouTube or to display images of rock climbers as you talk. Examples of both can be found by Google image searching for "rock climbing," or for searching for "rock climbing" on YouTube.
- Show any images or video as you talk. Explain to students that rock climbing is an incredible sport. People have to show tremendous determination and strength to safely traverse some amazingly difficult landscape.
 - Say something like: **It's pretty amazing to watch someone climb a mountain using only his or her strength and flexibility. But the cool thing is the people who are the first to climb a specific route. See, the vast majority of climbers climb routes that have already been successfully tried. This doesn't take anything away from their achievement. But, think about the first man or woman to climb it. These people would have had no pre-determined path to follow. They would have had to lead out on their own, risking that their path may not be a safe or correct one.**
- Explain to students that in this session, they are going to learn that Jesus works in our lives like these path-setting climbers work on a mountain.

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 various 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 room for your personality and experience.

Teaching Point 1: Jesus Gave His Life So That We Could Follow Him.

- Remind students that the focus of *Follower* is the idea of living out an authentic faith.
- Then, instruct students to turn to John 10:11-16.

- 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 10:11-16 aloud.**
 - Explain to students that you want to start by focusing on verse 11. Re-read verse 11.
 - Explain this verse reinforces the first teaching point. If you haven't already mentioned it, do so now.
 - Then, say something like: **Jesus can ask you to follow Him. He can make that request of you. And it's not a request that's over the top or somehow unjustified. Why? Because Jesus laid down His own life to make a way for you to follow Him, He gave up Heaven to come live on earth. Jesus, the perfect Son of God, took on the punishment of your sin to provide you life. So next time you think that following Him seems like He's asking a lot of you, think again. He gave it all so you could be with Him.**
 - Remind students that Jesus is worthy of their followership. Jesus demands our commitment. And He is right to do so because of the price He paid.

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 1: "No, But I Did Stay At A Holiday Inn Express™ . . . "

- Do a YouTube search for any of the Holiday Inn Express commercials in which the actors feign some level of expertise only to confess that they have none, but that they did stay at a Holiday Inn Express . . .
- Choose the commercial that's funniest to you, then show it to your group.
 - Say something like: **These commercials are funny because of the fact that the people doing these tasks that require expertise aren't experts at all. When the punch line hits, the other person is dumbfounded. It's a funny gag that centers on the idea of authority and expertise.**
- Explain that unlike the person in the commercial, Jesus' authority can be trusted. Jesus is an expert in surrendering His life to a greater purpose. Explain that He made a sacrifice greater than anyone else has ever made. And that by surrendering our lives to His leadership, we follow in His footsteps of giving up our lives to gain a great reward.

Transition Statement:

Explain that there's also another great aspect of Jesus' ability to call us to follow Him. Transition to Teaching Point 2.

Teaching Point 2: Jesus Is Active In Leading Us.

- Explain to students that you want them to look at verses 12-13. Re-read the verses aloud.
- Explain that these verses reinforce the second teaching point. If you haven't already mentioned it, do so now.
 - Say something like: **Jesus doesn't come out and say it, but He is implying that there is a great difference in the hired hand and the shepherd. The hired hand doesn't love the sheep like the shepherd does. And so when wolves come, the hired hand flees. But not Jesus. Jesus is the shepherd. When the wolves close in on you in your life, Jesus is there to drive them away. Jesus hasn't left you to fend for yourself. He is with you when life gets tough.**
- Explain to students that this should give them tremendous confidence.
- Jesus isn't some hands-off, unapproachable God sitting on His throne. Jesus is dialed-in to our lives, helping us deal with our stressors, and going with us into the hard places.

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

Option 1: Lead From The Front

- Explain to students the concept of leading from the front. Explain that in war, especially in ancient combat, there were unique generals who lead their men into combat from the front. In other words, they were in the thick of the fighting, inspiring their men from the front, and leading the charge.
- Explain that most other generals were content to lead by observing the fighting from a viewpoint far away, and sending messages via soldiers or runners.
- If you want, do a Google image search for one or all of the following leaders: Stonewall Jackson, Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, and David.
 - Show the images and say something like: **Some of the more noteworthy “lead from the front” generals were guys like confederate general Stonewall Jackson, 4th century Macedonian King Alexander the Great, and Roman leader Julius Caesar. Even King David often led the Israelites from the thick of the battle. The impact of a “lead from the front general” is powerful. It inspires his troops to move forward, even in spite of overwhelming odds. The thought is that if the general is willing to go into battle with you, you owe him your best. Jesus is a lead from the front King, as well. Jesus goes before us. He leads out, paving the way for us, inspiring us to follow Him no matter what.**

Option 2: Personal Story

- Prepare to tell a personal story of a time when you went on a trip, had an experience, or even underwent a trial of some sort that was made better by someone else’s presence.
- Then, make the connection that our time spent following Jesus is meaningful because He is journeying with us. He leads out ahead of us, and travels along with us when things get bad.

Transition Statement

Explain that this demonstrates your final teaching point. Transition to Teaching Point 3.

Teaching Point 3: Jesus Cares Deeply For All His Sheep, Especially Those Who Are Lost.

- Finally, explain to students that you want them to look at verses 14-16. Re-read the verses aloud.
- Explain that these verses reinforce the third teaching point. If you haven’t already mentioned it, do so now.
 - Say something like: **Would you say that Jesus knows God pretty well? The only real answer is, “yes.” Of course. Well, here Jesus says that He knows you, His sheep, as well as He knows God. That’s some pretty in-depth knowledge. And Jesus shows here that He loves all people, Jews and Gentiles alike. It’s plain to see that Jesus truly loves those whom He calls to follow Him.**
- Explain to students that Jesus cares deeply for all people. He wants all people to follow Him. His heart is especially for the lost, those who don’t know Him.

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 1: Parables Of The Lost Things

- Turn to Luke 15. Look at the three parables Jesus tells involving lost things.
- Choose a parable, or two, to help support the point that Jesus cares deeply for those who are lost.
- Read the selection you have chosen.
 - Then, say something like: **This is one of many places in the Bible that reinforces Jesus’ love for the lost. Jesus values all people, and His mission is to redeem all who will believe in Him. He longs to see people follow Him.**

CLOSING

Option 1: *Follower* Closing Video

- Some of you will be wrapping up your DNow or Retreat Weekend with this large group time.
- If so, arrange to show the *Follower* 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: Personal Challenge

- At this point your students should have a really good idea of what it means to live out an authentic faith. They grasp what it means to follow Jesus.
 - Maybe the best thing you can do for them is to come up with your own personal challenge based on what the Spirit is leading you to say.
- **Encourage students.** Challenge them. And remind them that the Holy Spirit is their power source for living as true followers of Christ.