

# 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 Saving Shepherd
- **Session Purpose:** To encourage students that Jesus will never leave them, and that following Him leads to ultimate safety and rest.
- **Scripture Passages:** John 10:22-30
- **Session Snapshot:** The world can be a pretty rough place. Sure, we're surrounded by blessings, and few of us will ever suffer as many in the world do. But, the world our students live in can be pretty harsh, relatively speaking. What a comfort, then, for them to know that Jesus not only can save them from their sins, but promises that it is a forever salvation. When students commit to following Christ, they are committing to follow a strong shepherd, one who will never let them go.

## 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 4, students will be encouraged as they commit to pursuing an authentic faith with Christ, empowering them to make real change in their lives.
- Small Group Session 4 Passages are as follows:
  - **Main Scripture:** 1 Corinthians 9:24-27, 2 Corinthians 4:7-9, John 14:25-27, Hebrews 12:1-3
- 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 Saving 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 3 to review:
  - **Jesus Gave His Life So That We Could Follow Him.**
  - **Jesus Is Active In Leading Us.**
  - **Jesus Cares Deeply For All His Sheep, Especially Those Who Are Lost.**
- 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 be the final lesson in the Good Shepherd narrative from John 10 you've been studying over the last three gatherings.
- Remind students why Jesus was making the statements He made 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.
  - Consider saying something like: **In this session, we're going to see that Jesus will never leave you, and that following Him leads to ultimate safety and rest.**

### Intro Option 2: Follower Closing Video

- Some of you will be wrapping up your DNow or Retreat Weekend with this large group time.
- **You can choose to either show the Follower Closing video now, or at the end of the lesson.**
- Watch the video and decide where it would be best for your group.
- 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.

### 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: The First Step In Following Jesus Is Seeing Him For Who He Really Is.

- Remind students that the focus of *Follower* is the idea of living out an authentic faith.
- Then, instruct students to turn to John 10:22-30.
  - 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 10:22-30 aloud.**
- Explain to students that you want to start by focusing on verses 22-26. Re-read these verses aloud.
- Explain that these verses reinforce the first teaching point. If you haven't already mentioned it, do so now.
  - Then, say something like: **The Pharisees wanted to know if Jesus was the Son of God. Now, whether they really wanted to know or if they were really just looking for something to get Him in trouble for, we don't know. But, the point is this: Through His words and actions, Jesus had made it clear to all who were interested in seeing that He was truly the Son of God. The Pharisees couldn't follow Jesus because they were unwilling to see Him for who He was. If you have come to faith in Christ, you have been saved. The more you get to know Jesus, and the more you learn about His character, the stronger you will be compelled to make following Him your first priority.**
- Explain to students that they can't grow in their understanding of who Jesus is unless they are taking steps to do so. While the Holy Spirit works in our lives to make us more Christ-like, our commitment to knowing God more is essential.
- Consider challenging students to evaluate their prayer and Scripture reading practices. Encouraging them to grow in these areas will lead to them knowing Christ more, which in turns leads to a stronger desire to follow 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: When Do I Say I Do?

- Explain to students that marrying someone is one of the biggest decisions they'll ever make. And like most people, they want to be sure they get it right.
- Explain that according to one study, the average length of time people date before popping the question is 2.8 years.
  - Say something like: **Does that seem like a long time to you? Certainly there are people who get engaged after a shorter period of time. But when you think that you will spend the rest of your life with someone, it doesn't seem like a bad idea to make sure you know him or her first. The fact of the matter is that it is hard to have a relationship with someone unless we really know him or her. It's the same with Jesus. The more we know Him, the more we see Him for who He truly is, the more we'll want to be closer to Him.**

### Transition Statement:

Explain that knowing Jesus more is just one aspect of being in relationship with Him. There is another aspect that is powerful in its truth.

## Teaching Point 2: When We Come To Faith In Jesus, We Enter Into A Forever Relationship With Him.

- Then explain to students that you want to re-read verses 27-28. Re-read these verses aloud.
- Explain these verses reinforce the second teaching point. If you haven't already mentioned it, do so now.
  - Say something like: **Knowing Jesus leads to following Jesus. We follow Jesus because of who He is. But wrapped up in Jesus' identity is what He gives us. Here, Jesus says He gives us eternal life. That is life with Him forever. From the day we come to a saving relationship with Christ, we're united with Him forever. And look how He describes it: no one, no force, not Satan, not death . . . nothing can snatch us from Jesus' grasp. We are forever with Him in relationship. As we follow Him, He will always be there.**

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: Long Life

- Explain to students that you're going to tell them a story of one of the longest living animals ever recorded.
- Introduce students to Adwaita, the Aldabra Giant Tortoise, who died at the age of 255 in March of 2006.
- If you want to find some supporting pictures, you can go to <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adwaita>, or you can Google image search for "Adwaita" and "tortoise."

- Adwaita spent most of its life in a zoo in India. Born sometime in or around 1751, the tortoise was given to a British explorer as a gift. It stayed on the explorer’s farm in India until 1875 where it was transferred to the Alipore Zoo in Kolkata, India.
  - Say something like: **Think about how incredibly awesome this is. In this turtle’s lifetime, he would have seen Benjamin Franklin doing his experiments with electricity, Alexander Graham Bell invent the telephone, Henry Ford mass produce the automobile, the Wright brothers take flight in 1903, the Civil War and both World Wars, the invention of the TV, the movie theatre, and the personal computer. He would have even seen the invention of the Internet, and if he had lived around long enough, no doubt would have had his own Twitter account. This turtle lived about as long as anything could possibly hope to live. And yet, it’s not even a blink of an eye compared to the eternity we’ll spend with God.**
- Help students understand that their faith in Jesus opens the door for a life lived forever in relationship with God.

## Option 2: Til Death Do Us Part

- Explain that as of the date of this writing, the oldest living married couple in the world is Karam and Kartari Chand. The couple lives in England and has been married for over 88 years.
- Explain that they were married in December of 1925, when Karam was 19 and Kartari was only 13.
  - Say something like: **Can you imagine what it must be like to be married to the same person for the better part of 100 years? At what point do you think their annoying habits stop being annoying? Do you think after 50 years Karam remembers to put the toilet seat down? Imagine the love and unselfishness necessary to keep a marriage together for 88 years. It’s a truly amazing story.**
- Explain to students that marriage is God’s best earthly example of the covenant love He has for us. Explain that when we follow Jesus, trusting Him to pay for our sins and believing in His identity, we enter into a binding relationship with God, stronger than even the strongest marriages. It will never fail. It will always last.

## Transition Statement

Explain that the forever relationship we have with God has some unique qualities you’ll look at in Point 3.

## Teaching Point 3: This Forever Relationship Is One of Ultimate Safety And Rest.

- Finally explain to students that you want to re-read verses 29-30. Re-read these verses aloud.
- Explain that these verses reinforce the third teaching point. If you haven’t already mentioned it, do so now.
  - Say something like: **One of the many mysteries of coming to faith in Christ is that God the Father knew that you would. He has placed your salvation in Jesus’ hands. Jesus purchased your life, snatching you out of death’s grasp. As Creator of all things, God is supremely powerful. When you come to faith in Christ, submitting your life to His leadership, you are committing to walking with the One who will never leave you, never forget you, and never NOT be with you. There is no safer place in the world, despite what goes on around you, than following Jesus.**

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: Doomsday Preppers

- Prepare to show the trailer for National Geographic’s “Doomsday Preppers” TV series.
- You can show this trailer, or if the link is inactive, simply search on YouTube for a video that is active:
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dEJsQ1nMtV8>
- Before showing the video, ask if anyone watches the TV show, or has ever heard of “preppers” before.
- Explain to students that “preppers” are people who fear some sort of worldwide disaster. They live their lives preparing for the worst possible scenario. The lengths they go to are extraordinary.
- Show the trailer.
  - Then, say something like: **These people have gone to an incredible amount of expense and trouble to be protected in case of an emergency that may or may not ever materialize. It’s certainly their right to prepare in the way they have. But their lives reflect an interesting point: people have a natural desire for safety and survival. And while these measures may keep these people safe in the short run, the only permanent safety plan is believing in God and following Him in our daily lives.**

## 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.