

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:** Hitting Play
- **Session Purpose:** To help students understand that they are to be on mission for God and how hitting pause helps this.
- **Main Scripture:** Matthew 28:16-20
- **Supplemental Scriptures:** Acts 1:8, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, John 14:25-27
- **Session Snapshot:** This final Large Group Outline will give your students a framework within which to understand this discussion of hitting pause. Using the Great Commission as a launching point, your students will be challenged to see the time they spend hitting pause as preparation for their life on mission with God. Small Group Session 4 does a great job of practically fleshing this out. As the other outlines have done up to this point, this outline will maintain more of a big picture view.

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 recall what you've covered.
 - **Session 1:** Theme pitch: Why it's so important that we seek to know God more
 - **Session 2:** The importance of prayer in our lives
 - **Session 3:** Why knowing the Bible is vital to our relationship with God
 - **Session 4:** Examining God's call on our lives

A note about Small Groups

- In Small Group Session 4, students will be led to embrace their mission of being God's messengers of the reconciliation that Christ offers to all people.
 - They'll be challenged to really think about the people in their lives they come in contact with, and what it looks like to bring God's redemption and reconciliation to those people.
- The creative hook in the Small Group session is the idea that hitting pause prepares us for a life lived in play.
- In Small Group Session 4, students will be looking at 2 Corinthians 5:17-20. You can allude to this if you choose. But mostly just keep it 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: Hitting Play

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: Pause Intro**

- Consider setting the stage for what you've learned so far.
- Use the definition for hitting pause that you've been using the last few sessions.
- Remind students that we define hitting pause as **"Seeking God in silence and solitude through prayer and Bible study."**
 - Remind students that you've already learned the importance of each one of these aspects.
- Explain that in this final session, you're going to look at something that's not in the definition.
- Explain that you're going to look at one of the main purposes behind hitting pause.

- **Intro Option 2: Video: Pause Closing Video**

- Arrange to show the Pause Closing Video.
- The video really does a great job of summarizing what you've studied. And it sets up this lesson really nicely.
- Show the video.
 - **Then say something like:** *It's pretty cool to think we've learned all this stuff, isn't it? But as the video alluded to, it's not enough to know it. We have to put it to use. This final session will help us know exactly how hitting pause prepares us to make a major impact on the world in Christ's name. In other words, we're going to learn how hitting pause prepares us to live life in play. Let's take a closer look to learn how hitting pause prepares us to live a life of purpose and meaning.*

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 life in play equals joining God in His mission.

- **Have students turn to Matthew 28:16-20.**
- While they are turning, provide a little background for this passage.
 - Explain to students that Jesus had been crucified, then arisen, and then had been appearing to the disciples and others over a period of 40 days.
- The scene they're about to read is the last recorded interaction Christ had with His disciples in the Book of Matthew.
 - Explain that in these words, we can see Jesus challenge His disciples to embrace a life of action and service.
 - Remind students this is the same call we have on our lives today.
- **Read Matthew 28:16-20 aloud.**
- Point out that for the purposes of this session, you're going to look at this passage in three parts.
- The first part is in verses 18 and 19.
- Explain that here we see Jesus speaking from His position of authority, an authority that comes with Jesus' role as God.
- Explain that Jesus was commanding His disciples to devote themselves to leading others to follow Christ.
 - Explain to students that the Greek construct for this passage opens up the idea that we're called to make disciples as we go through life.
 - Explain that this is a call on all Christ-followers, and it speaks to what our focus should be as we go through our lives.

- Explain that Luke records a similar call by Jesus to a life of disciple-making in Acts 1.
- Explain that Luke was recording Jesus' last words He had with His disciples before ascending into heaven to be with God the Father.
 - As such, these words are especially useful to us, since we see Jesus leaving His followers with one final charge.
 - **Read Acts 1:8 aloud.**
 - **Then, say something like:** *It's clear from both of these accounts that Jesus had something very specific in mind. Jesus wanted His followers to be in the business of multiplication. He wanted His disciples to be people who led others to become disciples of Christ. Guess what? This is what God wants for you today as well. And this has a ton to do with what we've been talking about. Making time to seek God by hitting pause is how you lay the foundation for a life lived on mission for God. It's how you prepare yourself to obey Christ's call to make disciples of others.*

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: Last Words

- Explain to students that there's a pretty big fascination in some people to know and interpret people's last words. People seem to search these words for special meaning.
- Give students a sample of some of the famous last words of well-known individuals. (You might want to give a caveat that some of these are probably a mix of legend and hearsay, while others are probably accurate. That's part of the allure!)
 - **Pope Alexander VI**—"Wait a minute."
 - **Max Baer (boxer)**—"Oh, God. Here I go."
 - **Caesar Augustus**—"The play is over. Applaud."
 - **Winston Churchill**—"I'm so bored with it all."
 - **George Harrison (one of the Beatles)**—"Love one another."
 - **Teddy Roosevelt**—"Please put out the light."
 - And most recently, it was revealed that the last words of **Steve Jobs** were, "Wow. Wow. Wow."
- Explain that there are a ton of collections of these last words. Some are funny, some sad, and some extremely meaningful.
 - But, there's something that captures your attention about the last words someone speaks.
- Explain that in the case of Christ, we can add extra focus because Jesus was in full control of the situation.
 - He knew these would be His last words. He knew the exact circumstances that were happening. And He knew that they were to be recorded as Scripture.
- As such, we can see tremendous meaning in these words, as a true charge to His disciples and to us.

Option 2: Word Study

- Explain that we toss the word *disciple* around a pretty good bit. But, let's make sure everyone knows exactly what we mean when we say it.
- The Greek word translated disciple, *mathetes*, is pronounced "mah-THAY-tace."
 - Up until Christ more or less gave the word a new meaning, it had always meant "learner."
 - A disciple of a rabbi was someone who simply learned under the rabbi. More of a student, or apprentice.
- But based on Christ's life and teachings, we see in the New Testament that the understanding of the word *disciple* began to shift.
- In Luke 14:27, we see Jesus adding the idea of a disciple as a follower, someone who goes far beyond merely learning from a teacher.
 - "And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple."
- Another example is in Luke 14:33 and 9:23:
 - "In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple."
 - Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me."
- Explain to students that the idea of being a disciple means being totally sold out to following Christ. It's putting our devotion to Christ first and everything else second. It means living as God's children, taking on His ways and His purpose.

Transition Statement

We're called to make God known. We're called to lead others to a saving relationship with Christ. The question we have to ask is how we're preparing ourselves to do this.

Teaching Point 2: Hitting pause equips us to live in play.

- Explain to students that we have to face the fact that preparation is huge when it comes to our ability to effectively lead others to Christ and to grow in Christ.
- Explain that they will look at this more in-depth in their final Small Group Session. But the idea is pretty simple: We can't replicate or multiply what we don't have in the first place.
 - An intimate relationship with God, His Word, and His ways is the groundwork for living our lives on God's mission.
- **Instruct students to look back at the first part of Matthew 28:20.**
- **Read aloud verses 19-20**, stopping at “. . . and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”
- Explain to students this verse is a great challenge to us.
- Key in on that phrase: “teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”
 - Ask students how it's possible to teach what we don't know.
 - Ask how we can lead someone to obey the things we don't obey ourselves.
 - Ask how effective we'll be at drawing others to Christ when we ourselves are distant from Him.
- **Instruct students to turn to 2 Timothy 3:16-17.**
- While they're finding the passage, explain that we're fast-forwarding a few decades to a letter the Apostle Paul wrote to a young pastor named Timothy.
 - Explain that in this familiar passage we're going to flesh out a little more what it looks like to teach others about God's Word and His ways.
- **Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17 aloud.**
- Explain to students that you could spend a lot of time going deeper into this verse and what it's calling us to. But for your purposes in this session, what this verse does is give some structure on how we can begin to look at teaching others.
 - Look where these concepts of teaching, rebuking, training, and correcting come from: **a knowledge of God's Word.**
- ***Then, say something like:*** *When we look at these two passages together, we begin to see this idea that we're called to do much more than simply be good people. We're called to be more than people who don't drink, or don't swear. God calls us to be His messengers of His story. He calls us to teach people about Him! He calls us to use our knowledge of His Word to shape other people. If this intimidates you, that's OK. It's a big calling. But it's not a mystery. If we've accomplished anything in our time together, it's understanding that the way to be effective in these things is very clear. We have to know God before we can lead others to Him. And this happens through hitting pause.*

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: Site Prep

- To add a visual element to this option, consider doing a web image search for pictures of Ground Zero construction and/or pictures of the computer renderings of the new World Trade Center complex.
- Explain that in the aftermath of the World Trade Center attacks on 9/11, there was a great movement to rebuild the towers.
 - Remind students of the tragedy of this event, as many will be too young to remember it.
- Explain that the idea of rebuilding was seen by most as a way of healing—as a way of moving past the horror, sadness, and tragedy of the events.
- Without getting into some of the political and logistical starts and stops that plagued the early attempts to move forward in rebuilding, explain that the decision was made to rebuild.
 - Explain that the work for the new building, *One World Trade Center*, actually began on April 27, 2006.
 - Yet the beautiful new building complex, along with memorials to honor the victims of the attacks, will not be completed until at least 2013.

- Explain that the overall build time could take close to 10 years. Why so long? Explain that for this type of project, one that is both complex and that has extra meaning, the preparation time is intense.
 - **Say something like:** *For something of this nature, the preparation is every bit as important as the actual building. It's complex, like any large undertaking. But it's also symbolic. There was a lot to consider and take into account based on the sensitive nature of the project. But the idea here is that anything this momentous, anything this important, has to be prepared for in a major way. We can say the same thing about our lives as Christ-followers. Our lives are ours to be stewards of. It's a huge responsibility. And the preparation is as big, if not bigger than, the actual execution.*

Option 2: What Tools Do You Need?

- Again, to make this have a little more punch, you might want to take the time to find some images of the items used in the following example.
- Lead students to think of the last time they went on a camping trip. Or, if they've never been, lead them to imagine being on one.
 - Explain to them that to be successful in the woods for a weekend, there are things you have to have.
- **Mention some or all of the following items (and show images if you have them):**
 - You'll need a tent.
 - You'll need something to sleep in, such as a sleeping bag.
 - You'll need something to eat and drink.
 - You'll probably need a backpack to lug it all around in.
 - And you might need something to start a fire with.
- Explain that if you were to take away any one of these things, the overall experience of the trip would be severely compromised. Not only would your trip not be much fun, but the entire thing might fall apart.
 - **Say something like:** *Making time to hit pause is like packing all the right stuff on a camping trip. If we will be devoted to seeking God, we'll find our life will be effective, purposeful, and fun. Kind of like a camping trip with everything lined up just perfectly. But when we don't make time to know God through hitting pause, we'll realize that the life or purpose we could have will be pretty hard to pull off.*

Transition Statement

We said a minute ago it's OK to be a little in awe of the task we're called to. If we weren't, it would probably mean we weren't listening really well! It's a big task. However, Jesus gives us a big clue here as to how we can accomplish this task. Let's take a closer look.

Teaching Point 3: God is with us as we go.

- Instruct students to look back at the last verse in the passage.
 - **Read aloud Matthew 28:19-20**, putting special emphasis on the second half of verse 20.
 - Instruct students to concentrate on that last phrase: "And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."
- Explain that Jesus was reminding His followers and us of a great spiritual truth: As believers, we have the Holy Spirit dwelling within us permanently!
 - Jesus' disciples didn't have the full picture of this yet. But we do. We know what it means to have the Spirit helping us along in this life.
- **Read aloud** John 14:25-27.
- **Then, say something like:** *Jesus knew the call wasn't going to be easy. He knew that we're sinful and weak. He knew that we're naturally prone to wander from Him. He knew that we're selfish and will always look out for ourselves first. But He also knew that somewhere deep inside us, we long to make a difference. He knew that when we tasted reconciliation and forgiveness that we would want to bring this gift to others. And He knew that we would be better with His help. So, God in all His amazing knowledge planned all along to send His Spirit to help us in our call to lead others to Christ. And that's pretty awesome.*

Transition Statement

You're not alone. You're not left to live this life under your own power. God is in you and with you. God's very Spirit is guiding you and equipping you to live for Him. But that doesn't mean you're off the hook!

CLOSING

- At this point students should pretty much know what it means to hit pause. (If they don't, they probably won't get it even if you kept talking all night.)
 - Maybe the best thing you can do for them in this time is to come up with your own personal challenge based on what the Spirit is leading you to say.
- **Encourage students.** Remind them that they do indeed have an incredible power source.
- Also, you might want to remind students that this is a long, long journey.
 - **While they can be used immediately to have an impact for the Kingdom, they'll spend the rest of their lives seeking God and growing closer to Him.**
 - Consider encouraging them that there will be successes and failures along the way. But the idea is to consciously make an effort to grow closer to God.