

MAY 2016

HOPE

WEEKLY GUIDES



"I AM A FOLLOWER"

May 2016: Help Week Leader Guide

Help Week: Equips and empowers student leaders to share the love and message of Jesus to their friends who have questions about their faith.

Date:

Team Leader/Welcome

Club Reporter

Greeters

Opening Prayer

Reminders

Trainer Host

Trainer

Closing Prayer

INTRODUCTION

Beforehand Task:

Select one volunteer to share from the Help Week Leader Guide

1. Welcome Students and Pray

- Student Leader Host - "Welcome to First Priority! This club is a safe place to seek and share God. This week is Help week, which is where we work together in learning about how to share the gospel. This month our theme is 'I am a Follower.'"
- Pray.
- List off any reminders for the club as they begin First Priority.

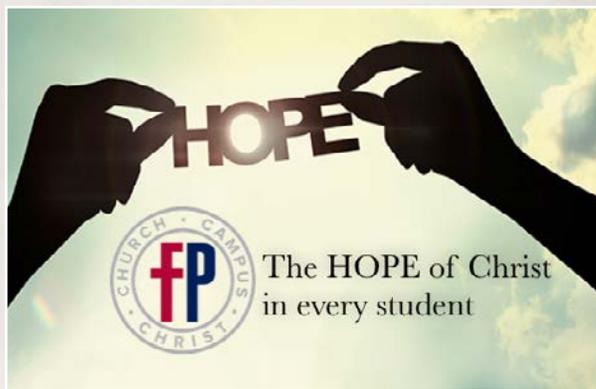
2. Introduce Volunteer

- Signal volunteer to join the leaders.
- "Today, my friend <insert name> is going to share about being a follower of Christ.

GOSPEL CONTENT

1. Share the Gospel Content

- › **Ephesians 5:1-2** says, "Imitate God, therefore, in everything you do, because you are his dear children. Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ. He loved us and offered himself as a sacrifice for us, a pleasing aroma to God." (NLT)



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“I AM A FOLLOWER” May 2016: Help Week Leader Guide (continued)

Share the Gospel Content (continued)

› **What kind of things do you follow? Who would you say you are a fan of?** (Let students answer)
Let’s take social media for example. In order to be a follower, all you have to do is click “follow,” “friend,” or “like” and instantly you are an official follower. You now have access to the daily happenings of whatever or whomever you are following. There comes a point, however, when being a “follower” of that account via social media has limitations. Clicking a “follow” button does not necessarily mean we are committed to the thing or person we say we follow. We can un-follow any time we no longer like the content of the media. What we really mean when we “follow” someone on social media is that we are simply a FAN. But, can we really “follow” Jesus in the same way that we “follow” someone on social media?

› **Today, I want to answer this question:** What does it mean to be a follower of Jesus?

THREE REQUIREMENTS OF JESUS-FOLLOWERS:

1. Jesus-followers must trust Jesus alone to be saved.

There are many people who believe that if they are good enough or if they do “Christian” things (like going to church) that they automatically know God and are saved. This ultimately amounts to us trusting in ourselves to be saved. This is not what the Bible teaches. In order to know God, we must confess our need for him, repent, and ask Him to save us. This is where a relationship with God begins.

2. Jesus-followers must let God be the boss of their lives.

Many people also prefer to think of Jesus as Savior, but have trouble when it comes to Him being Lord. It’s easy for us to retain control of our lives, but this is not what Jesus calls us to. He wants to be our boss, not just our Savior. We must allow Him to “call the shots” in our lives and live fully obedient to Him.

3. Jesus-followers must love God so much that they make relationship with Him their first priority.

The thing about lords is this: you can only have ONE of them. In our daily lives, we let many things become our “lords”. Money, power, pleasure, popularity, acceptance – they are all desires that seek to control our lives. Jesus asks us, however, to give these things up when they threaten His authority and relationship in our lives. This is also why Jesus asked people to “count the cost” of being a disciple before following Him – because following Him requires that we must forsake other things. He must be the number one priority.

Continue:

› Salvation is free – we cannot earn it. Being a disciple of Jesus, however, requires that we give everything to God – our belongings, our desires, even our very lives. This is the way God created us to live – in relationship with Him and submitted to His authority.

TRANSITION TO SMALL GROUPS

Student Leader Host: “Thank you <insert name> for sharing. Let’s break into small groups and use the Help Week Handout to spend a few minutes in discussion about what has just been shared.”

Small Groups Discussion Questions:

1. In your opinion, what is the difference between a fan and a true follower?
2. What are some commands that you’ve found in the scripture since you’ve come to know God that totally changed the way you live? Were these things hard to apply to your life? What was the outcome of this application?
3. What are some sacrifices you’ve made as a Christian because of your relationship with God?

Prayer points (for student handout)

Reflect on Ephesians 5:1-2 upon entering prayer time.

- › Pray for your peers, especially those who need Christ in their lives.
- › Pray for the lost – that they may experience the incredible love of the Father.

“I AM A FOLLOWER”

May 2016: Help Week Student Handout

Help Week: Equips and empowers student leaders to share the love and message of Jesus to their friends who have questions about their faith.

SMALL GROUPS DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. In your opinion, what is the difference between a fan and a true follower?
2. What are some commands that you've found in the scripture since you've come to know God that totally changed the way you live? Were these things hard to apply to your life? What was the outcome of this application?
3. What are some sacrifices you've made as a Christian because of your relationship with God?

PRAY

Reflect on Ephesians 5:1-2 upon entering prayer time.

- › Pray for your peers, especially those who need Christ in their lives.
- › Pray for the lost – that they may experience the extravagant love of the Father.

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

Answer: The Father God adopting me.

FATHER GOD

God made all of creation. The first people in God's creation—Adam and Eve—had a perfect relationship with God. However, they sinned, turned away from God, and creation fell. That brokenness resulted in a separation from God and from a freedom that comes in fullness of life with the Father. God was deeply grieved over His creation.

“The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth ... and it grieved Him to His heart.”

- Genesis 6:5-6 (ESV)

ADOPTING

God's heart was so hurt over His creations' brokenness that He sent His Son Jesus. God sent Jesus to pay the price (redemption) to restore our relationship back to the Father. Jesus sacrificed His own life on a cross in our place and was also raised back to life to end our alienation from God and bring us into a living relationship that lasts forever. Only because of Jesus can we be adopted as sons and daughters of God— part of His family, along with the benefits of being His children.

“But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.”

- Galatians 4:4-5 (ESV)

“For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.”

- Romans 8:14-16 (ESV)

ME

You and I were born into the same experience, the inevitable realization that something is not right with the world or us. We discover that we are alienated, alone, and missing out on real life. Life without a relationship with God is a broken existence. The good news is that it can be restored by making the decision to follow Jesus and placing our trust in Him. Once this happens, we have a relationship with God and His family (fellow believers who follow Him)—a true belonging quite possibly for the first time. You, too, have the opportunity to follow Him and place your trust in Him to receive a living relationship that lasts forever.

“Yet to all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God.”

- John 1:12 (ESV)

"I AM A FOLLOWER"

May 2016: Overcome Week Leader Guide

Overcome Week: Allows student leaders to be encouraged by a peer or an adult leader that they are "Called to Prayer" throughout their lives. Leaders are to use testimonies, teaching points, and Biblical encouragement during the teaching time.

Date:

Team Leader/Welcome

Club Reporter

Greeters

Opening Prayer

Reminders

Trainer Host

Trainer

Closing Prayer

INTRODUCTION

Beforehand Task:

Select one volunteer to share from the Overcome Week Leader Guide.

1. Welcome Students and Pray

- Student Leader Host - "Welcome to First Priority! This club is a safe place to seek and share God. This week is Overcome week, which is where we work together in learning about how to overcome our fears of sharing the gospel. This month our theme is 'I am a Follower'."
- Pray
- List off any reminders for the club as they begin First Priority.

2. Introduce Volunteer

- Signal volunteer to join the leaders.
- "Today, my friend <insert name> is going to share about overcoming our fears of sharing Jesus with others."

GUEST CONTENT

1. Teaching Time (10 minutes)

→ Introduction

- › Introduce yourself, who invited you to speak, and simple points about your life.

› **For example:** "My name is Billy and I'm a ninth grader at Missionfield high school. Sally invited me to share with you today about how to overcome fear. I'd like to encourage and challenge you today."

Ephesians 5:1-2 says, "Imitate God, therefore, in everything you do, because you are his dear children. Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ. He loved us and offered himself as a sacrifice for us, a pleasing aroma to God." (NLT)

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“I AM A FOLLOWER” May 2016: Overcome Week Leader Guide *(continued)*

Guest Content (continued)

– Last week, we learned about the requirements of Jesus-followers. (Share a personal testimony or story and relate the story to this text.)

→ **Let’s begin today with a question:** How can we communicate the gospel with others accurately and confidently?

First, it is very important that when we have the opportunity to share the gospel with someone that we don’t forget to mention that “inviting Jesus into our hearts” also means “surrendering our lives to Him.” Being a Jesus follower is not simply a title we add on to the other things in our life, it is something that completely changes everything we already had. Sharing the gospel isn’t the same a sales-pitch – where we only emphasize the convenient benefits in order to get people to sign up. It may be that you are very passionate about it, but always remember to inform people about what they are getting into. Surrendering our lives to Him is not a negative thing at all! It is difficult at times, but completely worth it! Some people, however, will choose not to follow Christ because the cost of following Him is too great. As Christians, we need to be prepared for this possibility, and still have a burden for the lost at the same time.

Second, if we remember that all we can do is present the facts, we will be relieved of the pressure to say everything in a convincing manner. It should give us confidence that we don’t have to make the gospel “look good.” We can only share the truth as best we can, and some will accept, but some will not. The most important thing is honesty. But also remember to be honest about the positive changes in your life! Never worry about what you should say. Worry and fear will make us hesitate to share. Instead, be confident in who God is and the Holy Spirit will guide you in what to say.

Open Discussion:

- 1. What are the most important parts of the gospel message that you have learned this semester?**
(example: God is a loving Father who wants to adopt us, sin is a big problem, the solution to sin is the cross, we must surrender our lives to Him, etc...)
- 2. Have you ever personally shared the gospel with someone? How did it go? What would you have done differently?**
- 3. Describe a time when it felt difficult to follow God, but you persevered in obedience to Him. What was it like on the other side of that situation?**

2. Close

→ Conclusion: “We should never be ashamed of the gospel. If we are, perhaps we should ask God to check our hearts and help us overcome fear. Salvation is the greatest gift God ever gave to people, so we should announce this good news every chance we get! I hope that this is a challenge for you to follow Christ in greater obedience than before, and that you’ll begin to share Jesus with others if you have not already.”

CONCLUDE

- Follow up the teaching time by thanking the guest speaker. Remind the students of next weeks meeting, Prepare Week.
- Dismiss with a closing prayer, reminding the students of the prayer points from last week as well as the prayer points below.
 - › Pray for yourself, family, and peers.
 - › Pray for your school, wisdom, protection, and for open hearts to receive the gospel.

“I AM A FOLLOWER”

May 2016: Prepare Week Leader Guide

Prepare Week: Allows Student leaders to share their story of what their life was like without Christ as opposed to the fullness of their new life with Christ.

Date:

Team Leader/Welcome

Club Reporter

Greeters

Opening Prayer

Reminders

Trainer Host

Trainer

Closing Prayer

INTRODUCTION

Beforehand Task:

- Ensure selected 3 student leaders are prepared to share their testimony with “Appendix A – Your faith Story”.
- (Optional) Print “Appendix A – Your Faith Story” (1 per student) if you want to have every student attending club working on their testimony at the same time (recommended at least once a semester).

1 Welcome Students and Pray

- Student Leader Host - “Welcome to First Priority! This club is a safe place to seek and share God. This week is Prepare week, which is where we practice sharing our personal story about how we came to know Jesus. This month our theme is ‘I am a Follower.’”
- Pray
- List off any reminders for the club as they begin First Priority.

2. Introduce Volunteer(s)

- Signal volunteer to join the leaders.
- “Today, my friend <insert name> is going to share their story. Please listen respectfully as it takes a lot of courage to speak in front of others. At the end we are going to give some positive feedback on how well they did and also ask questions. Let’s welcome them as they share.

TESTIMONY TIME

1. Share Testimonies

- › Student 1 Testimony = _____
- › Student 2 Testimony = _____
- › Student 3 Testimony = _____

• Leader Host: “Thank you for sharing, <insert name>. Now let’s take a minute to share some positive feedback about how they did. Also, feel free to ask them questions about their story.

- (Optional) If you are working on testimonies collectively, pass out “Appendix A – Your Faith Story” and read/explain/discuss each step.

2. Conclude

- Dismiss with a closing prayer.
- Inform students of the upcoming Engage Week and any other First Priority reminders.

“I AM A FOLLOWER”

May 2016: Engage Week Leader Guide

Engage Week: Trains student leaders choosing to impact their classmates with the gospel of Jesus.

Date:

Team Leader/Welcome

Club Reporter

Greeters

Opening Prayer

Reminders

Trainer Host

Trainer

Closing Prayer

INTRODUCTION

Beforehand Task:

- Ensure the student speaker is prepared to share the gospel using “Appendix B – Sample Gospel Presentation,” and follow with invitation.
- Confirm that arrangements for food for the club have been completed and that it is ready to serve just before club opening.
- Confirm that enough response cards will be at the club and ready to hand out as students enter.

1. Welcome Students and Pray

- Student Leader Host - “Welcome to First Priority! Today we are going to start with a game to get to know one another. There is food for everyone here, so please feel free to grab a bite to eat while we get started.”
- Allow students to fellowship as student leaders prepare the gathering activity.

2. Activity

- Game: Jelly Bean Trade
- Preparation: You will need enough jelly beans so that each person can have ten beans.
- Play: Each person gets ten random jelly beans. By trading one at a time, each person must try to get all ten of their beans in one color. The first person with all ten in one color wins. (note: jelly belly beans will be harder to match since they have so many similar colors. Also M&M’s and Skittles could also substitute for jelly beans.)

3. Introduce Volunteer(s)

- Signal volunteer to join the leaders.
- “Today, my friend <insert name> is going to share about something that is very important to them. Please listen respectfully as it takes a lot of courage to speak in front of others.”

GOSPEL TIME

1. Gospel, Invitation, and Response Cards

- Student Leader: Share the gospel and give a personal invitation using “Appendix B “Sample Gospel Presentation”.
- After invitation prayer, call attention to the response cards and direct students to fill out their information and respond by checking the appropriate box. It may also be helpful to announce that this information is only used if follow up is requested.

2. Conclude

- Student Leader: Thanks you so much for coming today! Please turn in your card to <insert name of student leader> before you leave. We meet here every week at this time, so you are all invited to come back next week!

Need more information about leading your club?

Check out www.firstpriority.club/club-resources

Is your club registered and reporting?

Check out www.firstpriority.club/register

Do you have a question about what your legal role in the school is?

Check out www.firstpriority.club/roles

Just want to see your club online?

Check out www.firstpriority.club/clubfinder



Connecting the Church to the Campus for Christ

Appendix A

YOUR FAITH STORY

Your story is one of the most important tools you have been given by God to share the gospel with the world around you! Finding the power in your story will depend on how you learn to tell it. The first step to being able to tell a powerful story is to **WRITE IT DOWN**. This will give you the ability to edit the specifics and memorize. The second is to **PRACTICE OUT LOUD** with a close friend or parent so that they can give you useful feedback. The third is to **SPEND TIME IN PRAYER AND IN THE SCRIPTURE** to ask God to speak through you before you share your story publically, because God can do more in others through you than you can do by yourself!

1. START WITH A KEYWORD

The first step in writing down your faith story is choosing what keywords describe your life before Christ. Below is a list of emotions. Circle two or three that adequately describe how you felt as a result of a problem you faced without Christ in your life. You are not limited to this list, so feel free to choose a keyword of your own! This part helps keep your story compelling and on track.

KEYWORDS

alienated	bitter	fearful	hurt	rejected
alone	confused	frustrated	insecure	uncertain
angry	depressed	guilty	lonely	unforgiving
apathetic	distrusting	heartbroken	lost	unloved
ashamed	doubtful	hopeless	prideful	worthless

2. SET UP THE BACKGROUND

Now describe the situation in which you came to face this problem and why your keyword describes the way you felt. It is more important to be honest than dramatic. This helps people to relate with your story personally and understand why we need God in our lives. If you need more space, continue on the back.

EXAMPLE: *"my parents divorced when I was younger... I blamed myself and began to feel unworthy of relationships... so I become isolated and alone because I was afraid of being rejected for being unworthy..."*

3. SHARE HOW JESUS ENTERED YOUR STORY

Now describe how you came to know Jesus. Be sure to describe that moment (or that process) if you can with adjectives that show how meaningful and impactful it was for you. Try to describe how Jesus touched your heart, and how you responded (such as asking Him to be your Lord and Savior). This part challenges people's idea of what God is like.

EXAMPLE: *"One summer I attended church camp with my youth group and we talked about new identity in Christ and being loved as God's children. God began to speak to my heart and to my issues of unworthiness and fear of rejection. One evening I experienced the love of God and realized that Christ died for my sin, so that I could have a loving relationship with God. So I asked Him to save me and forgive me of my sin. The impact of that moment changed everything."*

4. STATE THE IMPACT OF CHRIST ON YOUR LIFE

Now describe how Christ impacted your problem and your life. Use the emotion opposite of your keyword and share how Christ either reversed your problem or is continually giving you the power to overcome. This is the part that inspires your hearers to place their hope in Christ!

EXAMPLE: *"What changed after that was my view of myself. I began to trust that God really did love me and want me to be in relationship with Him. I had once been unworthy, but now I was given worth. I was once alone, but now I see myself as wanted, loved, and together with God and His family. I was once afraid of rejection, but now I know that I am fully accepted by Him, and He is giving me the faith and the strength to overcome the attitudes of the past."*

Appendix B

SAMPLE GOSPEL PRESENTATION

Begin the presentation by sharing a short version of your testimony. For example: *"I was raised in church. I'd never really thought of my story as being powerful, but when I think about how Christ died for me, a sinner, I am very grateful that Jesus did for me something I could not do for myself. This fact is powerful enough all by itself. I love to serve God because of all that He has done for me."*

What Is the Gospel?

• Answer: The Father God Adopting Me.

FATHER GOD

God made all of creation. The first people in God's creation—Adam and Eve—had a perfect relationship with the Father. However, they turned away from Him and creation fell into sin and brokenness. This resulted in separation from God and the free and full life we were intended to experience. God was deeply grieved over His creation.

"The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth ... and it grieved Him to His heart." - Genesis 6:5-6 (ESV)

ADOPTING

God's heart was so hurt over His creations' brokenness that He sent His Son Jesus. God sent Jesus to pay the price (redemption) to restore our relationship back to the Father. Jesus sacrificed His own life on a cross in our place and was also raised back to life to end our alienation from God and bring us into a loving relationship that lasts forever. Only because of Jesus can we be adopted as sons and daughters of God—part of His family, along with the benefits of being His children.

"But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons." - Galatians 4:4-5 (ESV)

"For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, 'Abba! Father!'" The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God." - Romans 8:14-16 (ESV)

ME

You and I were born into the same experience, the inevitable realization that something is not right with the world or us. We discover that we are alienated, alone, and missing out on real life. Life without a relationship with God is a broken existence. The good news is that it can be restored by making the decision to follow Jesus and placing our trust in Him. Once this happens, we have a relationship with God and His family (fellow believers who follow Him)—a true belonging quite possibly for the first time. You, too, have the opportunity to follow Him and place your trust in Him to receive a loving relationship that lasts forever.

"Yet to all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God." - John 1:12 (ESV)

HOW TO RECEIVE CHRIST AS SAVIOR

1. Confess your need (I am broken and in sin)
2. Change your direction in life, knowing that God's way of living is better than our way living
3. Believe that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross and was raised to life to redeem you and restore your relationship to God
4. Receive through prayer the free gift of salvation and begin your journey as part of the family of God.

WHAT TO PRAY

Father God,

I know that I am broken and I need your forgiveness. Jesus, I believe you died and were raised to life to redeem me. I want to turn away from my old life and toward a completely new life with You in your family. Right now I put my trust in you and invite you to come into my life and change it. In Jesus' name, Amen.

We believe in the impossible:
THE HOPE OF CHRIST
IN EVERY STUDENT
at your school.



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