



Every home loved 🏠

NEIGHBORHOOD OUTREACH GUIDE



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Encounter*Life* Training

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PREFACE

This guide will take you on a journey of inspiration to love what Jesus loves and prepare you to take part in pursuing the object of His passion: people. This in-depth training winds its way through four amazing stories from the life of Jesus and the disciples. Through these four narratives, we will see the grandeur of Jesus' mission, and discover the part we get to play in His story.

The story reminds us of just how much God loves His creation and the lengths to which He will go to redeem and reconcile the ones He loves.





What if every home in your community encountered Jesus' love?



Home is where much of life happens; it is a deeply personal and meaningful place. To meet someone where they live is to engage them where they, not we, are most at home.



The Gospel is a story of Jesus' love for everyone. God so loved the world that He came to us—making His home with us—to give us life. While a lot of people know things *about* Jesus, fewer have truly *encountered* His life-giving love. Even fewer of those who know Jesus' love will *share* it. Both in and outside of the Church, evangelism is often perceived as an argument or confrontation, causing people to avoid Gospel conversations altogether.

This is where we can help. The outreach guide that you're holding in your hands exists to equip you and your church to share Jesus' love the way He did—meeting people with words of life and love where they are most at home.



God so loved...

“It is not so much the case that God has a mission for His church in the world, but that He has a church for His mission in the world.”

THE MISSION OF GOD
CHRISTOPHER WRIGHT

The Gospel is the reason we love.

The Gospel is good news meant to be shared. It is not a message of judgment or fear but a proclamation of life and love. The Gospel is freedom to love without pressure or agenda, because it is God’s work that changes hearts, not ours. God simply asks His people to join Him.

Jesus is our example of how to love.

God took on human form to come to us—to share His love face-to-face. He spoke with the confidence of someone on a mission but also with the tenderness and patience of a friend. Jesus alone holds the power to transform a heart, but He asks us to be a part of the work He is doing—and promises He will walk with us wherever we go.

A man with dark hair and a light beard is standing in front of a house with grey siding and white trim. He is wearing a black bomber jacket over a light grey hoodie. The house behind him has a white door and windows with white shutters. The scene is outdoors with some greenery and a brick path visible. A thin orange line forms a house-shaped outline around the man and the house.

...so we love.

Everyone can share Jesus' love—but fear holds many people back.

Even when people are inspired by Jesus' love, it can feel intimidating or overwhelming to share it with others. Over the years we have served the Church, we've found that 85% of followers of Jesus want to share His love—but common barriers hold them back.



FEELING INADEQUATE

“I don't feel qualified.
I'm not a 'good
enough' Christian.”



FEARING CONFRONTATION

“I don't want to be pushy
or put someone on
the defense.”



FEELING ILL-EQUIPPED

“I don't know what to say.
Where do I start when talking
about something so big?”

85%

We have found 85% of Christians want to share their faith, but something holds them back.

Inspiring people to see evangelism not with fear but with joy and confidence.

When people intentionally share their faith with others, sometimes for the first time, it is often as life-giving for them as it is for the person they're engaging. Sharing the love of the Gospel with others gives us the opportunity to trust that God is with us and working beyond what we might be able to see. These types of experiences often help people encounter Jesus in new and deeper ways. With Jesus' love, there is great joy in letting what pours into us pour out of us, too.



**Equipping churches for face-to-face,
heart-to-heart conversations where
they live, work, and play.**



Evangelism isn't a script; it's a conversation between two people. We want to help it be as natural as any other conversation. Even a simple word, gentle action, humble prayer, or honest story has the ability to lead people to an encounter with God that changes everything. This guide supplies practical training and resources to give you the confidence to engage others in conversation, knowing that God is writing an ongoing story before and beyond that moment.



EncounterLife Lesson Introduction



LESSON 1

Encounter Jesus' Passion

The driving force behind Jesus' mission is His passion for giving life and hope to His creation. In the first lesson, we will step into the story of the Samaritan woman (John 4:1-42). At that well in Samaria, Jesus showed us that people are not the objects of His wrath, but rather the objects of His passion. In this story, He offers living water to a rejected woman who society despised. The only thing that Jesus requires of her is a simple ask for the living water that He wants to give. When she takes Him up on His offer, her life and her entire village are transformed.

Jesus invites you to embrace what He is most passionate about. When we embrace Jesus' *passion* for the lost, it leads us to *pursue* the lost with Him. He promised that when we follow Him, He will prepare us to participate.



LESSON 2

Encounter Jesus' Promise

One simple promise extended to Peter now extends to you. Jesus said, "Follow me, and I will make you a fisher of men" (Matt 4:19). The second lesson takes a closer look at Jesus' promise to qualify and prepare Peter for the mission. Once Peter begins to follow Jesus, Jesus begins to prepare him for His mission. The invitation to join Jesus' mission is for each of us. Embracing His mission means embracing our life purpose and calling.

Once we understand that Jesus has called us and will prepare us, we then explore the simple yet profound process that He taught His disciples.



LESSON 3

Encounter Jesus' Process

One of Jesus' highest priorities was to prepare His followers to continue His mission. Every moment He spent with the disciples shaped and prepared them to walk in their calling. In the third lesson, we unpack the timeless instructions Jesus unveiled to 72 of His followers when He sent them out (Luke 10:1-16). Over a period of three years, He revealed His passion and demonstrated His approach. And He entrusted them with a simple, life-giving process to “turn the world upside down” (Act 17:6).

This is the pivotal point in Jesus' preparation of His followers. He has enabled them to enter into their calling and opened the door for them to receive the authority necessary to change their generation.



LESSON 4

Encounter Jesus' Purpose

When we engage in Jesus' mission, we encounter the joy of living with purpose, and we receive a new level of kingdom authority in our calling. In this fourth and final lesson, we pause to observe the transformation of the 72 disciples who chose to engage Jesus' mission (Luke 10:17-24). This story makes it clear: we experience a joy that comes only from participating in God's mission. Joining Jesus isn't an obligation; it is the process of finding the life He made for us. When we step into our purpose, we Encounter*Life*.

LESSON 1

Encounter Jesus' Passion

“If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.”

JOHN 4:10 (ESV)



Encountering Jesus' passion produces life. Jesus' heart is for the lost, the broken, and the hurting. He came to demonstrate God's never-ending love for creation. Time and time again, we see His heart moved with compassion and compelled by kindness toward the broken and hurting. Jesus took the time to encounter people where they were. He went to their towns, their homes, and their front doors. He went out of His way to talk with the Samaritan woman so that she could hear words of life. One word, born of compassion, will change lives forever.

This is one of the most iconic stories in the Gospels. It completely shatters expectation. The most unlikely of people draw near to Jesus. The poor, despised and rejected Samaritan woman drinks deeply from the life-giving water that Jesus offers. She experiences something she never knew she needed: the life that Jesus made for her. After this encounter, she becomes an unlikely testimony to her entire village, sharing the life-changing power of Jesus' love and forgiveness. As you read, imagine that you're from her village, maybe even that you're her neighbor. You know her story. How do you view her before her encounter with Jesus? And how do you view her afterward?

WATCH | LESSON 1 VIDEO



We were all separated from God at one point, but someone came to us in our weakness and shared the love of Jesus. What we have freely received we must also freely give to those in need. The woman at the well never expected to have a fresh start in life, but Jesus came to seek and save the lost.

› Find the Lesson 1 video at encounterlife.com/lessons.

READ | JOHN 4:1-10, 13-18, 39-42 (ESV)

Jesus and the Samaritan Woman

¹ Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John ² (although Jesus himself did not baptize, but only his disciples), ³ he left Judea and departed again for Galilee. ⁴ And he had to pass through Samaria. ⁵ So he came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. ⁶ Jacob's well was there; so Jesus, wearied as he was from his journey, was sitting beside the well. It was about the sixth hour. ⁷ A woman from Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." ⁸ (For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.) ⁹ The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.) ¹⁰ Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water."

¹³ Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water

will be thirsty again, ¹⁴ but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." ¹⁵ The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water." ¹⁶ Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here." ¹⁷ The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband'; ¹⁸ for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true."

³⁹ Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me all that I ever did." ⁴⁰ So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days. ⁴¹ And many more believed because of his word. ⁴² They said to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world."

**LEARN** | JESUS' PASSION

Jesus goes out of His way to visit the woman at the well in Samaria. Tradition tells us that Jews avoided the land and its inhabitants. Anyone traveling from Jerusalem to Galilee would have added extra days to his or her journey by going around Samaria, but Jesus was on a mission to seek and save the lost. No one is beyond the reach of God's love and mercy. He pursues us.

Jesus was not received in Judea. The religious leaders wanted nothing to do with Him. In Samaria, we see the humanness of Jesus. He is weary from travel and needs to rest. As we peel back the surface of the story, we begin to see Jesus' heart of compassion. He knows the pain of rejection, and as He sits down at the well to drink, we see His empathy for this lonely woman.

Surely He has born
our griefs and
carried our sorrows.

ISAIAH 53:4 (NKJV)

In asking for a drink, Jesus breaks all cultural expectations. She said, “Why are you talking to me?” His words reveal that He cares, that He notices her. In the simple act of dialogue, He addresses her deep desire to be accepted, loved, and pursued. His words are living water to her. His presence exposes the shame of rejection by the five husbands who had left her and the other man who would not marry her. Jesus empathizes with her. He is acquainted with her grief.

Jesus pursued this woman when all others had turned away and abandoned her. In a moment, her shame is broken as she hears life-giving words from this compassionate stranger. Jesus begins by starting a simple conversation. Doubtless, He sees the pain and fear in her eyes from years of neglect and loneliness. He speaks right to that pain and changes her world forever.

This High Priest of
ours understands our
weaknesses.

HEBREWS 4:15 (NLT)

This woman’s mind-set was rejection. She had nothing to offer anyone. We don’t know why all her other husbands had rejected her, but we do know that an unmarried woman in that day had no security, no prospects, no honor, nothing. Jesus came to empathize with her troubled past, having compassion for her in the present, to change her future.

God’s Word always gives life to those willing to hear it. Jesus, perceiving her plight and empathizing with her rejection and pain, tells her that there is more to life than what she’s known: “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water.” (John 4:10) God’s mercy is free to all who ask for it.

He is telling her that she can have a fresh start. She doesn't have to live this way or settle for less. He invites her to experience hope—the hope of a new life. She wants it. She wants to forgive and be forgiven, to start over and be restored. “Sir,” she says, “give me this water.”

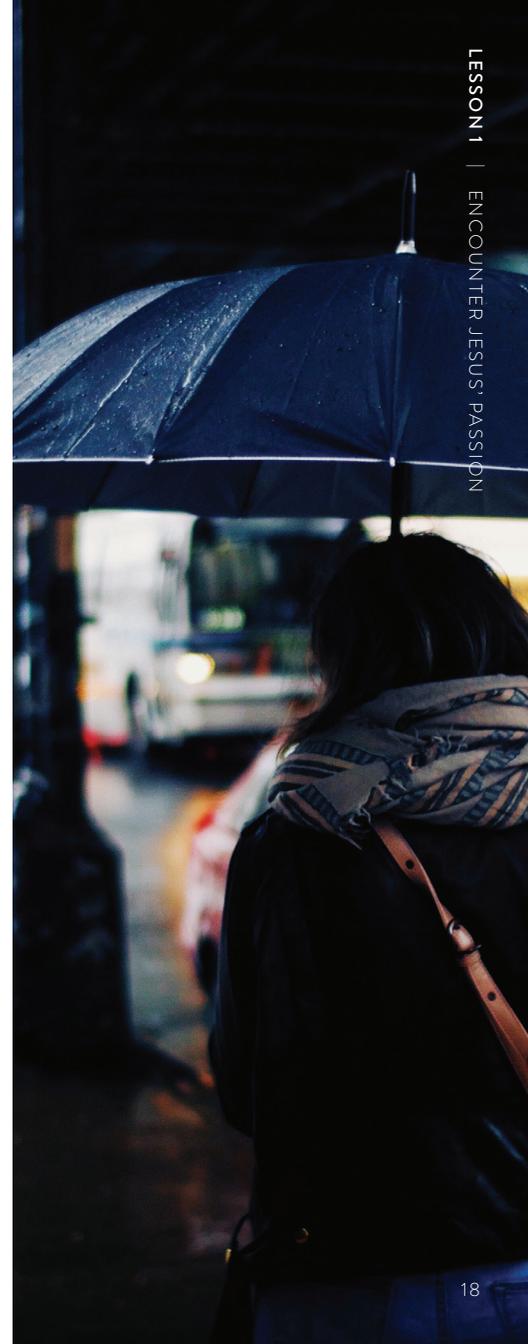
On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.”

JOHN 7:37-38 (NKJV)

Jesus promised living water. He has described who He is. The dialogue has centered on spiritual truths and Jesus' identity, but now He turns His attention to the Samaritan woman.

She's physically and spiritually exhausted. Jesus uses the analogy of water to describe the desire of her heart. To drive the point home, He asks about the one thing in her life keeping her from freedom: a shameful past.

As Jesus redirects the conversation, He pierces right to her heart. He asks her to invite her husband. She winces. An overwhelming sense of guilt and shame and fear wells up in her, as it has so often. Her story, regrettable at best, has defined her identity and perspective—utter worthlessness. So many broken relationships. Does she tell the truth and brace for the



judgment to follow—a scornful look of disgust that she has seen so many times before—or does she tell a bald-faced lie, hoping to dodge the awkward explanation of her past? Embarrassed and dejected, she chokes out a half-truth: “I have no husband.”

I desire mercy, not sacrifice. For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.

MATTHEW 9:13 (NIV)

A smile forms across Jesus’ face. He looks at her and begins to speak. His gentle and lowly heart beats with the rhythm of mercy for the sinner: I know who you are. I know your story. I see you.

O Lord, you have searched me and known me. You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off. You comprehend my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways.

PSALM 139:1-4 (NKJV)

It doesn’t matter what you’ve done in the past. There is living water pouring from the heart of a compassionate God. Receive it today, and share it with someone in need. He really is this good.

The woman at the well had an encounter with Jesus that completely shattered the shame of her past. With a free heart and hope for the future, she runs home to tell what has happened: “Come see a man who told me all I’d ever done.”

The timid, ashamed woman was now bubbling with redemption life. She is so excited that the whole village hears her story.

Why would she be so excited to share with everyone about all she ever did? She was not proud of her sordid past. What made her so ready to tell others about it? Jesus. It wasn't just that He knew her situation; it's that He gave her living water. She experienced His hope, and couldn't help but tell others. The people in her village heard her testimony, but they wanted to see Jesus for themselves. As soon as they encountered Jesus and heard His words, they realized He was more than a prophet. He was the Savior of the world. One encounter with Him is all it takes to change someone's life forever.

We so commonly look for the basic needs of life, but Jesus understands what we thirst for and what will satisfy us. He sees much deeper, and He alone provides living water. If we lived fully from the depth of His joy and passion toward us, we would see His life overflow in us to those around us as naturally as water gives life to our physical bodies. He came that we would have life and life to the fullest.

This living water is available to anyone because Jesus loves people and desires that all be saved. He pursues even the least of these, and He came so low and humble to prove to us that He wants us. That's what Jesus did for this woman. He broke all expectations and cultural norms to make sure that she knew her worth. And that's what we are called to do for others—pursue people because He did. Every single person is valuable to God. One encounter may be all it takes to set someone free. Are you ready to encounter Jesus' passion? 🏠

REFLECT | KEY LESSON POINTS

Encounter Jesus' Passion: Jesus pursues sinners. They are the object of His passion, and He desires that they encounter His life and receive a new identity.



- 1 Jesus passionately pursues the world.** Jesus is on a mission. He goes out of His way to pursue the lost—they are the reason He left heaven, and they are the reason that He endured the cross and paid the ultimate price. Nobody is outside the reach of His love and grace.

He left Judea and departed again for Galilee. And he had to pass through Samaria.
JOHN 4:3-4

- 2 Jesus offers new life to all who will simply ask.** He came that we might have life and life to the fullest. That life is found only in Him. He gives liberally and to all who will ask and believe.

Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water." LUKE 4:10

- 3 The living water that Jesus gives will remove our shame and overflow to others.** One encounter with Jesus changes everything. It changes the way we view Him, ourselves, and those around us. The life He pours into us puts everything into perspective.

So the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people, "Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?" ... Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me all that I ever did." JOHN 4:28-29, 39

On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'" JOHN 7:37

ANSWER | REFLECTIONS ADDRESSING SHAME

- 1 Sin and shame do not disqualify you from the living water that Jesus offers. When God looks at you, He does not see your mess; He sees your potential. Are there places in your heart where you haven't received God's forgiveness and love? Are there times in your journey when you do not feel worthy of receiving living water? Jesus gives to all who will ask for it.
- 2 When we accept God's love, even in our mess, we find the grace to see the world through His eyes. Have you disqualified people in your heart from asking for and receiving the living water that Jesus offers?



- 3 When the Samaritan woman encountered the living water, her shame was removed, and she was compelled to point people to Jesus. Her past did not disqualify her from sharing. Have you been so filled with living water that it naturally overflows into the people around you?



Did you know that God thinks you're amazing? Not because of anything you've done or haven't done, but because He made you in His image. Sara was transformed by an encounter with God's love. Watch her story.

› Watch the Amazing video at encounterlife.com/lessons.

LESSON 2

Encounter Jesus' Promise

“Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.”

MATTHEW 4:19 (NIV)



The day you chose to follow Jesus, He began to form you for His mission. It doesn't matter where you are in life; Jesus calls you to join Him. He takes simple obedience with faith and puts His power on it. Jesus comes to us where we are and invites us to join Him. In the midst of daily life, with all our cares, worries, and fears, He calls us to partner with Him to make an impact. He's not looking for the talented, gifted, or strong. We simply obey, and He moves. He understands our weakness. He knows us. All He asks of us is that we follow Him. He promised to make us fishers of people.

This is the story of Peter's call to follow Jesus, but before he is ready, he has to trust Jesus' instructions even when it doesn't seem to make sense. As you read this lesson, imagine that you're there, right on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. You know Peter. He's much like yourself—just a normal person trying to make it through life. Except what's about to happen is anything but normal. You're about to hear Jesus for the first time.



God has promised something so much greater than you could ever imagine for yourself. Will you listen to His call? Are you willing to let Him interrupt your plans?

› Find the Lesson 2 video at encounterlife.com/lessons.

WATCH | LESSON 2 VIDEO

READ | READ LUKE 5:1-11 (ESV)

Peter's Calling

¹ On one occasion, while the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, he was standing by the lake of Gennesaret, ² and he saw two boats by the lake, but the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. ³ Getting into one of the boats, which was Simon's, he asked him to put out a little from the land. And he sat down and taught the people from the boat. ⁴ And when he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." ⁵ And Simon answered, "Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets." ⁶ And when they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish, and their nets were breaking. ⁷ They signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. ⁸ But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." ⁹ For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish that they had taken, ¹⁰ and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men." ¹¹ And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.



On the shores of the small lakeside town of Gennesaret, Jesus encounters Peter and changes his life. This is one of many miraculous events on the Sea of Galilee and the one that forms Peter's calling. One encounter is all it takes.

Crowds are gathering to hear Jesus. Anticipation has been growing in the land, and now the people are anxious to see what Jesus will do. Is He truly the awaited Messiah? There is a palpable sense of urgency and spiritual hunger as multitudes press in around Him—the tension and energy growing. Seeking a better vantage point to view the crowd, Jesus spots two small boats. He wants to address the people in such a way that all can

LEARN | JESUS' PROMISE



hear, not willing that any of them should perish (2 Peter 3:9). The surface of the water will amplify His words, making the speech more audible, but He needs a vessel to carry Him out upon the water.

Noticing that the two boats are empty, He looks to Peter. As their eyes meet, Jesus asks him to set out from the shore. Jesus uses His position on the water to reach the crowds, but Peter is the partner, the willing vessel carrying the Living Word of God where He needs to go. It won't be long until Jesus shows Peter the power of the Word when met with obedience.

Commercial fishing is tough work. No sitting on the bank, relaxing and unwinding. It's long hours of chasing a catch, mending nets, cleaning the deck, and bringing fish to market. In good weather and bad, it's hard, blue-collar toil. Peter was exhausted, stressed, and anxious. Jesus meets him here.

Imagine being in Peter's shoes. You've worked a long shift all night, trying desperately to catch something, anything. With every passing second, you feel the financial strain mounting, the pressure to produce something to pay for the boat, the dock time, and the pile of bills. Something has to give. Discouraged and ready to quit, you cut your losses and head to shore. You want to go home, grab a bite, and crawl into bed. Your legs are aching, and your eyes are stinging. What a worthless night.

Then Jesus calls your name. You wince, tired and spent, but oblige. After all, it is Jesus. Reluctant, you climb back into the boat where you've just spent the entire night. Just a few more hours, and it will all be over. Jesus finishes addressing the crowd, looks at you and says, "Put out into the

deep, and let down your nets.” Really? More fishing? Doesn’t He know what you’ve been doing all night?

Doesn’t He know you’re exhausted? This is the last thing in the world you want right now.

In this decisive moment, Peter receives something He would need for the rest of his days: the grace of God.

His grace is sufficient. God meets us with grace when we follow His lead. Every time.

Teetering between utter exhaustion and great anticipation, Peter does what Jesus asks. In the process, He learns a valuable lesson about his own heart, who Jesus is, and the way God’s Kingdom works.

Peter goes along with Jesus’ request to start fishing again. He probably isn’t expecting a miracle here, but something about Jesus causes Peter’s heart to respond in hope. It is a sense of trust and expectation—silent but declarative. In Jesus’ presence, Peter feels an invitation, not just a request.

Many of us will experience a radical departure from the norm when Jesus interrupts regular life and asks us to do something specific. These moments have a twofold purpose. They reveal where our hearts are in our relationship with God, and they reveal God’s faithfulness toward us.

As Peter engages his faith and obeys Jesus’ request to launch out into the deep and let down the nets, something astonishing takes place. Previously empty,

My grace is sufficient
for you, for my
power is made
perfect in weakness.

2 CORINTHIANS 12:9 (ESV)

the nets are now filled with a catch, so full that the crew struggles to haul it in. This wasn't just a great catch; it was most likely the best of their career. It is a life-changing encounter for Peter as he sees who stands before him.

Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

MATTHEW 6:33 (NKJV)

Peter's obedience results in the miraculous. Jesus demonstrates to Peter that simple trust can change everything. As they haul the catch on board, Peter sees that Jesus is more than a teacher. He is the Messiah.

Peter had addressed Jesus as Master before, but after the miraculous catch of fish, He addressed Jesus as Lord. Shame welled up inside of Peter when He realized who was standing before Him. "Away from me Lord, for I am a sinner!" But Jesus didn't even acknowledge Peter's shame; He simply called him higher. This realization changes Peter. No longer just a fisherman, he is now a friend of God. He will never be the same. From this moment forward, Peter follows Jesus and becomes who he was created to be.

God will use you wherever you are in life. Seek Him first and watch what happens.

Peter could never have anticipated what would happen that day. It should have been a day like any other, like hundreds of others, but Jesus interrupted Peter's life and called him to something unimaginable. Peter didn't have the training, the experience, or any of the other necessary tools to become the leader of the Church in just a few short years, but he had an encounter with Jesus that altered everything. This simple fisherman was now going to fish for people, for eternal souls, and become a leader who would inspire and

encourage millions. Throwing that net in simple obedience to Jesus was an act of faith that would forever solidify His calling as a fisher of men.

Then He said to them, “Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.” They immediately left their nets and followed Him.

MATTHEW 4:19-20 (NKJV)

We know this story. We've experienced it in our own lives. We work hard to produce something of value, and many times, it just doesn't seem good enough. Engaging the world with the Good News can often feel like this. But when we begin to trust Jesus and obey Him, regardless of how we feel or what we see, He begins to produce something in us that we could never accomplish on our own. More of His life develops within us. Our simple obedience and His love for people begin to produce life wherever we go.

As disciples of Jesus, we don't have to wonder what we're supposed to do. The Father called and sent Jesus. Jesus called and sent Peter. And Jesus calls you. As you set out to engage the lost with the good news, know that you will encounter more of the life that Jesus has for you—more of His heart, more of His passion, more of His authority, and more of His joy. Are you ready to encounter Jesus' promise? 🏠



REFLECT | KEY LESSON POINTS

Encounter Jesus' Promise: The day you chose to follow Jesus, He began to mold you for His mission.



1 When you trust Jesus' leadership, He will exceed your expectations.

The Creator of the universe can be trusted, even when His commands seem counter to your knowledge or experience. He can do in a moment what we struggle to accomplish in a lifetime.

And when he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." And Simon answered, "Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets." And when they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish, and their nets were breaking. LUKE 5:4-6

2 One encounter with Jesus can transform your perspective.

One encounter with Jesus changes everything. It changes the way we view Him, ourselves, and those around us. The life He pours into us puts everything into perspective.

But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." LUKE 5:9-10

3 When you choose to follow Jesus, He qualifies you to participate in His mission.

Your past does not disqualify you from joining Jesus' passionate pursuit of the lost. Jesus qualifies you, and He promises to prepare you for His mission.

Then Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will fish for people." And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him. LUKE 5:10-11

While walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon (who is called Peter) and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." MATTHEW 4:18-19 ESV

ANSWER | REFLECTIONS ADDRESSING FEAR

- 1 When Jesus asked Peter to go fishing, Peter decided to trust Him even though his own experience didn't match up with Jesus' call. Do you trust Jesus' leadership in your life even when it doesn't make sense? Have you experienced a moment in your life when Jesus asked you to do something contrary to your plans and desires? Do you see Jesus as trustworthy? What would you have done if you were Peter in this story?
- 2 When Peter encountered the miracle, it changed his perspective of himself. Can you remember a time when you encountered Jesus, and your perspective changed?



- 3 As Jesus was inviting Peter into His mission, He said: “Do not be afraid.” What fears do you think Peter had? Do you have any fears related to Jesus calling you to join His mission? In the end, Peter left everything. Is there something that you have held onto that is keeping you from engaging in Jesus’ mission? God will use you wherever you are in life. Seek him first and watch what happens. One encounter with Him is all it takes to set you in your calling. What are you willing to leave behind?



A raging and physically abusive alcoholic has a life-changing encounter with Jesus. One encounter with Jesus changed a dangerous man into a city leader and family man who went on to impact hundreds of lives in his community.

› Watch the 24 Hours Later video at encounterlife.com/lessons.

LESSON 3

Encounter Jesus' Process

"I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth."

1 CORINTHIANS 3:6 (ESV)



WATCH | LESSON 3 VIDEO

Around the entire Galilee region, Jesus has gone from village to village preaching the Good News and healing the sick. In every place He visits, the multitudes gather. He took the time to minister to as many people as possible. They press in to hear His words. So many are hurting and broken, in need of so much. Up to this point, Jesus has done the majority of speaking and miracles, but now He makes it clear to the disciples that they will also play an active role. In order to reach more people, Jesus begins to send out the disciples to every place He wants to visit. He has revealed the Father's heart to them and prepared them to continue His mission. He's revealed to them His passion for people and given them a promise to prepare them for the task.

This group of Jesus' followers was more than the original twelve. These were the everyday disciples, the rough and tumble ones. These were the recent converts: ex tax collectors, the previously mute and blind, and the dicey, former criminals and prostitutes. They had no natural qualifications to do what they were about to do, but they had encountered Jesus and learned His heart. That was their qualification. Jesus releases the seventy-two as ambassadors of His kingdom to every town where He wants to go, and He gives them a clear process. He does not leave them wondering how to engage. This story from Luke 10 shows us the explicit instructions He



Jesus came to seek and save the lost. Traveling through towns, villages, and cities, proclaiming the Kingdom of God, Jesus instructs the disciples to go ahead to every place He will visit and prepare the way.

› Find the Lesson 3 video at encounterlife.com/lessons.

The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.

LUKE 10:2 (ESV)

gave. Through this extraordinary event, we see Jesus' followers engage in His mission and experience a profound change in their own lives.

It would have been natural for them to think that they couldn't do this, or that they weren't good enough leaders to change anything. But Jesus appoints them for the task, and prepares them for the same work that Peter and the other apostles did. The place of ministry is not reserved for a select few. In Jesus' mind, anyone who says "Yes" is called and equipped for the mission. Luke 9 deals expressly with leaders going, but Luke 10 is all about the everyday followers of Jesus being appointed and sent. Likewise, we are all called to play a part in Jesus' process. Jesus appoints you to go.

The Church has used this process, with great success, for the past two centuries. It is the timeless model of sowing Gospel seeds and watering the soil of people's souls. God uses this process to produce His harvest. As you engage in this lesson, imagine that you're there as a part of the group. Picture yourself going out to every town and village where Jesus wants to go. What can He do through you? What will He do through you? Ask the Holy Spirit to open your eyes to see how God wants to use this timeless process to impact your community.

Jesus Sends Out the Seventy-Two

¹ After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them on ahead of him, two by two, into every town and place where he himself was about to go. ² And he said to them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. ³ Go your way; behold, I am sending you out as lambs in the midst of wolves. ⁴ Carry no moneybag, no knapsack, no sandals, and greet no one on the road. ⁵ Whatever house you enter, first say, ‘Peace be to this house!’ ⁶ And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest upon him. But if not, it will return to you. ⁷ And remain in the same house, eating and drinking what they provide, for the laborer deserves his wages. Do not go from house to house. ⁸ Whenever you enter a town and they receive you, eat what is set before you. ⁹ Heal the sick in it and say to them, ‘The kingdom of God has come near to you.’ ¹⁰ But whenever you enter a town and they do not receive you, go into its streets and say, ¹¹ ‘Even the dust of your town that clings to our feet we wipe off against you. Nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near.’ ¹² I tell you, it will be more bearable on that day for Sodom than for that town.”

**LEARN | JESUS' PROCESS**

Jesus gave us a clear plan. We are heralds of the Good News, and Jesus instructs us to go and prepare the way. We have to remember that it's our job to go where He sends us, but it's His job to release authority to turn hearts and set captives free. We can't change people's hearts and minds. We go in obedience to Jesus, and He will meet us with His power to save. Jesus appointed the disciples, not because of their qualifications or experience, but because He desired that everyone have a chance to hear the Good News. He did not send them alone but together, as partners with Him and each other. When you go in obedience to Jesus' process, you bring His presence with you. The fear you may have is natural. The

seventy-two probably felt the same way. Jesus told them they were being sent out as sheep among wolves. They had never done ministry before and had nothing to fall back on except for Jesus' instructions. When they obeyed, they saw that they had all they needed to make an impact and bring the Kingdom of God to the broken and hurting. They had the Good Shepherd, and the Shepherd watches over the flock. The sheep are always safe from wolves when a competent shepherd is nearby.

Likewise, we must recognize that the Good Shepherd is with us as we go. When we follow His leading, He will Shepherd us, even in the midst of wolves. He promised in Matthew 28:20 that He would never leave or forsake those who engage with Him in His mission. Wherever you go, you bring His presence into the neighborhoods, lives, and situations you encounter. This is the Good Shepherd's process.

AS YOU GO:

When Jesus sent the seventy-two, He gave explicit instructions that revealed the process of sowing Gospel seeds and watering the soil of people's hearts. Every time we encounter the lost, we should be looking for ways to sow and water. The following are the keys that Jesus taught the seventy-two that still apply today.

1

Speak Peace

2

Prioritize Relationship

3

Address Brokenness

4

Proclaim the Kingdom

Step 1. Speak Peace.

Whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace be to this house!' And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest upon him. But if not, it will return to you. LUKE 10:5-6 (ESV)

“Gospel conversations” should not be confrontational. Nor should they lead to conflict. Our role is to bring peace into people’s lives and situations. In fact, if the peace we offer is not received, we are instructed to move on. We are not engaging people to win an argument or to “seal the deal.” Only God can move the heart of people. Our role is to sow the seed. God’s role is to bring the harvest.

Step 2. Prioritize Relationship.

And remain in the same house, eating and drinking what they provide, for the laborer deserves his wages. Do not go from house to house. Whenever you enter a town and they receive you, eat what is set before you. LUKE 10:7-8 (ESV)

The saying that “people don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care” is true. Jesus instructed His followers to eat what was set before them. He encouraged them to seek a personal connection and relationship. Throughout scripture, the dinner table is a place for community and connection. If the door of relationship is open, we should be ready to interact with genuine interest. As you connect, engage in authentic relationship. Be prepared to stay in touch with the people you meet.

Step 3. Address Brokenness.

... *Heal the sick who are there* ... LUKE 10:9A (NIV)

Enter every conversation knowing that everyone has broken and hurting parts of their lives. God will use you as a vessel of His healing, wisdom, peace, and hope. It is amazing how one word of insight or a simple act of care demonstrates the authentic love of God. All creation is sick and broken, yearning for solutions. God desires to use you to be a part of His mission to “heal the sick” and the broken things on earth.

Step 4. Proclaim the Kingdom.

Say to them, ‘The kingdom of God has come near to you.’ LUKE 10:9B (ESV)

When we go, we go with the mind-set that “I care because God cares.” We are ambassadors of God’s kingdom. When we carry the heart, attitude, and hope of the King as we engage people, we are “proclaiming the kingdom.” Jesus didn’t ask His followers to get people to say a prayer of salvation or to prod them to proclaim Jesus as Lord. They had to proclaim that there is a better way, a Kingdom way of peace, relational wholeness, and healing. It is not complicated, and there is no formula. It’s a matter of helping people take a deep look at Jesus and experience His care or receive needed wisdom and peace. John 6:40 reminds us, “For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in Him should have eternal life.” When we set out to engage in Jesus’ process, our primary task is to help people see Him. A simple glimpse will often leave people with a desire to pursue Him.

You will seek me
and find me when
you seek me with all
your heart.

JEREMIAH 29:13 (NIV)

Being a true disciple means preparing a way for the Gospel to reach each and every person so that they can hear the truth and have a chance to respond. It's not a flippant thing to engage a hostile world with God's truth. Jesus clearly laid out potential resistance and hindrances.

He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation."

MARK 16:15 (NIV)

"As lambs among wolves" hardly sounds like a winning position, but the nature of the Gospel message is reconciliation to God and each other through the life of Jesus. Whether or not that reconciliation happens is not up to us. It is not our job to change hearts and minds, but rather to be faithful to go and share the message. It is the Holy Spirit's job to convict of sin and change hearts. The outcome is entirely upon the Lord of the harvest, but nothing at all will happen without faithful laborers. Jesus' process for ministry is not difficult. He gives a clear progression for how to reach the lost. Go to homes, speak peace, engage in relationship, and address brokenness.

He who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these.

JOHN 14:12 (NKJV)

Jesus sends us out into the harvest field with the ability to heal the sick and speak the Gospel of reconciliation. We don't have to earn the power of God. Jesus promised us that the works would be great. Therefore, we don't need to worry about the impact. Jesus has appointed us to engage the world with His presence, power, and process. The job of every believer is to welcome the lost back into the family of God.

When Jesus tells the disciples to go and speak peace, He doesn't promise that everyone will respond well. But that doesn't mean we don't do the

work. Outreach is not about the outcome. It is about your obedience to Jesus. You may never know the impact you have on someone, but it still matters to God. He sees your simple obedience, and each process in the harvest will receive a reward.

Whether you plant the seed, water it, or reap the harvest, the reward is the same. Only God can bring forth the increase. It's our job to sow good seeds, water them, and reap a harvest when it's ready. It's a process requiring time, cultivation, relationship, and real effort, but the pressure is not on us to make something happen. It's God's job to reveal Jesus, but He uses us to point others to the new life that is available. Every encounter we have, good or bad, sows a Gospel seed that has the potential to bear fruit. Every encounter we have with someone about Jesus is bringing the Kingdom of Heaven closer (Luke 10:9).

Already the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together.

JOHN 4:36 (ESV)

Jesus only did what He heard and saw His Father do. Likewise, we can only make an impact when we partner with Jesus' process. He is the Good Shepherd, and He will lead us as we engage with Him. We can't do God's part, and He won't do our part. But when we obey the call to plant and water Gospel seeds, He will meet us in reaping the harvest. Not everyone we share with will receive it. Some may reject it entirely, but the important thing is to do the task. Only God can do the miracle of moving a human heart and bringing about transformation. It's a spiritual thing, but nothing at all will happen if we neglect the natural work of sowing and watering seeds of the Gospel. He will use us as we faithfully partner with Him. Are you ready to encounter Jesus' process? 🏡



You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.”

JOHN 15:16 (ESV)



REFLECT | KEY LESSON POINTS

Encounter Jesus' Process: Jesus taught and demonstrated a process of sowing and watering the Good News in a way that produces a harvest.



1 Jesus has appointed you.

Jesus appointing you is more important than your techniques and skills. When you go, you represent the King, and your primary role is to invite His presence into people's lives and circumstances.

After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them on ahead of him, two by two, into every town and place where he himself was about to go. LUKE 10:1

2 Go with the Shepherd; He will protect and guide you.

We are sent out as sheep among wolves. His rod and His staff will comfort and lead us. We must avoid doing anything in our own strength; we need the leadership of the Shepherd.

“Go your way; behold, I am sending you out as lambs in the midst of wolves.” LUKE 10:3

3 Jesus revealed the process of sowing and watering the Good News.

When you approach people in a posture of peace and authentic care with a priority for establishing relationship, you provide people with an opportunity to experience the power of God's Kingdom. When people experience this process, it often leads to us sharing the Good News.

Whatever house you enter, first say, ‘Peace be to this house!’ Whenever you enter a town and they receive you, eat what is set before you. Heal the sick in it and say to them, ‘The kingdom of God has come near to you.’ LUKE 10:5, 8-9

1 Speak
Peace

2 Prioritize
Relationship

3 Address
Brokenness

4 Proclaim
the Kingdom

ANSWER | REFLECTIONS ADDRESSING HINDRANCES

- 1 Jesus told His disciples, “the Harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few.” If you were confident that the harvest was ready in your city, would it change how you approached your friends, coworkers, and neighbors?
- 2 Luke 10 teaches us to begin our Gospel conversations by announcing peace. It also gives us permission to walk away if our peace is not received. If you participate in a Gospel conversation that is less than peaceful, do you feel comfortable walking away, knowing that you have still sown a Gospel seed?



- 3 The Apostle Paul illustrated the truth of sowing Gospel seeds in 1 Corinthians 3:16: “I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow.” If you knew that Gospel seeds were planted and watered every time you spoke a word of peace, had a relational connection, or addressed a need, would you engage others in Gospel conversations more often? Do you trust the Holy Spirit to steward the seeds you sow, regardless of how small or large the initial impact seems to be?



In the midst of depression, Kelly cried out to God for help. Little did she know that He already had someone on their way to her house. Hear the powerful story of how God impacted a woman's life in Carroll, Iowa, through the simple obedience of one family.

› Watch the *God Knocked On My Door* video at encounterlife.com/lessons.

LESSON 4

Encounter Jesus' Purpose

Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."

JOHN 20:21 (NIV)



The life of Jesus flows through us. As we engage Jesus' heart for the lost, we experience His life, power, and love. When we agree with His heart to serve and reach those in need, His joy flows in and through us.

Wherever we carry the love of Jesus, life will grow, because living water is not just a picture of what Jesus wants to give to us, but also a picture of what He wants to work through us. Part of what it means to be a follower of Jesus is to bring new life with us wherever we go while also experiencing more of the life of Jesus as we share with others about who He is and what He has done. The Good News is not just for others, but for us as well. Every time we share it, we feel the pleasure and joy of walking in Jesus' purpose for us. The Good News is not an obligation, but rather a joy. Joy so intense and so real that it flows like a river. Have you experienced that joy yet? Has it welled up inside of you to the point that you can't help but share it with those around you? Read this story and place yourself within it. Imagine being there and feeling Jesus' life springing up within your heart as you tell someone about Him. Who will you share it with?

WATCH | LESSON 4 VIDEO



We are most satisfied when we do what we were created to do. When we walk in obedience to Him, we overflow with His love. Being a part of God's family and sharing the life of Jesus with others is our highest purpose and the way our heart comes alive.

› Find the Lesson 4 video at encounterlife.com/lessons.

The Seventy-Two Return

¹⁷ The seventy-two returned with joy, saying, “Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!” ¹⁸ And he said to them, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. ¹⁹ Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you. ²⁰ Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.” ²¹ In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. ²² All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, or who the Father is except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.” ²³ Then turning to the disciples he said privately, “Blessed are the eyes that see what you see! ²⁴ For I tell you that many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.”



Jesus had sent His disciples into every town and village where He was about to go. They were commissioned to prepare a way for the Living Word. Jesus wanted to give all a chance to receive Him, and He also wanted the disciples to understand the hope of the Kingdom—that anytime they engage in His process, they experience His purpose of bringing the Kingdom of Heaven near.

This group of seventy-two shared with every person they encountered in each village and town. They were sent for this purpose, and they returned ecstatic at the authority they had. Demonic powers submitted to the name of Jesus when they shared (Luke 10:17b). Darkness was driven out,

LEARN | JESUS' PURPOSE

and the Kingdom of Heaven drew near to all who heard Jesus' name. As the disciples engaged in Jesus' purpose and mission, the very gates of hell were shaken. Authority from Heaven was released through the disciples to destroy the works of the evil one. Wherever they went, the life and power of Jesus went. The disciples experienced more than they could have imagined. They came back reporting powerful testimonies of healing and deliverance for the lost and broken, and immense joy that they were a part of Jesus' passion, promise, process, and purpose.

Seeing Jesus heal the sick and cast out demons was a common experience for these disciples. They had watched countless people experience His presence and power. And now, they begin to realize that Jesus has entrusted them with the same authority, for the same mission. As they went from door to door, they saw that same power and life now flowing through them. Surprised, they return full of joy at the wonders they saw. Engaging in Jesus' purpose and mission actually changed the way they thought about themselves. They knew He cared for the lost and broken, and that He could heal the sick and work miracles. The groundbreaking truth of going out on mission is that they've been invited into the storyline of redemption. They had a part to play.

Yes, they had seen Jesus' heart and passion. They had watched Him serve the poor and broken. They had also been given a promise that He would prepare them for the work. And they had been given a task to do with a clear process for engaging the world around them. But now, the entire training and all that Jesus taught them came to a climax. They got to participate in the very works of Jesus. They had been given a new life—one of purpose and hope and power and love.

They said, “Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name!” As they rejoiced in the amazing things they experienced, Jesus rejoiced with them. In verse 21, Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit to the Father, and we see the very Trinity itself full of joy that the seventy-two had experienced what they were made for: joy and freedom and the life of God overflowing from within them. Jesus tells the disciples not to be surprised that the demons were subject to them; He saw Satan fall like lightning. Jesus has all authority and power over evil. Part of our mission in the harvest is to bring deliverance and healing to the afflicted so they can discover Jesus for themselves.

We don't earn God's power or gifts but rather let them flow through us freely. The disciples came back full of joy at the miracles released in and through them. They had walked with Jesus for months and heard His words. They had spent time with Him and were His closest friends. Now they were commissioned as laborers in the harvest, and they began to see spiritual fruit and great demonstrations of power from their partnership with Jesus.

If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.

JOHN 15:7-8 (NKJV)

And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

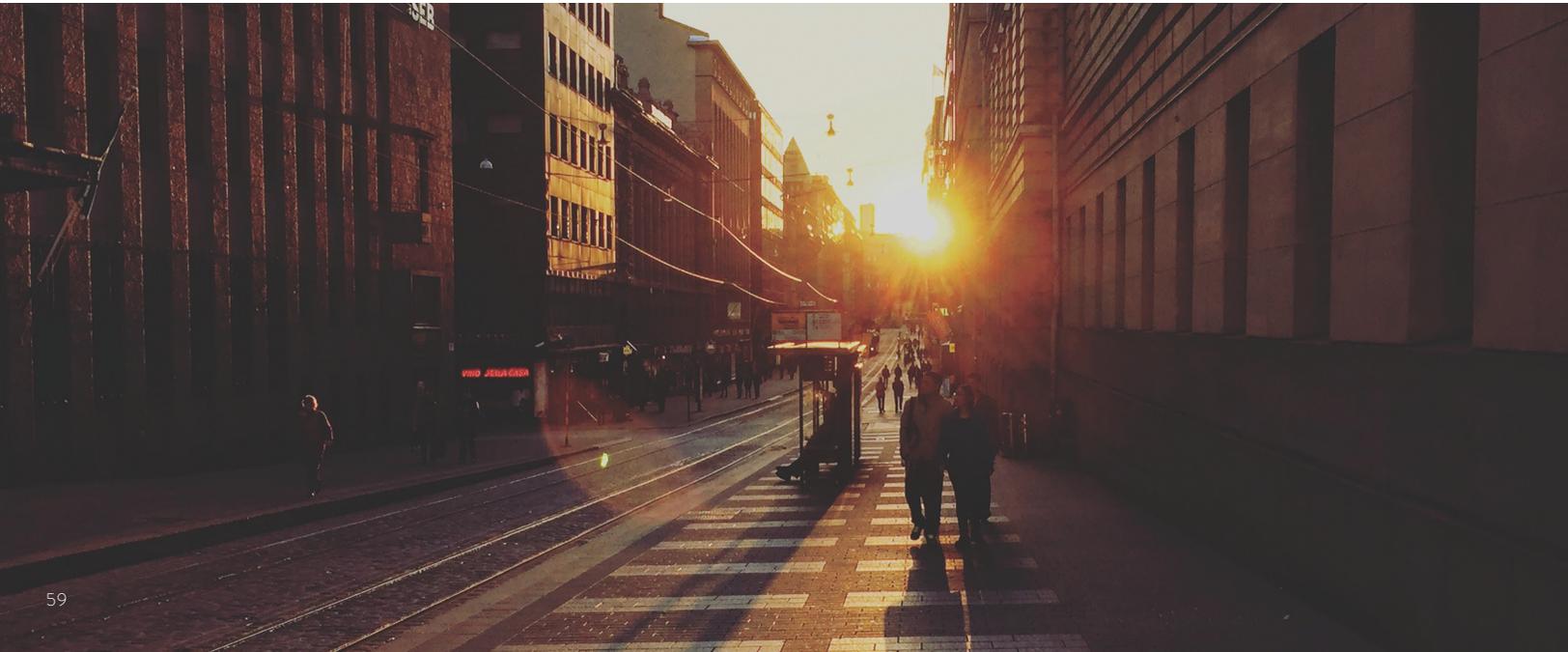
MATTHEW 16:18-19 (ESV)

I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.

LUKE 15:7 (NIV)

The disciples realized that Jesus came to destroy the works of evil and set the oppressed free. They saw His compassion toward the weary and His power breaking their chains. The disciples experienced it firsthand. They participated in it, and Jesus rejoiced in their joy.

This is not just something for the spiritually elite or professionally trained. The seventy-two were normal people, but they had encountered Jesus' love. Even the weakest among us can help transform lives when we engage in Jesus' purpose of redemption. God can use anyone willing to step out in faith and take risks. He loves the lost. His mission is people, and He releases His authority and power through us to help set them free.



Jesus' mission was not just a dutiful obligation. His mission was, and always will be, about delivering us and giving new, abundant life. He cares for all people and is deeply committed to us.

If you have freely received the grace of God and encountered His extravagant mercy, freely share it. Go and do likewise. You are the desire of His heart, and so are the lost. He wants you to play an active role, and He's given you the tools needed to point others to Him.

Effective, fruitful ministry is not just for the gifted. It is for all who approach their calling with childlike faith and wonder. The world around us is parched, dry, and spiritually thirsty. There's really only one stream that can flow to those places and give life. If you've encountered Jesus' life-giving water, let it flow through you now. Wherever you go, the river goes. Rejoice in the revelation that you are His, and that He has delivered you out of darkness. You have been redeemed, and He wants you to help redeem others. He has given you the authority to walk in freedom, and you now have a part to play in sharing that freedom. As you walk with Jesus, you will bear good fruit, and many will encounter new life. Are you ready to encounter Jesus' purpose? 🏠

The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners.

ISAIAH 61:1 (NIV)

REFLECT | KEY LESSON POINTS

Encounter Jesus' Purpose: Participating in God's mission both releases His authority and honors His heart.



1 Participation in Jesus' mission produces deep satisfaction.

We are most satisfied when we do what we were created to do. Sharing life and mission with Jesus is our highest purpose and the place where our heart comes alive.

The seventy-two returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!" LUKE 10:17

2 Participation in Jesus' mission leads to greater authority.

When we are faithful with the little, Jesus puts us in charge of more. Intimacy with Jesus and faithful obedience to His mission produce greater authority to accomplish what He has sent us to do.

And he said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you. Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven." LUKE 10:18-20

3 Participation in Jesus' mission brings all of Heaven great joy.

Jesus loves when we love what He loves. This is a sign of true intimacy with the Father. He enjoys us as we enjoy Him and His mission.

In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will." LUKE 10:21

In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents." LUKE 15:10

ANSWER | REFLECTIONS ADDRESSING IDENTITY

- 1 Many believers who engage in Gospel activity do so out of a sense of obligation or duty. Have you ever had an experience, like those in the Luke 10 story, where you felt so much joy that it became the driving force for a lifestyle of sharing Jesus? Do you approach Gospel activity with the awareness that it is part of what God created you for?
- 2 When the disciples walked in faithfulness to Jesus' mission, they ended up inheriting a new level of authority. Do you avoid engaging in Gospel activity because you think you lack spiritual authority? If you knew you'd receive a new level of spiritual authority when sharing Jesus, would you be more inclined to engage?



- 3 This story highlights the joy that Jesus and the Father experience when their followers partake in the mission. Have you ever considered the joy you bring heaven when you engage in the mission of Jesus?



In the small community of Mira Mesa, San Diego, a group of faithful believers takes God's love to the street, resulting in many blessings to the neighborhood and a greater hunger within the church to share the good news.

› *Watch the San Diego video at encounterlife.com/lessons.*

The Church exists for nothing else but to draw men into Christ, to make them little Christs. If they are not doing that, all the cathedrals, clergy, missions, sermons, even the Bible itself, are simply a waste of time. God became Man for no other purpose.

C.S. LEWIS

The Good News According to John

God loves people, and they are the reason for the Gospel. God created each person uniquely, and nobody is an accident. **With great skill and care, He designed us in His image** and gave us the nobility to choose love, giving our lives meaning and purpose. We have the unique ability to feel His emotions and pleasure, and He wants us to embrace these gifts to encounter Him.

God's desire for a relationship is the basic, underlying meaning of life. We were made to know Him and be known by Him. And once we have experienced His life, He calls and appoints us to share it freely with others.

The Gospel is for everyone, and it's good news. Go and share it. Every time you share the good news, remember these four pillars – they are what makes the good news so good.

1 LOVE

“For God so LOVED the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.” JOHN 3:16-17

Even though we stumble, God's love does not change. He pursues us and does not give up. Time after time, He fights for love, remaining faithful to us even when we cannot see it. He gave His Son to destroy the sin and shame that keep us from knowing Him.

God gave His Son Jesus as the ultimate picture of His love for us. Through the life of Jesus, God revealed His kindness, compassion, and mercy. He so desires to be near us that He came and lived among us, reminding us of His longing for relationship. He knew we could not make our way back to Him, so He made His way to us.

One encounter with Jesus is all it takes to see the Father's love.

2 LIFE

Jesus said, “I have come that they may have LIFE and that they may have it more abundantly.” JOHN 10:10

Jesus came to give new life; the life we were made for. Only He can satisfy the longings of our heart and give meaning and purpose to our lives. He gives abundant, living water to anyone who asks for it. He promises that new life will overflow to all who receive it. What we can't sustain on our own, He offers freely and without reservation. In His life, we have life, and that life will flow through us to those around us.

One drink of Jesus' living water can satisfy the deepest longing of the human heart.

3 LOOK

“And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who LOOKS upon the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise Him up at the last day.” JOHN 6:40

Jesus is the door to a new life, where all things can be made new. That door swings wide for all who look upon Him and believe. Our role is to direct people to Jesus so that they can see and experience Jesus for themselves. When we point others to look at Him, we introduce them to His transforming power and the promise of new life.

One look at Jesus is all it takes to set someone free.

4 LEAD

“And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment ... He will LEAD you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is mine and declare it to you.” JOHN 16:8, 13-14

The Holy Spirit will lead people into a relationship with God. It’s not our job to change someone; it is His job to lead people into a relationship with Jesus. Remember, it’s always a process, and we get to partner with the Holy Spirit to help someone along in their journey of encounter, no matter where they are. When we are faithful to be obedient to the Holy Spirit’s leading, God moves on hearts and begins to transform lives.

One experience of the Holy Spirit’s power and grace starts someone on their journey of following Jesus.



OUTREACH TIPS:

Sharing the Gospel Freely

Wherever we go, and whoever we come in contact with, we are the light and love of Jesus Christ. If the lost don't see and encounter Jesus in us, there is no guarantee that they will ever have another opportunity to hear of Him. This is what it means to have compassion. Jesus came to us and revealed His heart for every single human being. Not once in the Gospels did He turn away from a broken, humbled, or lost soul.

Remember that we receive the grace of God freely. Freely we must give it. As you share the love and hope of Jesus, take time to incorporate the following principles.

1 PRAY.

Always pray before you go. Prayer is key to gaining authority for the harvest. God is already working. Find out where the Shepherd is leading and follow Him.

2 GO.

Follow that leading. Watch for opportunities and places where you can start a conversation. Continually ask God to open doors for you to share the Gospel.

3 SPEAK PEACE.

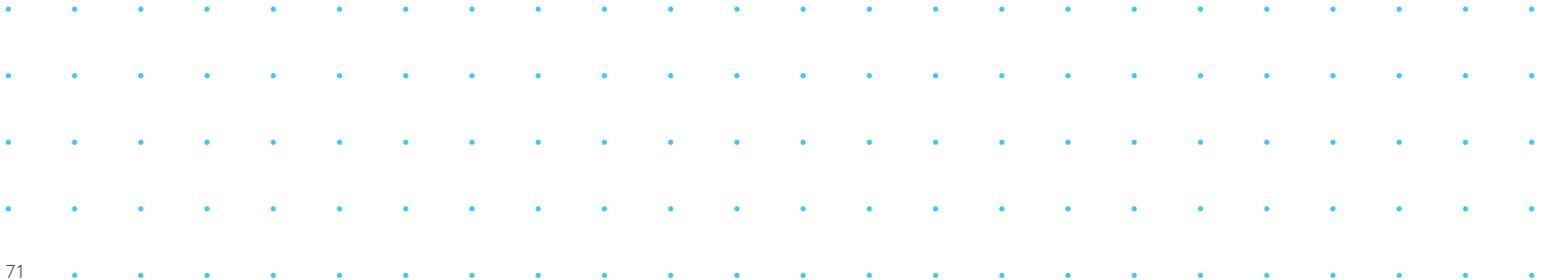
We aren't trying to win an argument. If you don't know what to say, ask how you can pray for people. Most people will gladly receive a word of encouragement or prayer. Remember, the Gospel is good news. Everyone likes good news.

4 GENUINELY CARE FOR PEOPLE.

Meet them where they are. Don't assume anything. Listen and care. Share what God has done in your life. It doesn't matter how deep into sin they are, or how broken they seem—nobody is too far from the reach of God's mercy.

5 PREACH THE GOSPEL.

Share Jesus. There is power in His name. Speak His name as you pray and share.



6 SOW SEEDS.

It's not your job to change hearts; it's your job to be a witness. Don't feel unnecessary pressure to make something happen. Let the Holy Spirit move people's hearts.

7 BE OBEDIENT.

Whether you sow a seed, water an existing one, or reap a harvest, it's obedience that God wants, and it's all the same to Him. Be faithful to be obedient and trust God with the outcome.

8 BE A FRIEND OF GOD.

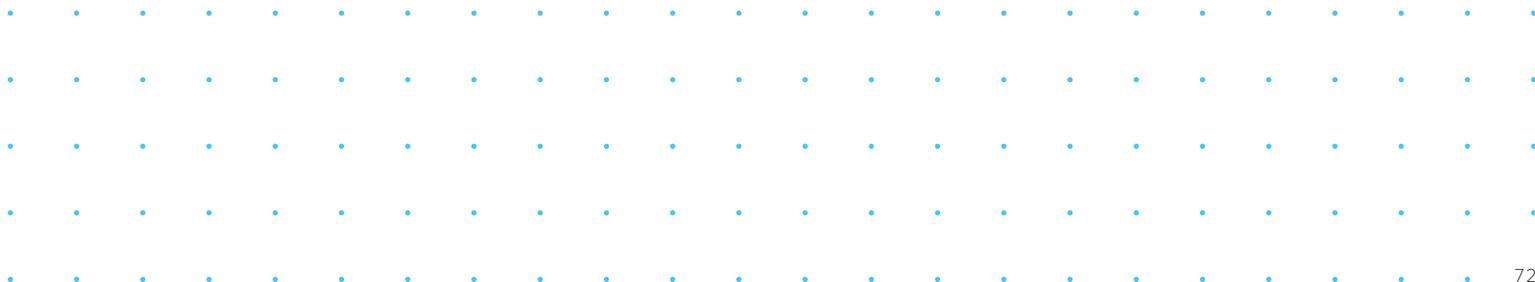
You're a friend of God, not just a servant. Knowing God's desire for partnership changes the way you see yourself and others. He's working already; join Him.

9 LOVE WELL.

Love, serve, give, and bless people. God's heart is for every person you will meet. Let His love flow through you.

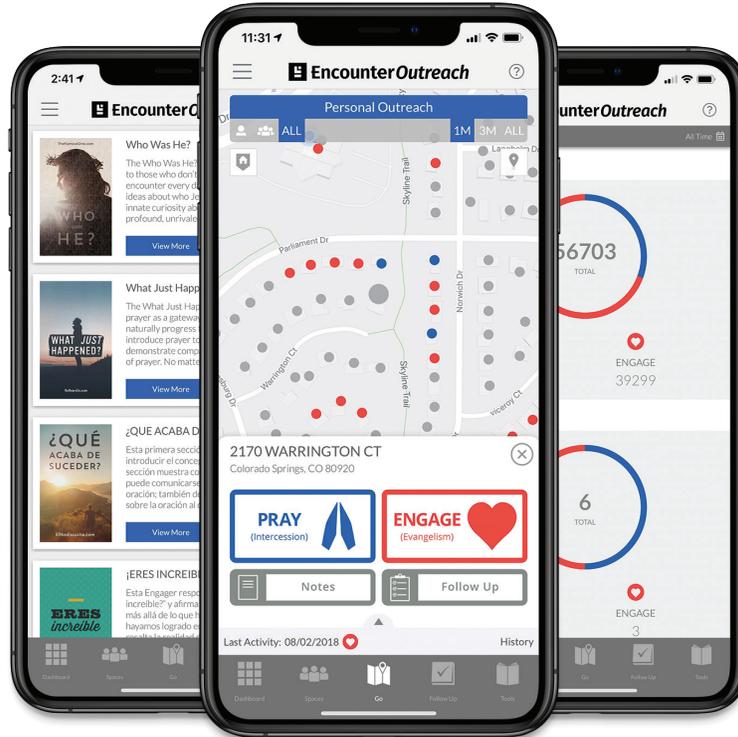
10 CONTINUE THE PROCESS.

You don't have to fit everything into one conversation. Feel free to continue praying for people after you've moved on. Leave an Engager, and always feel free to go back for another discussion if they're open to it.



Outreach Tracking App

The Encounter Outreach app is a free digital mapping and strategy tool to help you see outreach opportunities and track interaction in your neighborhood.



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