

Life Group Guide: Personal Vision

Feb 23-29 2020

Focus: The goal of this gathering is to learn to share our faith story in everyday life and in very natural ways.

Prep: The video gives a brief reminder of the essential components of sharing our personal story that Pastor Bob discussed on Sunday. You will want to preview the video and you will want read through the questions in this guide to determine which ones will help provide an honest and meaningful conversation.

Video: Show the video. It is about 4 minutes long.

Scripture:

Luke 5: ¹⁷ One day Jesus was teaching, and Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there. They had come from every village of Galilee and from Judea and Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was with Jesus to heal the sick. ¹⁸ Some men came carrying a paralyzed man on a mat and tried to take him into the house to lay him before Jesus. ¹⁹ When they could not find a way to do this because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on his mat through the tiles into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus.

²⁰ When Jesus saw their faith, he said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven."

²¹ The Pharisees and the teachers of the law began thinking to themselves, "Who is this fellow who speaks blasphemy? Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

²² Jesus knew what they were thinking and asked, "Why are you thinking these things in your hearts? ²³ Which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'? ²⁴ But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." So he said to the paralyzed man, "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home." ²⁵ Immediately he stood up in front of them, took what he had been lying on and went home praising God. ²⁶ Everyone was amazed and gave praise to God. They were filled with awe and said, "We have seen remarkable things today."

Reflection Time:

We recommend taking about 4-5 minutes for people to reflect after the passage. But before you do, say something like:

"I encourage you to first take a couple minutes to reflect on this passage and the video, come up with any questions, connections, or what the passage says to you tonight."

Questions For Discussion:

Leaders: Remember to mark the questions that are most pertinent ahead of time.

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Question: What is one of your favorite stories? Why do you enjoy it so much?

Luke 5: ¹⁸ Some men came carrying a paralyzed man on a mat and tried to take him into the house to lay him before Jesus. ¹⁹ When they could not find a way to do this because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on his mat through the tiles into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus.

Observation: The friends of the paralyzed man cared enough about him to get involved in his life. These men didn't grab a random handicapped person from the street. They already knew him and wanted to help him.

Question: Do you spend most of your time with people who identify themselves as Christians or those who are not?

Question: What do you like about conversations with non-Christians? What feels difficult about conversations with non-Christians?

Observation: When we care enough to get involved, we will spend time with and build relationships with those who need Jesus. No one wants to be treated like a spiritual project. Most people are open to being included in something enjoyable or being helped with something challenging.

Question: What do you think are some reasons that keep people who follow Jesus from building relationships with those who do not follow Him yet? What makes you uncomfortable in developing a relationship with someone who is not a follower of Jesus?

- Do you think a believer is ever at risk of falling into sin by connecting with non-Christians? In what ways can they be aware of their own weaknesses? How do you think they should proceed?

Question: What is one of the best and most authentic relationships in your life? What does this relationship look like?

Observation: When you care enough about someone, you will do whatever it takes to connect them to Jesus. The friends of this man lifted him on top of a roof and dug through the ceiling to lower their friend to get him to Jesus.

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Question: Do you think it is easier for a person to experience forgiveness or to experience physical healing? Why do you believe that?

- In what ways could a person give up hope they could ever be forgiven? In what ways could a person give up hope they could ever be healed?
- A person can tell when they are physically healed. How can they tell they are forgiven?

Luke 5: ²⁰ When Jesus saw their faith, he said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven."

Question: Jesus saw the faith of the paralyzed man's friends. In what ways do you think it takes faith to build relationships with non-Christians and to encourage them to connect with Christ? We might be tempted to focus on their faith or lack of faith. What do you think this story teaches us about our own faith?

- Do you believe you have faith for Jesus to help you bring others to Him?
- In what ways might you increase your faith in this area?

Question: How did you come to faith in Christ? Who was it that cared enough about you to be involved in your life? What were they willing to do to help you find Jesus?

Luke 5: ²⁶ Everyone was amazed and gave praise to God. They were filled with awe and said, "We have seen remarkable things today."

Observation: When people meet Jesus everyone is filled with awe and gives praise to God. There is a deep joy that comes from caring about and connecting someone to Jesus. It takes faith – and it is the kind of faith that Jesus rewards.

Question: You have a story about how you came to Jesus. Have you clarified it in a way that makes it easy to tell? Have you had the opportunity to share it with others?

Question – Only if you have time...

If you could share your faith story (testimony) in 60 seconds or less with a non-believer, how would you share it?

Prayer

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Some of your group members may already have people they care deeply about who have not yet connected with Jesus. You can pray for their faith journey. You can also ask God to give an open opportunity to act or share in a way that helps bring them to Jesus.