

# The Kind of People He Invites

## THE INVITATION: SESSION 1

Dear Parents,

Thank you for making this small group experience a priority for your teen. Statistics tell us that parents are the number one influencer in the faith life of a teenager. Even though it may not often feel like it, your influence does make a difference.

In this first session, your child's small group discussed what it means to follow Jesus, to be a disciple. Here are some of the main points:

- When Jesus called his Disciples, he flipped the traditional system on its head. He didn't call the religious elite; he called regular people.
- Jesus' disciples weren't perfectly holy before he called them. And we don't have to be either. It is in following him that we become more like him.
- Discipleship is a process, not a program. It is the process of following Jesus and becoming more like him.
- It is also the process of becoming more yourself. St Catherine of Siena said, "Become who God meant you to be and you will set the world on fire."

Consider asking your teen these questions to continue processing what was discussed in their small group:

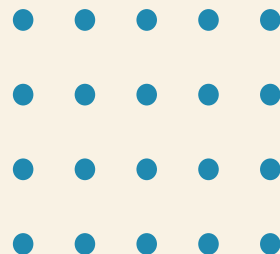
- What was something that stuck with you from your small group time?
- I heard that the way that Jesus chose his Disciples was very different than the way it had been done historically. Can you explain that to me?
- What are you most excited about with this group? What are you most hesitant about?

**Commit:**

Every week, group members accept a personal challenge to apply what was discussed to their day to day lives. This week, they were simply asked to commit to coming back next time. Put it on your family calendar; set a reminder in your phone. Encourage them to go next time.

### Theme Scripture

*"As he was walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter, and his brother Andrew, casting a net into the sea; they were fishermen. He said to them, 'Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men.' At once they left their nets and followed him. He walked along from there and saw two other brothers, James, the son of Zebedee, and his brother John. They were in a boat, with their father Zebedee, mending their nets. He called them, and immediately they left their boat and their father and followed him."  
(Matthew 4:18-22)*



# The Invitation

## THE INVITATION: SESSION 2

Dear Parents,

In this session, your child's small group discussed the Kerygma, a Greek word meaning "gospel." The heart of the gospel message can be broken down into 4 main points. This was the focus of the group's discussion:

- **God loves you.** Christianity is not an ideology but a Person. And this person, Jesus, loves you.
- **We live separated from God's love.** Something is broken, and we call this brokenness - both in the world and in ourselves - sin.
- **Jesus' death and resurrection bridges that divide.** It's like when his arms were stretched out on the cross he reached across that gap between God's love and human brokenness and made himself the bridge.
- **If this is all true, how do we respond?** Those first 3 founding principles of the gospel are just principles unless we respond. Jesus is inviting you to follow him. Will you say yes? Will you give Jesus a chance?

Consider asking your teen these questions to continue processing what was discussed in their small group:

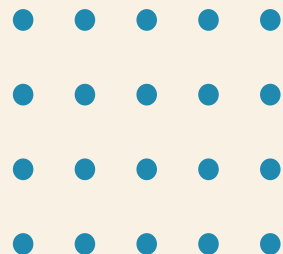
- What was something that stuck with you from your small group time?
- Do you remember the 4 points of the gospel or kerygma? What of those 4 points are easiest for you to believe? What is the hardest?
- Share your own thoughts and experiences with your teen as well.

Commit:

Every week, group members accept a personal challenge to apply what was discussed to their day to day lives. This week, they were invited to pray a simple prayer inviting Jesus to be the center of their lives.

### Theme Scripture

*"In this way the love of God was revealed to us: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might have life through him. In this is love: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as expiation for our sins." (1 John 4:9-10)*



# The Cost

## THE INVITATION: SESSION 3

Dear Parents,

In this third session, your child's group discussed the cost of Discipleship. Here are some of the main points discussed:

- **Jesus didn't hide** from people that following him was going to come at a cost.
- **Jesus willingly gave up his life.** No one took it from him. He made a choice to sacrifice. And he invites us to do the same. Not be crucified in a literal sense, but to "deny ourselves."
- **Taking up your cross to follow Jesus** may mean giving up sleeping in so that you can get to Mass on time. It may be having to explain to your family and friends why being Catholic is important to us, especially when they don't understand or don't appreciate our faith. It may mean giving up some bad habits.
- **Jesus is close to us in our suffering.** Remember, the cross doesn't have the final word. We believe Jesus rose from the dead. Our pain doesn't have the last word. We have hope in Jesus that there is more than just this life.

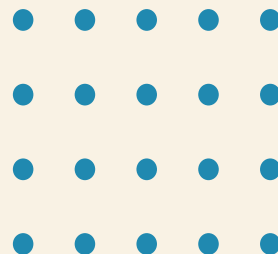
Consider asking your teen these questions to continue processing what was discussed in their small group:

- What is one thing that you remember from your small group discussion?
- What are some practical ways we can "take up our cross" and "deny ourselves" in daily life?

**Commit:**

This week teens made the commitment to pray for each other's needs at least once during the week. Ask them midweek if they have done so.

**Theme Scripture**  
*"Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross and follow me."  
(Mt. 16:24)*



# You Are Not Alone

## THE INVITATION: SESSION 4

Dear Parents,

This is your teen's fourth and final session of this first series, *The Invitation*. After discussing so much about a *personal* commitment to following Jesus, we would be remiss if we didn't also talk about the importance of community as well.

### Main Points:

- **Aristotle said there are 3 types of friends:** Friends of Utility (usefulness), Friends of Pleasure (enjoyment) and Friends of Virtue. The third type are friends that are concerned for your good.
- **Having a mentor is like a coach for following Jesus.** They can teach you but also work beside you to reach goals and find new places to grow.
- **Accountability is essential to discipleship:** To be accountable means to own up to an expectation or a standard we are trying to reach. We take account of where we are in meeting that standard. To do this with another person keeps us honest.
- **"The 5 S's of Accountability"** help us have specific goals to work on in our life with Christ:
  - Service
  - Praying with Scripture
  - Sacraments
  - Overcoming Sin
  - Sharing Jesus with Others

### Questions:

- What is one thing that stood out to you in your small group today?
- Who are the people in your life that bring out the best in you?  
*Parents, share your thoughts on this as well.*
- You discussed the 5 S's of Accountability. Are there any that you think we can work on as a family?

**Commit:** Each teen chose one of the "5 S's" that they wanted to work on this week. Ask them if they are willing to share with you their goal.

**Theme Scripture**  
*"Iron is sharpened by iron; one person sharpens another."  
(Proverbs 27:17)*

