

EASTER

A New Day

WEEK 4. BRINGING PEOPLE TO JESUS

This week we'll look at the role we play in helping those around us encounter Jesus. In the story we'll be looking at, the paralyzed man would not have been able to encounter Jesus if it wasn't for his friends that brought him to Jesus. Similarly, many people around us might never get to encounter Jesus if people like us do not step in to bring them to Jesus. (Please cover lessons 1-3 if you have not yet, as this lesson builds on those.)

Introduction Question: How has someone, at any point in your life, helped you to encounter Jesus in a way you needed or otherwise would not have been able to? (If you've got a large group, you can break into groups of 3-4 to share.)

Get into small groups of 3-4 (if you haven't yet): We will be in these small groups for the rest of the lesson. Small groups can simply open up this lesson on our website or app and guide themselves.

Follow-Up from Last Week: Revisit what you chose to apply from last week's passage and share how it went. If you weren't able to do it yet, make a plan to do it this week.

Jesus' Invitation (Luke 5:18-25):

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.

Discovery Bible Study (30 min):

- What strikes you from this story and why?
- What do we learn about Jesus?
- What do we learn about ourselves?
- What role do the friends play in helping the paralyzed man encounter Jesus?
- What can we apply from this passage this week? Then pray for each other over this.

Inviting People to Encounter Jesus (15 min): In tonight's passage the paralyzed man would not have encountered Jesus if it was not for his friends physically bringing him to Jesus. There are many people around us who need us to do the same thing for them. To help us grow in bringing our friends to Jesus, we are going to practice (1) sharing under 2-minute testimonies and (2) segueing to inviting our friends to encounter Jesus for themselves.

- 1) Begin by sharing a no more than 2-minute story of a time when you were in need and someone helped you encounter Jesus (this could be the same story as you shared in the intro question).
- 2) Then segue from this story to inviting your friend to encounter Jesus in some way. Here are some examples of how you might do this:

"I know that Jesus wants to show you how much he loves you just like he did for me. Would you like to come with me to my church on Easter where you'll be able to hear more about Jesus and his love for all of us?"

"This encounter with Jesus changed my life. Is there some way you need to encounter Jesus in your life?" If so, "Can I pray for Jesus to meet you in that place?"

"This encounter with Jesus showed me how much he loves me and how he is very much real and present in our world today. Would you like to learn more about Jesus by reading a short story from the Bible together?" If so, you can pull out a passage (perhaps one of the ones we have covered in this curriculum series so far) and read it together and then go through the simple DBS discussion questions we have been practicing over the last few weeks.

Praying for Those Around Us (15 min): Your prayers have been softening and changing the soil of the hearts of those on your list. We believe they are closer to encountering Jesus than they were even just a few weeks ago. Let's keep praying for them to encounter Jesus!

1. Take a few minutes individually to identify a few people from your list who you would like to help encounter Jesus. Then ask God to show you if there are any key ways they need to encounter Jesus and what kind of stories you might be able to share with them. Make a plan for how you are going to do this in the next week or two.
2. Share with your small group how you are beginning to help the people on your list encounter Jesus and what it might look like to keep doing so. Then share your plans for helping others on your list encounter Jesus as well.
3. Pray together for each other's friends and for all of us to have opportunities and favor to be able to help our friends encounter Jesus.
4. Throughout this next week keep praying for each other's friends and for each other as we step out to invite our friends to encounter Jesus for themselves.