



It is our joy to welcome you to the family of faith! We consider this a team effort. Welcome to the team!

This is a three-step process.

We believe that every new believer is adopted into God's family and invited to be a witness and a host. Today, we would like to focus on the family of God.

what does your new faith decision mean to you?

JOHN 9: 5-25,
35-38

Let's look at John 9 together. Here we have story about a man who has been blind since birth who encounters Jesus. Imagine the hardships that caused! Jesus miraculously heals the man's sight, which leads him to worship and follow Jesus. At first, he is fuzzy on who Jesus is. But the more people ask, and the more he explains, the more he is passionate and clear about who Jesus is. By the end of the chapter, he sees and worships Jesus fully. He is transformed as he tells his story.

We hope that everyone has this life-changing experience. Everyone needs to tell their story of faith in order to see Jesus more clearly. We need to tell our own story for our own good, not to mention the good of our friends as well. Let's look at this passage and briefly discuss. First, read the passage aloud.

- This man has a series of very intense experiences in this chapter. Describe his encounter with Jesus. What else happens to the man in this chapter?
- Everyone has an opinion about this man's healing. Describe how each group reacts to his healing.
- He is different at the end of the chapter. What internal and external transformations have taken place in this man's life?
- What do you like about Jesus in this chapter?



Since *you have made a decision to follow Jesus with your life*, in what ways has he brought you hope and new possibilities?

This man is effectively part of a new team: Team Jesus. The healing the man experienced from Jesus led him to worship Jesus and share his decision with others. As a new teammate, what actions does this man take?

We think that new faith is a little like wet cement. Just as wet cement becomes solidified overtime, our faith becomes stronger the more we talk about it, lasting for our whole lives and eternity. Let's take some biblical steps to strengthen your faith!

Many decisions we make change our lives: what school to attend, who to date, where to live. How do you anticipate following Jesus will shape your life?

your simple story of faith

[BEFORE] Many things try to shape or define us. Describe your life before making a commitment to Jesus. Begin with 2-3 sentences that describe how you used to identify yourself.

[ENCOUNTER] Write two or three sentences about how God is working in your life and your decision to follow Jesus.

[TODAY] How does God’s love change how you view yourself and your identity? How are you different? How does following Jesus shape how you live and how you see your future?

respond actively

Solidify your identity

Reflective prayer. Take 30 seconds to ask God to solidify your identity in Jesus. *“God, what do you want me to know about being your child?”*

Live your faith

We tell the story of Jesus primarily through our actions & character. What practical steps of obedience can you take this week to share the story of Jesus through your actions (e.g. honesty, stressing over grades, etc.)?

Tell your story

Think of a few people who should know about this important faith step you have taken. Reflective prayer, *“God, who do you want me to share my story with this week?”*

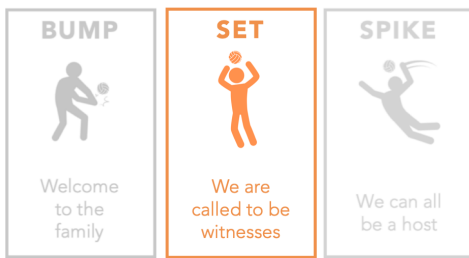
debrief



This is a 3-step process. We like to use volleyball as a metaphor. There are 3 very different skills to be a good volleyball team: BUMP, SET, SPIKE. Similarly, there are 3 different parts to becoming a fruitful witness.

You have just finished BUMP, welcome to the family! How was this worksheet for you? How are you feeling?

Let’s set up 2 meetings to work through “SET” and “SPIKE.” SET is comprised of inviting your friends to hear your story and encouraging them to explore faith in Jesus for themselves. SPIKE is when you host your friends to look at Jesus, together. Which of your friends do you want me to pray for this week?



We all bear witness to what we love. If you see a movie you like, you talk about it. If you see a video you like, you share it. The same is true for faith in Jesus. As God works in us, we talk about it. We do not need to be “faith experts” in order to talk about what God is doing in our lives.

How has it been following Jesus this week?
 What practical steps were you able to take this week to share the story of Jesus?

WITNESS

ACTS 1: 8

Jesus has been crucified and raised from the dead. Now he appears to his disciples one last time before ascending back into heaven. Last words are important. They generally emphasize what you want someone to remember or do. We typically say “I love you” as we leave, since we want to remind others about what is important.

Jesus’ last words are important as well. He gives those who have chosen to follow him clear instructions about what they are to do.

“...and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”



- *What is Jesus communicating by his last words to the disciples? How do his words apply to us?*

One way to share our story with Jesus



One example of a new believer witnessing in scripture comes from Matt. 9:9-13. Matthew, a tax collector *(tax collectors were often hated) had decided to follow Jesus with his life, just like you have decided to follow Jesus with your life. Matthew wanted to share his new faith decision with his friends, so he threw a party and invited folks to meet Jesus. Let’s look at the story:

- Why do you think Matthew welcomed others into his home to meet Jesus?
- Why did so many friends come out to meet Jesus?

We believe that sharing your story about Jesus with others strengthens your faith. And we know that others are very interested in hearing about Jesus. Just like you were, your friends are spiritually curious. Our willingness to welcome them into places where they can hear about and experience Jesus can make a significant difference in their lives.

true story

A university student in Texas recently became a follower of Jesus. She decided to invite her friends to come hear her story at their campus worship meeting. She texted and personally invited her friends when she saw them. Over 15 friends came to hear her story about experiencing Jesus.

Would you like follow the example of Matthew and many of your fellow students, like the one from Texas? Would you consider sharing your story of faith at Large Group, Small Group Bible Study, or at a New Faith party?

I'll help you write your story, select a good location where your friends will be comfortable, and invite.



LET'S PLAN THIS:

Last week, you did the first step which is to strengthen your identity as a daughter or son of our heavenly father. Now it's time to SET and SPIKE.

1. Let's brainstorm a list of your non-Christians friends whom you want to pray for. Who on this list will you invite to hear your new faith story?
2. Where do you want to invite them to hear your story? Large Group? Small Group? Pizza Party? 1 on 1 conversation?
3. When? Let's agree on a day and time to share (within the next 2 weeks). Let's pray for your friends.
4. Now let's expand on your story, building upon what you wrote last week. Fill in more details on your phone. Send to your staff and practice it together.
5. After you tell your story at the event (the "SET"), some of your friends will probably be interested in exploring faith for themselves. At the event, we will invite them to explore faith. Please host them for a 3-week GIG (God Investigation Group). This is the "SPIKE." (We will go through hosting the GIG in more detail next week.)

TEXT TEMPLATES



Hey __ I wanted to invite you to come hear me share about a very important event in my life. I recently made a spiritual, new faith decision. As one of my closest friends, it would mean a lot if you were able to come to my new faith party. I'll spend some time sharing about my faith journey with God and you'll even be able to meet some of my friends. Hope you can make it <3



I wanted to invite you to come hear me talk about a very important event in my life. I will share about a recent spiritual decision I made. I would be honored if you would consider joining me on _____ as I talk about how I've come to understand God and our relationship to him. It will be a fun environment where you can meet new friends and ask questions about spiritual matters if you have them.

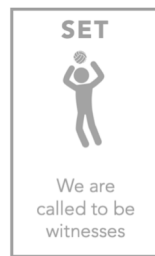
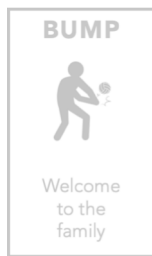


Hey ___! So tomorrow I will be sharing about my faith journey in the small group bible study I attend, and as I was thinking about who I would want there, your name came to mind. If you're available and free at ___pm, it would mean a lot if you could come hear me share my own story. Is that something you would be down for? Let me know, sista/brotha :D



Hi! Guess what? Tonight at the on-campus Bible study I attend I'm going to share about a big life decision I made this semester. I would love for my friends and community to be there! It's going to be today at ___pm at _____. I hope to see you there :)

3



Thank you for trusting us with your journey of faith! This next study is about how God wants to invite others into His family through you.



HOST

DEBRIEF



You recently shared your new faith story with others. How did you feel about that? What went well, and what might have been stressful? What did you learn about yourself by telling your story? How did this experience strengthen your faith?

Remember Acts 1:8 "...go into all the world and make disciples" As you have now experienced, sharing your new faith story both strengthens your faith and stirs spiritual curiosity in others. It's an amazing concept that God wants to use US to help others know and experience His goodness.

Hospitality and invitation are important themes in scripture. These are distinguishing marks of those who follow Jesus. We all are invited by God to be good hosts, welcoming others to experience God's love and grace. Luke 14 is a powerful story about hospitality and invitation.

In Luke 14, Jesus was at a dinner party, hosted by a religious leader, when he told this story. At the party, Jesus began painting a picture of how much God loves people. His hope was to encourage those at the party to go and invite others to come know God.

1. Describe the task assigned to the servants.
2. How would you describe what matters most to the Master who is hosting the party?
3. According to Jesus, what is important to God? What is our role in helping others experience his goodness?

God wants us to go out and continue inviting everyone to know and understand him. Sometimes there will be rejection. Despite their response, he longs for us to continue inviting because His love for those who are far from Him is persistent. God desires to express His love for your friends through your persistent invitation to hear and know Him. One way to do that is to host a God Investigation Group (GIG). A GIG is a 5-week bible study led by your InterVarsity leader that is tailor made for your seeking friends.

Would you be willing to give more of your friends and club/classmates an opportunity to hear about Jesus?

READ
LUKE 14: 15-24

You have done "BUMP" (strengthen your identity in Jesus) and "SET" (testimony and invitations). Now it is time for "SPIKE"...thinking through how to host a five-week GIG for those who want to explore faith.

We have created a pretty simple GIG for you to lead using our website ExploringFaith.Life. Check it out. At the GIG, you may want to use phones or laptops.



In the next few days,

- Decide a time and location for the Gig.
- Decide when you are going to prep.
- Text them today. (see below)
- Prayer: what are a few things you would like God to do for you and your friends this week?

IF YES

- 1 Let's make a list of who we can invite: prayer map again.
- 2 When can we host our first meeting and where?
- 3 Let's set a day/time to prep the first week's study and invite people to attend.
- 4 What are 2-3 things we can commit to pray about as we follow Jesus in this adventure of inviting and hosting others?

Multiple Text Template Options



Hey_____, I'm getting some friends together next week to talk about spirituality and James. It's gonna be a fun and safe place to ask questions and learn together. I'd love it if you came.



Hey_____, I want to create a safe place for my friends to ask their questions about spirituality and Jesus. I'm going to host an honest conversation where there are no bad questions. Starting next week. Wanna come?

PRAY TOGETHER

Thank God for giving you the privilege of reaching others with His love and good news.

Ask God to move in the hearts of those you are inviting.