



The Awesome Campaign: Large Group and Small Group Series

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Large Group Talk #1: Awesome Life

Luke 5: 1-11

Clip--What I want to be when I grow up

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j4S8LnHZuuE>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yob03VYqrPY>

INTRO

We all have dreams about what would make life awesome.

We all grow up talking to our friends, "One day, I wish I could. One day, I'd love to."

SHARE

What is your dream for the awesome life? Tell a personal dream you had coming into college. Could be funny or serious, i.e. maybe to be an Olympic wrestler. Get an amazing girlfriend. For people to think I'm cool. Straight A's. To find love. Get an awesome job.

Ask them to shout out their dream. If they are shy, have them call out their neighbor.

v. 1-3 SIMON PETER.

Tonight we are going to get in the shoes or the boat of Simon Peter. Like us, he had a dream. To be a great fisherman.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q-AKQrizQ38>

(Duck Dynasty Clip, Life is what you make of it, 1 minute clip.)

Letting Jesus into their boat is a small step toward the most amazing moment of their lives. The same is true for some of you. Coming here tonight is like letting Jesus into your boat. Checking him out. It's being brave and courageous, especially for those just checking out faith.

v. 4 Jesus, what do you know about fishing?!

Up through v. 5, this is just a nice story. But there is nothing nice about what comes next.

DREAM

Growing up, we all have dreams.

- If you are a Baseball player...It is the 9th inning, World Series, 2 outs, bases loaded, down by 3. Grand slam! Yankees lose. Dream moment.

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- If you are a Basketball player....March Madness. National Championship game. 3 seconds left, you are down by 2, give me the rock, 3 point shot, all net! Duke goes down! Dream comes true.

v. 7 This is the dream catch. This crazy dream IS happening. Their boats ARE sinking.

DREAM

Discuss in pairs:

What is your dream? I mean big dream? What you wrote down before, or a new big dream.

Simon got his because he let Jesus into his boat. Jesus is not playing kid games anymore. This is man time.

Jesus doesn't just teach us to pray or study the bible. Jesus is an expert on your major, your career, your internship, your dating life, your porn addiction, your summer plans, your hopes for grad school. You may try to tell yourself that you know better than Jesus how to handle these important topics. Simon tried to play that game.

Once Jesus is in our boats, he will NOT be relegated to the few things I think he can handle well. He wants to transform and redeem all parts of my life

C.S. Lewis quote

"Imagine yourself as a living house. God comes in to rebuild that house. At first, perhaps, you can understand what He is doing. He is getting the drains right and stopping the leaks in the roof and so on: you knew that those jobs needed doing and so you are not surprised. But presently He starts knocking the house about in a way that hurts abominably and does not seem to make sense. What on earth is He up to?

The explanation is that He is building a different house from the one you thought of —throwing out a new wing here, putting on an extra floor there, running up towers, making courtyards. **You thought you were going to be made into a decent little cottage: but He is building a palace. He intends to come and live in it Himself.**"

Many of you here want a few minor adjustments to your life. "Jesus, fix this little thing." My friends, Jesus is turning a cottage into a mansion!

Why do they accept this call?

What happens to the dream catch?

In v. 9, they were amazed at the genius catch. Their dream had come true! But now, standing on the shore, they have a new, life-changing choice.

Option A. This is my dream catch! Go with the pile of fish. I have always wanted this.

Option B. Go with the Dream Fulfller Himself.

v. 11 Simon chooses wisely. Later Simon becomes a world changer, leader of people, willing to die for Jesus and the Gospel.

You feel plain, normal, non-descript, tame. You are like Simon. Jesus sees you, and calls you to dream,

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to be transformed.

RECAP

1. Jesus gets you. He gets your world. She sees you and your innermost dreams.
2. Jesus is the dream fulfiller and the dream transformer.
3. Jesus is the name changer. Simon becomes Peter. The rock! Peter goes on to lead the most amazing revolution in history, the revolution of which we are a part today. Kingdom of God is at hand, right here. We say yes to it.

We form an identity based on our dreams, our activities, our friends today. Jesus sees who he will transform us into in 20 years, and gives us that new name.

Jesus says, “Follow me. And I transform you into a fisher of people, into a world changer!”

CALL TO RESPONSE

1. Dreams transformed. Identify your dreams. Invite Jesus into your dreams. What if Jesus gave you your wildest dream? Let Jesus be the dream transformer in your life.
2. Some are ready to say yes to Jesus to fishing for people instead of just fish. To be missional on campus and for the rest of your lives. Please join our apprenticeship.
3. Some are ready to become followers of Jesus for the first time in your life.

Small Group #1: Awesome Life—Jesus Calling Peter

Matthew 14:22-33

INTRO

“Go Pro” videos

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e6zSSyv-e4A&noredirect=1>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4bqoDoExFZo>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A3PDXmYoF5U>

What activity would make you feel most alive?

MAIN POINTS

- When we choose to follow Jesus he actually asks us to take risks. It’s not about sitting in the boat and obeying the rules, it’s about following him into something exciting and purposeful.
- Jesus is the awesome one, not us. When we focus on Jesus, we understand and experience who he is and what he wants for our lives. When we focus on ourselves and our fears, we can’t see beyond the crises right in front of us.
- Jesus invites us into some exciting risks, because he wants us, & the communities we’re part of, to see more of who he is and trust him. He wants to build our faith as we take steps to respond to him .

TEACHING POINTS

- Background: Takes place right after feeding the 5,000
 - They are tired after a long day of serving people
- V. 23: Why do you think Jesus prayed?

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- How would you be feeling if you were one of the guys in the boat?
- V. 28: Why do you think this was Peter's reaction? What must he have believed to ask Jesus to do this?
- V. 31: What do you think Jesus' tone was here?
- Didn't Peter have a ton of faith to jump out of the boat? What did Peter do right? Wrong? (He stepped out in faith & had a chance to experience more of Jesus, but when he took His eyes off Jesus & looked at the intimidating situation around him, he lost focus)
- What do you think Peter's friends were thinking as he was stepping out of the boat?
- Where do you see faith in this passage? How would someone go about growing their faith? (taking risks & seeing Jesus come through)
- What do they all learn about Jesus through this interaction?

APPLICATION

- What are some fears that you are focusing on instead of Jesus? Risk with honesty. Tell us your real story.
- What is one active step of faith you can trust Jesus with this week?
- Join our apprenticeship. Take a risk.
 - Pray for God to reveal himself
 - Pray for a specific situation in your life
 - Offer to pray for a classmate, roommate, or friend this coming week

Large Group Talk #2: Awesome Love

John 8:2-11

Clip--Jerry Maguire, "You complete me."

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GN-kILblvI0>

INTRO

We all crave love. We all need love.

Where does our campus go to satisfy this craving for love?

PERSONAL STORY OR CAMPUS STORY

Humor—the extent we will go to for love and affirmation.

Here is a story from Jesus about a woman who craves love and gets caught in the act.

And Jesus has the most interesting ways of interacting with us about the ways we crave love.

JOHN 8:2-11

Comes from the biography of Jesus by John.

v. 2-3

Picture this crazy scene. Huge crowd. Hundreds of people. Suddenly Jesus is rudely interrupted by this chaos. A bunch of religious leaders bring this half dressed woman.

v. 4

How do you catch someone in adultery? They probably plotted this out.

"When Martha's husband goes out of town, Bob always comes over for a quickie. Let's catch her in the act, and make Jesus judge her."

They are trying to prove Jesus is a wimp. "Jesus is so soft on sin. We need to confront him about this once for all."

All fingers are pointed at her, all shame and humiliation.

v. 5

They pit him against Moses. The Big Gun of the Older Testament. Moses v. Jesus. "Come on Jesus. Fight Moses."

Who is on trial here? She is on trial for her life, for the ways she has been seeking to satisfy the craving for love. Her life hangs in the balance in front of this rabid mob.

But Jesus is on trial as well. What is he going to do?

Their finger of accusation is pointed at both of them. What should Jesus do? How do you handle judgmental religious people?!

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v. 6a

This is a well-laid trap!

v. 6b

What the heck is Jesus doing? (Any theories out there?) Biblical experts love to debate over this. He is writing their names in the dirt.

We start with OUR question, “What is Jesus writing in the sand?” But wise students allow our questions get massaged into questions the text will answer.

So our question becomes “What is the SIGNIFICANCE of Jesus’ action?”

They harass him. “Come Jesus, should we stone her? Come on Jesus. Answer us.”

And in the process, where are they looking? The full spotlight is on Jesus, shifting a bit of the heat away from this woman.

[Pull out a slinky. Play with the slinky from hand to hand as you talk.]

I can talk to you right now, but it wouldn’t do any good. All you can think about is the slinky.

I think this the impact of Jesus writing in the sand. Everyone looks at him and his finger, instead of shaming the woman worse.

v. 7

Jesus defuses the situation, he is not controlled by the urgent, and he takes the rage of the mob and redirects it.

There are several genius things about this line.

How does Jesus feel about the ways that we crave and look in crazy places? No big deal? Jesus is serious about our sin and our transformation? In this story, Jesus offers transformation to everyone. Not just a woman looking for love in the wrong places.

Who will dare to pretend they are perfect?! Everyone here needs to look at themselves in the mirror. Everyone needs to check themselves. Not just her!

v. 8-9

They expect an either/or. Either stone her or don’t stone her. And he finds the third way.

“Let’s talk about your sin...”

Jesus always finds the third way. The path of wisdom.

v. 10-11

Neither do I condemn. Perfect love. From now on do not live in sin.

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Thank God Jesus loves you and me too much to leave us alone. Thank God he offers us substantial transformation.

DISCUSS IN PAIRS

What do you like about Jesus from this passage?

Jesus is bold, calm, wise, clever, defending her, but also not letting her fall back into her old life of addiction.

TAKING IT TO HEART

Let's bring it home. Three life-changing points from this passage.

1. We all prefer to point the finger at someone else rather than look at ourselves.
2. We all need Jesus to show us how we crave love, and where we find affirmation.
3. We all need the invitation to deeper freedom and new life.

NEW LIFE

Jesus says to us, "I have awesome things for you. Don't settle. Let me open your mind and heart to how much more I have for you. Do you want awesome love?!"

PERSONAL STORY FROM YOUR PERSONAL LIFE

How does Jesus actually offer us love and acceptance. Freedom to be fruitful. Joy. Meaning. Peace. Real friendships and love.

What about you?

DISCUSS IN PAIRS

Which one of these points do you need to take to heart tonight?

CALLS TO RESPONSE

1. How do we try to manipulate Jesus, OR look down on others.
2. Jesus knows your story. Jesus does not condemn. Where do you look for someone or something to complete you?
3. He does say "sin no more." Tell your story to others and help each other grow.

Small Group #2: Awesome Love—Satisfaction

John 4

INTRO

Have students eat salty food during small group, so they feel really thirsty as we go along. Maybe pass out mini water bottles at the end as part of application.

Image: Mary Magdalene (sculpture by Donatello)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Donatello,_maria_maddalena_02.JPG

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What is significant to you about this sculpture? Let's observe some things about it: what is it made of, what is she wearing? Why do you think Donatello chose to portray her like this? She looks desperate.

(Why this photo is included: this is not the woman well, but it is an illustration of a desperate woman coming to Jesus similar to the woman at the well.)

MAIN POINTS

1. *Jesus knows who we are.* But does not condemn, he initiates.
2. *Jesus knows what we long for and desires to quench it.* Her thirst is good, but how she quenches it is warped. Jesus does not just identify, but he also quenches. Her life flips. Shame is broken.
3. *Jesus invites us to live for something more than ourselves.* Inspires her to live for more.

TEACHING POINTS

1. Briefly use some of the end part where she goes back to the village. Make a great quick point about witness and world changers.
2. This woman has hidden thirsts in her life. Jesus moves the conversation from surface to honesty, to see if she is willing to be honest about herself. The same is true for us. Jesus invites us to be honest about what is going on under the surface. There are layers of honesty. You can be "somewhat honest" but rather vague. You can be "more honest". Or you can be "most honest." Please consider being "most honest."
2. Jesus is very gentle with her in helping uncover her deeper thirst. He uses intriguing language like "water that is alive" to draw out her curiosity. Jesus is amazing at using questions and parables. He

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is an expert in helping open our eyes, if we want our eyes open.

3. Jesus is the water. Jesus is the one who satisfies. He is God in the flesh. He is our creator, and he made our soul. Our soul is uniquely satisfied when we are filled by him alone.

APPLICATION

1. Call to honesty. Tell your story. Where do you get your identity and affirmation? Studies. Romance and image. Parents. Friends.
2. Pass out little water bottles. Call to Jesus. Are you desperate for Jesus? (Look at the sculpture of Mary Magdalene). How do we need to be real with Jesus and recognize that we need him? If you have never invited Jesus to fill your life, let's do that now.
3. Call to mission on campus. Who do you need to tell about the transformation Jesus is doing in your life? (Who is like this woman in your life whom you can befriend and pray for?)

Large Group Talk #3: Awesome Purpose in Life

John 21:1-19

INTRO

What is your life purpose?

Army, be all that you can be: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QpIWbNg57h4>
Braveheart freedom clip. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gr_OpFxCx-A

Today, we are looking at what might make for an awesome life purpose.

One of the most common prayers among those seeking God on campus: “God, what is my purpose in life?” Who here has asked God that question?

Our Awesome campaign theme is from Jesus in John 10:10. He makes the wonderful and audacious claim to offer amazing life. How does Jesus’ offer relate to our life’s purpose?

Let’s pick up this conversation at the end of Jesus’ time on earth. In fact, it is in the confusing times after Jesus death and resurrection, when his disciples are not sure what to do next. What is their life purpose. They are at a low point. Doubts. Confusion. Pain. Jesus is gone. Where do you go after Jesus is gone?

Some of us are crystal clear on the plan and direction for our lives. Step by step plan. Other of us are meandering. Not sure.

What does Jesus say to us, whether we are crystal clear or fuzzy? What might be your Awesome life purpose?

3 BY 5 BLANK CARD

Please pick up the card under your seat. Take a minute. What is your life purpose? See if you can write it in a minute. Doesn’t have to be perfect.

We are in John 21. Jesus has died and rose again. A few chapters before, the disciples were crystal clear on their calling and purpose in life.

But here in chapter 21, things are murky.

v. 21:1-3a

“I’m going out to fish.” Peter is reverting back to what he knows, back to what has worked for him in the past. Before Peter met Jesus, his life purpose was fishing. Why does John tell us that Peter is going back to fishing?

Often, when you don’t know the way forward, you look back and keep doing what used to work for you. Maybe he is ditching his calling. Maybe he is done suffering and being rejected and running for his life. Or maybe he is just hungry. A brother needs to eat sometimes.

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v. 3b

But they caught nothing. I love when my efforts are fruitful. How does it feel to fish all night long and catch nothing? When I'm getting A's and things are awesome, life purpose is not that pressing of a question. But when I keep coming up short, I ask, "What the heck am I doing with my life?"

v. 4

Jesus does not leave them in their confusion and haze. This is super encouraging! Jesus comes to us. When you are confused or meandering, please invite Jesus into your confusion, even if you don't know what that means.

They have been hanging out with Jesus for 3 years. How can they NOT recognize Jesus?!

I hate when I am asking Jesus to lead me or reveal my life purpose, and I get nothing!

v. 5-6a

Classic repeat of Luke 5. Déjà vu! Don't they see this coming?!

v. 6

To their credit, they do exactly what this stranger on the beach tells them to do.

When life purpose is murky and hidden, taking small steps can be the best way forward. Jesus will seldom map out the whole story for us, but he will give us an important small next step of faithfulness and obedience.

Why? If Jesus gave you the road map to life, we would try to trust ourselves to get to the destination. But giving small next steps, we autonomous people keep learning to lean on him.

v. 7-8

What a hot mess! Fish everywhere. Naked Peter. Could it freaking be Jesus??

They may not have any more clarity on their life purpose, but they do think they see Jesus. And that redirects their whole day.

v. 9-14

How do you describe Jesus in this paragraph? Thoughtful. Kind. A servant. Meets their current basic need.

"Jesus, what is my life purpose?"

"Let me feed you first."

When you are confused or questioning, how does it feel to have Jesus feed you first?

Why 153 fish? Could just be precise counting. Or could be symbolic of something else. There were 153 known countries in the world in that day. The word in the Greek, "hauled" is the same word in John 6:44. Only if the father "draws" him or her. All nations are being drawn.

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After a great breakfast, what is important to address next?

v. 15-18

Let me make 3 points from these verses:

1. *Why is Jesus so redundant?*

What is all this “do you love me” stuff? Jesus has some unresolved tough issues between him and Peter. Jesus warned Peter that he would turn his back on him, and Jesus was right. Peter and Jesus need to resolve this biting betrayal.

The best way to cauterize an infected wound is to lift the bandage and see how much infection is really there. The infected wound is Peter’s sense of confidence that he can fulfill his life purpose on his own. He sees Jesus path, and he consistently says to Jesus, “Yeah, I want to follow you. But I will pick the path. It is not the path of suffering.”

Jesus will have none of it. If I will be your Lord and your Leader, then you need to listen to me and trust the path that I pick for you and your future. I know better than you do.

Jesus knows that Peter loves him. Peter’s affirmations are not a surprise to Jesus. He is reminding Peter of his calling, of his purpose.

2. *Why the number 3?*

That was the number of the betrayal. Now it is the same number, but clarifying the calling.

3. *How does love and feeding sheep go together?*

We tend to separate these. I can love Jesus, but that nothing to do with me serving others and helping them grow. Not in Jesus’ mind. My love for Jesus has to be expressed in love for others. He wants to get Peter to put these 2 together for the rest of his life.

Jesus is calling us to re-think our life purpose. Where does serving others fit? This is the practical part. If my love of Jesus does not translate into loving others and helping them grow, I have a fundamental faith glitch.

We have a choice to make. Who do we live for? Here is an example of what happens to us when we live for ourselves. Any House of Cards fans here? Check out Frank Underwood.

Clip from House of Cards: Lessons in Ruthlessness:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a5Ha3IWeXOo>

Describe Frank.

Who here wants to be like Frank? No one. Jesus offers us meaning and purpose on a completely different path.

MARK 8:34-38

Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: “Whoever wants to be my disciple

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must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it. What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels."

We can define our life purpose on our own, for ourselves. Or we can let Jesus be the center of our life calling. By giving up ourselves at the center of the story, we will be servants of all, and actually have love that will last forever.

1 CORINTHIANS 13:8, 13

8 Love never fails....**13** And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

If you chose Jesus and love as your life purpose, you will have the thing that will last forever. If you do not, what you have will ultimately disappoint and fade away.

Please don't live for yourself. Please don't try to gain the whole world and forfeit your life, like Frank.

This is what Jesus is saying to us. Follow me. No matter what, follow me to a better life, a life with me. Follow me to the end, don't stop trusting. Every decision, where do I live, what do I study, whom I date, whom I marry, what do I do with my free time, what do I do with my weekends, what do I do with my summers. Ask Jesus to lead you in all these things.

RESPONSE

1. Please re-think your life purpose. What is your life purpose? Please read Purpose Driven Life and discuss it with us next week. Please stand if you are willing to re-think your life purpose.
2. How about next summer? Would you be willing to give your summer to service? Please stand if you are willing to give Jesus next summer to learn the path of servanthood.
3. What does it mean for you to feed Jesus' sheep? Leadership? Missions? Serving the poor? Serving your friends? Helping your roommate by cleaning the toilet?

Small Group #3: Awesome Life Purpose—Save Life = Lose It

John 12:20-26

INTRO

What is worth giving up your life for? Write down some causes or people that you would be willing to die for.

Clip: Gran Torino shootout

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HisV1xUcIFl>

Clint Eastwood gave up his life for this cause. Could you go that far?

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MAIN POINTS

- What makes a great life? Loss of soul to gain the world.
- You need to die to yourself to produce fruit, do what I'm doing and the father will honor you too
- If you want an awesome life, seek to lose your life.
- Jesus knew that God sent him to have a transformative impact on the world, but to do it he had to die. He had to lay down his life for God's kingdom to flourish & grow, to produce fruit. The same is true for us: God invites us into a life of great impact, honor, and significance, but we have to die to ourselves.

TEACHING POINTS

- Background:
 - Jesus has walked with His disciples for 3 years & now has arrived at Jerusalem for the Passover feast.
 - The closer he has drawn to Jerusalem, the more he has spoken about his imminent death.
 - His ministry is drawing to a close, so he is focusing in on the last few lessons he wants them to remember as he leaves.
 - Greeks: they were most likely converts or gentiles that had an interest in God & worshipping Him as far as they were able or allowed by the law.
- What must it have been like to be here? (*Busy. Lots of people gathered from all over to worship & celebrate. Jesus has been very busy healing, and preaching—he's probably a major celebrity that people would want to meet. This is after his triumphal entry*).
- Why did Philip go to Andrew & then to Jesus?
- How did Jesus respond to the Greeks' request?
- What is the significance of the "hour coming?"
- What is the "seed" & the "fruit" Jesus is talking about? (*The gentiles are now included as part of the fruit: "Anyone who..." "whoever serves..."*)
- Does Jesus want us to hate ourselves? Why?
 - V. 25: the word for life is also a representation of the whole "self" & the word for lose connotes destruction more so than misplacing
- Where is Jesus leading his disciples?
- What's the benefit of following Jesus & obeying His commands?

Application

- Reflection
 - Are you willing to give up everything in order to follow Jesus? What is holding you back?
 - What kind of fruit could Jesus produce in you while you are here at college?
 - Who are the "Greeks" that are seeking Jesus on our campus?
- Action
 - Let's pick a community that we can be "Phillips" for
 - Pray for them
 - Reach out to them
 - Introduce them to Jesus

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