



360 REVOLUTION: GROUP STUDY

Session 1: What is Evangelism?

Step 1 INTRO:

Step 1.0 Watch Video—Wally (6:32)

<http://www.iamsecond.com/seconds/wally/>

Step 1.1 Discuss Video—*In groups of two or three and talk about these questions:*

- What did you like about their story?
- How can you relate to their story?

**** (Set this step up in advance) Step 1.2 Tell a story—***Have someone from your group share their story. You can be creative in sharing their story for example, utilizing pre-taped testimony, note card story, cardboard story, a Before-Christ/After-Christ story, etc. This person needs to have a clear understanding on how to tell their story. The story should be 1–3 minutes long.*

Thank _____ for sharing their story!

Today we want to discover for ourselves what is in a story!

Step 2 TEACH:

Step 2.1 Teaching

Ask your group: What do you think of when you hear the word *evangelism*? What comes to mind when you hear that term? *Give your group a chance to respond.*

At first, many of the answers may center around definitions—“sharing your faith,” “telling others about Jesus,” “sharing God’s good news,” or “getting people to become Christians.” These answers are right on target, but you need to move your group toward expressing their feelings about evangelism. You may even want to say:

Okay, this helps us see what evangelism is, but how do you feel about evangelism? Is it something that excites you or scares you?

For many, if not most, the word evangelism causes people to break out into a cold sweat. They think of high-pressure tactics to convince people. They think of evangelism as something they know they should do, but they are deathly afraid of it.

We want to help them discover that evangelism is not simply something Christ-followers should do, but to discover that sharing our faith can bring us an amazing sense of joy, purpose, and excitement.

Say something like this: We want to move from being afraid of evangelism to actually looking forward to the opportunity to share our faith and be a part of God’s plan to help others live life to the fullest here on earth and for eternity. The experience is more like a dance than a fight. When you dance, one person moves one way and we move with them; then we may move a new direction and they follow. That is what happens in friendships, too.

Evangelism is not a fight to win or a sales pitch for a product. Trying to convert someone is not consistent with a relationship or friendship. Trying to convert is wrestling, not dancing. It is an argument, not conversation. Win-lose, not win-win. We tell others about Jesus because we believe that Jesus will change their life for the better and give them eternal life! Let’s look at a man in Mark 5 whose life was radically changed by Jesus.

Step 2.2 Scripture: Mark 5:1-20

Ask a couple people in your group to read Mark 5:1–20 out loud. (It’s best for them to read from the Bible, but if one is not available, give them this print-out.)

—Mark 5:1–20 (NIV)

“They went across the lake to the region of the Gerasenes. When Jesus got out of the boat, a man with an evil spirit came from the tombs to meet him. This man lived in the tombs, and no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain. For he had often

been chained hand and foot, but he tore the chains apart and broke the irons on his feet. No one was strong enough to subdue him. Night and day among the tombs and in the hills he would cry out and cut himself with stones.

“When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and fell on his knees in front of him. He shouted at the top of his voice, ‘What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? Swear to God that you won’t torture me!’ For Jesus had said to him, ‘Come out of this man, you evil spirit!’ Then Jesus asked him, ‘What is your name?’

‘My name is Legion,’ he replied, ‘for we are many.’ And he begged Jesus again and again not to send them out of the area. A large herd of pigs was feeding on the nearby hillside. The demons begged Jesus, ‘Send us among the pigs; allow us to go into them.’ He gave them permission, and the evil spirits came out and went into the pigs. The herd, about two thousand in number, rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned.

“Those tending the pigs ran off and reported this in the town and countryside, and the people went out to see what had happened. When they came to Jesus, they saw the man who had been possessed by the legion of demons, sitting there, dressed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. Those who had seen it told the people what had happened to the demon-possessed man—and told about the pigs as well. Then the people began to plead with Jesus to leave their region.

“As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed begged to go with him. Jesus did not let him, but said, ‘Go home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you.’ So the man went away and began to tell in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him. And all the people were amazed.”

Step 2.3 Teach

Let’s look at some key ideas we discover from this story.

Idea #1. People are affected by evil

The man in Mark 5 gives us an extreme vision of how a person can be impacted and damaged by evil. While we may not live in tombs and mutilate ourselves with rocks, we are still affected by evil. Evil—sinfulness—is something all of us have been influenced and damaged by.

Read Romans 3:23: “For all have sinned; all fall short of God’s glorious standard” (NLT).

Let’s see ourselves for who we really are. We are all affected by evil. You don’t have to claim to be worse than you are, but you certainly should not claim to be better than you are. The Bible just says that you need to be clear of who you are: that apart from Christ you are a sinner and fall short of God’s standard.

When we allow Christ to be our leader and forgiver, Scripture tells us we have a new identity—an identity of holiness and purity. But even with that new identity, there are times we don't live out that identity. We choose to live apart from Christ's power. The first lesson we can learn from this passage is to be clear about who we are apart from Christ. We are evil-affected people.

Idea #2. People need to know who Jesus really is

The man in our story sees the Son of God and because of his demon-possession makes an incorrect assessment of the purpose and intentions of Jesus Christ. "I know who you are, but I believe that you have come to make my situation worse." While we may not be possessed by demons, the impact of sin in our lives creates the same problem: We are often blinded from seeing Jesus for who he really is. We see Jesus as a hindrance rather than as a healer. We see him as someone who brings problems rather than peace. But until we are clear on who Jesus really is—the ultimate healer, who comes to bring us freedom and forgiveness—we will never respond to him as the savior and leader of our lives.

Idea # 3. People are transformed and set free by Jesus

This guy underwent enormous life change. What happened to this man, and how was he transformed by Jesus?

When you meet Jesus, there should be unmistakable evidence in your life that you are a different person. Everyone should see it! How is your life different because of knowing Jesus? What are specific ways he has transformed your life?

Idea # 4. People who are changed by Jesus have a desire to tell others

Just look back at the scripture. This man could not wait to tell his friends about this Jesus guy. We ought to have the same sense of urgency to share the impact of Jesus in our lives with our friends. This sharing is not just a matter of words, but of actions as well. Many people have heard about Jesus, but few people have displayed what a life marked by Jesus is all about. So for us, we cannot just simply tell them about Jesus—we must show them Jesus by how we live.

We all have people in our lives that are far from God. Our call is to share Jesus with those friends through our words and actions. Our call is to be intentional, not haphazard, about sharing our faith.

Some of you may be thinking, "Wait a minute! I thought we were supposed to stay away from the worldly people." In reality, the Bible says to be in the world but not of the world. That means we are to interact with people who are far from God without being corrupted by the sin of the world. This does not mean we should avoid people who are far from

God. Instead, it means exactly the opposite! We are to be in the world sharing the love and life of Christ with people who do not yet follow him.

Step 3 DISCUSS:

(optional) This section can be used as an additional resource for continued large groups; as a segue from large groups to small groups; or as an opener for those who have small groups on a different day of the week. If you are not using this video option, please skip to Step 4.1.

Step 3.1 Show Video—Landry Jones (5:05)

<http://www.iamsecond.com/seconds/landry-jones/>

Step 3.2 Discuss Video-

- What did you like about their story?
- How can you relate to their story?

Step 3:3 Discuss Questions

- 1) How do you think your friends perceive Jesus? How do you think they would describe him?
- 2) What do you think it means for Christ to be your forgiver? What do you think it means for Christ to be your leader?
- 3) What do you think some of the evidence your life has changed might be? How have you seen change in your own life because of your heart relationship with Christ?
- 4) What do you think keeps us from sharing our faith with our friends? Which do you think is harder: Telling people about your faith or living out your faith? Why?

Step 4 ACT:

Step 4.1 Present the 360 Strategy

We are on a mission. We all have people around us who are inside our spheres of influence, our circles of trust—teachers, parents, friends, siblings, and the list goes on and on. Many of those people do not have a relationship with Jesus. Let's break down these three categories as we make our 360 list.

360 Breaks down this way:

- Look 360 degrees around you where God is at work
- choose 3 people
- pray for them 6 times a week
- miss 0 opportunities to share your faith with them

Do you have three people you know who need Jesus? We want to start to PRAY for our three people, six days a week. (Note: Why not seven days? First, there was a time when Moses was praying and God said, in essence, "What are you doing still praying, get up and do something." We are going to do something at least one day a week for these three people. This may be writing them a note, sending them a text, Facebook message, doing something with them, etc., but we will DO SOMETHING. The second reason is that 370 would make a bizarre circle 😊.)

Finally, beginning next week, we are going to learn how to miss zero opportunities and be given some helps of how to do that. Let's commit to approach these relationships intentionally, trusting that God will give us the opportunity to share our faith with them through our lives and words.

Step 4.2 Create a 360 list

Have each person in your group draw a big circle on a piece of paper. Put an X in the middle of the circle that will represent them.

Say: Think of those that are above you: parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, bosses, teachers, coaches, etc. In twenty seconds, write at the top of the circle the names of all the people that are above you that you either know are not Christ-followers or you are unsure if they are Christ-followers. Go! Start the clock and stop after twenty seconds.

Follow with: Next, think of those that are around you: friends, teammates, neighbors, children, grandchildren, cousins, students in your classes, etc. In twenty seconds, write in the middle of the circle the names of all the people that are around you that either you know are not Christ-followers or you are unsure if they are Christ-followers. Go! Start the clock and stop after twenty seconds.

Follow with: Finally, think of those that are below you: younger brother or sister, teammates, nieces, nephews, friends of your younger brother or sister, etc. In twenty seconds, write down at the bottom of the circle the names of all the people that are below you that you either know are not Christ-followers or you are unsure if they are Christ-followers. Go!" Start the clock and stop after twenty seconds.

Then say to your group: This becomes a working list that you will begin to pray over this week. Ask that God would bring three of these people to the forefront of your mind. Ask that he would place a sense of urgency in your heart for them coming to know him personally. Have those names with you when you come back next week.

Session 2: The Mission

Step 1 INTRO:

Step 1.0 Watch Video—Lecrae (9:09)

<http://www.iamsecond.com/seconds/lecrae/>

Step 1.1 Discuss Video—*Have everyone turn in groups of two or three and talk about these questions:*

- What did you like about their story?
- How can you relate to their story?

***** Set this up in advance Step 1.2 Tell a story**—*Have someone from your group share their story. You can be creative in sharing their story for example, utilizing pre-taped testimony, note card story, cardboard story, a before-Christ/ after-Christ story, etc. This person needs to have a clear understanding on how to tell their story. The story should be 1–3 minutes long.*

Thank _____ for sharing their story!

Today we want to discover for ourselves what is in a story?

Step 2 TEACH:

Step 2.1 Recall 360 Strategy

Ask your group: What do the 3, 6, and 0 stand for in the 360 Strategy? Give your group time to think out loud a bit and then write these words on a flip chart or board:

Look 360 degrees around you where God is at work.

3: Invest in 3 people.

6: Pray for them 6 days a week (acting on at least one of those days).

0: Miss 0 opportunities to plant, water, or fertilize a seed.

Say something like this: It is important for us to understand the need for a strategy to reach people who don't know Jesus. It empowers us to share our faith with others. We get a glimpse in Luke 15 of how important this mission is to Jesus. In this passage, he tells three different stories. All of these stories have the same thread running through them. Although the details of each story are different, he is making the same point in each.

It is as if Jesus cares so deeply about the point he is making sure that he retells the point three times through each of these stories. If Jesus cares deeply enough to make the point three different times, it is something to which we should pay incredibly close attention. It is something we should never forget.

Step 2.2 Scripture

Ask different people to read these scriptures out loud

Lost Sheep (Luke 15:1–7) Lost Coin (Luke 15:8–10) Lost Son (Luke 15:11–32)

Summarize the scripture: Lost people matter to God! God wants us to go to great extremes to help them be found.

Step 2.3 Story

Story: Here's a story from the life of Greg Dewey, the author of this series. Feel free to read this to your group. You may have a story from your own life; it would probably have more impact because it is your story. I remember a time when I was walking out of Sam's Club. Between the first set of sliding exit doors and the second set was a bulletin board. I glanced over at the board and in a split second realized that it was full of pictures of missing children. I did not miss a step and continued walking until I sat down in my Jeep. From out of nowhere, I was struck with the insensitivity that I had just displayed. Why did I not stop and look at the pictures? What was so important about my agenda that I could not pause for one minute to see if I recognized a child or to log some of the pictures in my mind on the remote chance that I might see one of them in the future? I immediately began to think of my two small children. What if one of my children were missing? I would be hurt that someone would not pause to see if they could help me find my missing child. I thought of the urgency with which I would search for them. I would go door to door—every door in town, picture in hand, asking if they had seen my missing child. I would stop cars on the highway, flash them the picture, and ask for their help in finding my beloved child.

Summarize the scripture and story: That is God's invitation to us in Luke 15. He reminds us that he has children that are missing whom he cares deeply about finding. He asks us to join him in his mission to find his lost children. When we say someone is lost, it's not simply that they won't go to heaven when they die. It is also that they don't understand what life is about. They are wandering through life without a sense of purpose or direction. If they have a sense of purpose, it's misdirected since it is not directed toward God. Like someone driving a car the wrong way down a one-way street, lost people are people who are living life in the wrong direction.

Step 2.4 Scripture

Read Matthew 5:13–15:

“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men. “You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light

a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.” (NIV)

Step 2.5 Teach on Salt & Light

Say and explain: Regardless of our age, Jesus calls us to be “salt and light.” Salt needs two things to be effective:

1. Flavor—saltiness (authentic relationship with Jesus)
2. Proximity—closeness to the thing it is supposed to flavor (nearness to non-believers)

Light needs two things to be effective:

1. Power (authentic relationship with Jesus)
2. Darkness (nearness to non-believers)

We are called to be salt and light.

There are two other unacceptable alternatives to being salt and light:

FAIL #1. Safe to talk to, but offering little truth.

Some students tell me that when they are partying with their buddies, those friends bring up spiritual subjects. Their friends consider them safe to talk with. The problem is they do not have much to offer in the way of truth. They may be good listeners (very important), but they do not have anything to say. Or, worse yet, they are not living a life that gives any credibility to anything they say. They have proximity, but no flavor. They are in the midst of darkness, but they have no power.

The question for people like this is: Will you develop a life so influenced by Jesus that when spiritual conversations come up, you will have something to say and a life that backs up what you say?

FAIL #2. Spiritually knowledgeable, but unapproachable.

Ask: It is possible to be an unapproachable, judgmental, and unsafe Christian? You have knowledge, but you are not safe for those who are far from God to talk with you.

Step 2.6 Teach on being a F.R.I.E.N.D.

Say: There are truly only three outcomes of sharing your faith with someone:

1. The person can respond positively: “Yes, I want to follow Christ.”
2. The person can respond negatively: “No, and leave me alone!”
3. The person can respond with interest but no decision—a seed can be planted: “Hmm, let me think about all this.”

Share this: If you tell someone about Jesus, it seems that two of the three responses are positive! In 1 Peter 4:14, we are told, however, that if we are insulted, rejected, or

reproached because of God, we will be blessed and God's Spirit will rest upon us. Having God's Spirit rest on us is an amazing thing! So even if a person says "No thanks," something good happens. We have a 100 percent chance of something positive happening when we share the Jesus story with someone!

Remember this: The ultimate goal is not to share our faith with someone: the ultimate goal is to share our life! People often don't ask if you can prove it, they ask if you can live it. They want to see what difference does Jesus really make in your life.

Because evangelism is best accomplished through spiritual friendships, it is important for us to understand the process by which a person becomes a follower of Jesus. This is not an exact science and may not be true in every single situation. But I think you will see that generally a person comes to Jesus similarly through this process.

F.R.I.E.N.D.

1. Friendship with a believer
2. Relevance of the Bible observed
3. Initial acceptance of the Bible as a special book
4. Explanation of the Good News
5. Need recognized
6. Depend on Jesus and ask him to be their Lord and Savior

Say to your group: Sometimes the idea of helping one of the three persons on our 360 list to trust Christ is overwhelming. If we look at it through the following process, the task becomes much more manageable. Our question becomes: What is necessary in order for him/her to move to the next stage? The process helps in steering our conversations. It helps us direct our prayers. It causes us to be more intentional in helping our friend meet Jesus.

Explain F.R.I.E.N.D.

Friendship with a believer: This is the beginning stage of building spiritual friendships. If your group is having trouble identifying friends who do not know Jesus, they may need to spend a great deal of time in stage one developing relationships.

Relevance of the Bible observed: Here the friend becomes aware that the believer is different because he or she lives according to a different standard. In our world of "don't tell me the facts, show me the evidence," this stage is where the rubber meets the road.

Initial acceptance of the Bible as a special book: There have certainly been people who have recognized Jesus while not believing that the Bible is the inspired Word of God. It is also true that by becoming a believer, they will have a great appreciation for the Bible. The reason this is an important step is much of sharing the gospel will be coming from the Bible.

Here's a story you can share at this point, but, again, feel free to share your own personal story.

A few years ago, I was sharing with a volleyball player from the U NIVersity of Notre Dame. The gospel message was clear and understood. When I asked if she would like to receive Jesus, she said, “Everything you have told me has come from the Bible, and to me the Bible is no special book—just pretty good history.” We spent the next few days looking at how we can be certain the Bible is a special book. Because of that, she responded to Jesus.

Explanation of the good news: At some point we have to explain to our friend the good news. We will look at this more in a couple of weeks. In 1 Peter 3:15, we are told that we must be prepared when the time is right.

Need recognized: If there is no need recognized, why would a person respond to Jesus? We must help our friends see their need. They have been separated from God because of sin and only Jesus can solve the separation problem. Using the Ten Commandments is an effective way to help a person recognize their need. Galatians 3:24 says that the law is our schoolmaster that leads us to Christ. By looking at just a few of the Ten Commandments, we begin to see how we fall short. This is particularly true when we compare the Ten Commandments with Jesus’ commentary on them in Matthew 5 where he says that we commit adultery if we even look at another person lustfully and that we commit murder simply if we are angry with others.

Depend on Jesus: Jesus says, “I am the way, the truth and the life, no one comes to the Father but through me.” Here our friends come face to face with how they are going to deal with that statement.

Step 3 DISCUSS:

(optional) This section can be used as an additional resource for continued large groups; as a segue from large groups to small groups; or as an opener for those who have small groups on a different day of the week. If you are not using this video option, please skip to Step 4.1.

Step 3.1 Show Video—Mike Fisher (7:09)

<http://www.iamsecond.com/seconds/mike-fisher/>

Step 3.2 Discuss Video-

- What did you like about their story?
- How can you relate to their story?

Step 3 Discuss Questions

1. What do the 3, 6, and 0 stand for in the 360 strategy?
2. Last week we talked about the mission we are a part of. Why is this mission so important?
3. Read Luke 15:1-32. What do all these teaching moments from Jesus have in common? What conclusions can we reach about Jesus’ attitude toward those who are lost?

4. What do you think it means to say someone is lost?
5. How do you think your life would change if you accepted God's invitation to join him in the mission of finding his lost children?

Step 4 ACT:

Step 4.1 Commitment to Accept the Mission

Give your group a chance to commit to the mission of 360. Perhaps have them sign a card or a sheet of paper as a reminder of this commitment.

Step 4.2: Review the steps of F.R.I.E.N.D. with your group

After a review of the process, divide into groups of three to four and take time to identify and discuss where your three friends are in this process.

For example, if they have been friends for a while, hopefully they are at least ready for stage three. The friendship is there, and the relevance of the Bible has been observed through your actions. Now it is time to find out their thoughts about the Bible.

After they have identified where their three friends are, ask them to discuss this question:

How do you think you can help this friend move to the next stage?

Close in prayer. As you pray, take a moment of silence and ask each one in the group to pray during this time for their 3 on their 360 list.

Session 3: It's About People

Step 1 INTRO:

Step 1.0 Watch Video—Albert Pujols (7:25)

<http://www.iamsecond.com/seconds/albert-pujols/>

Step 1.1 Discuss Video—in groups of two or three and talk about these questions:

- What did you like about their story?
- How can you relate to their story?

**** Set up in advance Step 1.2 Tell a story—***Have someone from your group share their story. You can be creative in sharing their story for example, utilizing pre-taped testimony, note card story, cardboard story, a Before-Christ/after-Christ story, etc. This person needs to have a clear understanding on how to tell their story. The story should be 1-3 minutes long.*

Thank _____ for sharing their story!

Today we want to discover for ourselves what is in a story?

Step 2 TEACH:

Step 2.1 Scripture

Read Mark 2:1–12 (NIV).

“A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. So many gathered that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. Some men came, bringing to him a paralytic, carried by four of them. Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus and, after digging through it, lowered the mat the paralyzed man was lying on. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, ‘Son, your sins are forgiven.’

“Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, ‘Why does this fellow talk like that? He’s blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?’

“Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, ‘Why are you thinking these things? Which is easier: to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up, take your mat and walk’? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins. ...’ He said to the paralytic, ‘I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home.’ He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, ‘We have never seen anything like this!’”

Step 2.2 Teach

These four men were keenly aware of two very profound facts that changed how they did life and how that went about doing life on this day. May I suggest that these two facts ought to also change the way we do life?

Fact #1—People Matter to God.

You are probably saying, “That is obvious. I know that!” BUT this fact is hard to fully absorb into our value system. We hear “people matter to God” and pass it through our filter. John 3:16 says, “For God so loved the world...” so of course people matter to God. I agree with this fact. We agree with it, but do we own it? Do you remember the story from last week about the missing children? God is knocking on every one of our doors and pleading with us, “Will you help me in finding my missing children? I realize it may take a little time, but please understand how much they mean to me.”

People matter to God. And when this fact really takes root, it will affect our entire value systems. In turn, this will affect our time, our spending, our conscience, and our conversation.

Fact #2—People Need Jesus.

These four men were keenly aware that there was only one person that could help their friend and that was Jesus. A doctor wouldn't do, and he did not need religion. He needed Jesus. This fact ignited the passion behind this journey. They must get their crippled friend, who was lying on a mat, to the miracle worker. The Bible tells us that we all are crippled and have fallen short of God's standard of perfection.

Romans 3:23 (NIV): “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

Isaiah 59:2 (NIV): “But your iniquities have separated you from your God.”

John 14:6 (NIV): “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

Acts 4:12 (NIV): “Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.”

1 Peter 3:18 (NIV): “Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God.”

1 Timothy 1:15 (NIV): “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.”

After reading and commenting on the verses, remind everyone of the four facts:

1. You and your friends matter to God.
2. You and your friends need Jesus.
3. Many of us agree with these facts.
4. However, God does not ask us to agree—he calls us to act.

The four men from this story didn't just agree, they acted. They did whatever it took to get their friend to Jesus. They carried him, fought through the crowd, climbed on top of the roof, and dug a hole in it.

Here are a few common hurdles that keep people away from Jesus:

Hurdle #1—People Need Answers

Today, we are living in the first post-Christian era. You may have heard it called the post-modern era. It is an era that could be summarized by the quote from Fredrick Nietzsche: "There are no facts just interpretations." There are no moral absolutes; everyone decides what is right and wrong for them—no matter what God says.

We do not know what we do not know. There are many around us who have not had the privilege of growing up in church or in a Christian family. They have questions that need to be answered. The late Walter Martin, author of *The Kingdom of the Cults*, once said, "When we fail to answer someone's questions and objections, we become just one more excuse for them to disbelieve."

That is why Paul wrote in **2 Corinthians 10:5 (NIV)**, "**We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.**"

Reread Mark 2:5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven."

Notice it was the faith of his friends that Jesus noticed, not just the paralytic. Do you have any idea what the faith of one person (or group) can do for a friend? It moved them to dig a hole in a roof, and it moved Jesus' heart.

When was the last time one of your friends felt this sort of commitment from you? The kind of commitment that says you are with them no matter what?

Teaching Tip: This is a great place to insert a personal story of how your life was affected by the actions of a friend, or how your actions as a friend has changed someone else's life.

Often answers, especially hard truth answers, are best delivered through relationship, which leads us to hurdle #2.

Hurdle #2—People Need Community.

The paralytic could not have gotten to Jesus on his own. He needed a community of friends. We have badly confused friendly people for friends.

Our world today is dominated by technology and social media, we are mostly living our lives on a screen. The more this happens, the lonelier we all become; you can't have true relationship with a screen. Technology can enhance true relationship, but it can't replace it. God created us for community and relationship.

Our mission is the same as Jesus' mission—to seek and save that which is lost. The best way to accomplish that mission is through community.

Luke 19:10 (NIV) For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”

There is one more hurdle that we have to leap:

Hurdle #3—People Need Time.

This whole process of getting this man to Jesus took time.

Had it not been for these four men's patience and persistence, would he have gotten to Jesus?

Of course, we don't know. We do not know! Are you OK with that in your friendships? If not, will your friends get to Jesus? If not for your efforts and your investment into the relationship; if not for your prayers, your faith, your courage, and your alertness to not missing any opportunity to help move them along in their spiritual journey; if not for your intentionality, will your friends make it to Jesus? We don't know the answer to that question, but these four men were not willing to leave it up to uncertainty or fate. It took time out of their lives to invest in their friend, but they were willing to pay that price.

We also need to realize that relationships take time to develop. We are not talking about just meeting a person, sharing the gospel with them, and never talking to them again. True relationship is a long-term investment.

It really is about people, because we know that everyone matters to God and they need Jesus. Since we have Jesus we should also share Jesus. In order to do this we can provide answers, community, and time as we point people to Christ.

Step 3 DISCUSS:

(optional) This section can be used as an additional resource for continued large groups; as a segue from large groups to small groups; or as an opener for those who

have small groups on a different day of the week. If you are not using this video option, just skip it.

Step 3.1 Show Video—Christine Petric (7:05)

<http://www.iamsecond.com/seconds/christine-petric/>

Step 3.2 Discuss Video

- What did you like about their story?
- How can you relate to their story?

Step 3.3 Discuss Questions

- Do you think someone can be friendly but not be a friend? How?
- When is the last time you did something extreme to show Christ's love through you? Did that action(s) have an effect on them or on your relationship with them?

What are some obstacles that you will have in getting your friends to Jesus?

1 Peter 3:15 (NIV) But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.

Do you feel prepared to give the reason for the hope that you have in Christ?

If the answer is "no" encourage them to be thinking about their own I am Second story. Next week you will work with everyone on how to write their own story. (note to Chris – is this also what will happen in the first six weeks of I am Second's material?)

Step 4 ACT:

Step 4.1 Review 360 and F.R.I.E.N.D.

What kind of investment did you make this week in one of your three?

Have each group member share the first name of at least one person on his or her 360 list. (you are welcome to share the names of all, but should share at least one). Where are you in the F.R.I.E.N.D. process discussed last week with that person?

F.R.I.E.N.D.

1. Friendship with a believer
2. Relevance of the Bible observed
3. Initial acceptance of the Bible as a special book

4. Explanation of the Good News
5. Need recognized
6. Depend on Jesus and ask him to be their Lord and Savior

Pick one of your three and share if you saw any movement in the F.R.I.E.N.D. process. What will be necessary for you to do to help encourage them to move forward in the process?

What is the next logical step you need to take with someone from your 360 list? Share your story? Move down the FRIEND process? Other idea?

Step 4.2 Prayer

Facilitate the group prayer time by taking personal requests, as well as having the group pray for the following:

1. An increased passion for those around them that do not know Jesus.
2. Specifically pray for those on their 360 list.
3. Opportunities to have spiritual conversations and/or share their own second story with those that they have prayed for.
4. Wisdom to say and do the right things and the courage to follow through.

Session 4: Telling My Own “I Am Second” Story

Step 1 INTRO:

Step 1.0 Watch Video—Alex Kendrick (11:27)

<http://www.iamsecond.com/seconds/alex-kendrick/>

Step 1.1 Discuss Video—in groups of two or three and talk about these questions:

- What did you like about their story?
- How can you relate to their story?
- **Set up in advance Step 1.2 Tell a story**—Have someone from your group share their story. You can be creative in sharing their story for example, utilizing pre-taped testimony, note card story, cardboard story, a before-Christ/after-Christ story, etc. This person needs to have a clear understanding on how to tell their story. The story should be 1-3 minutes long.

Thank _____ for sharing their story!

Today we want to discover for ourselves what is in a story?

Step 2 TEACH:

Step 2.1: Pray

A leader offers a prayer for the group, that we will have eyes and ears to see and hear from God today. That we will be teachable, and open to what God has for us in our time together.

The following Bible story and discussion can be adapted as a large group teaching time or small group discussion time.

Step 2.2: Read the Bible story

⁵ So Jesus came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. ⁶ Jacob’s well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon. ⁷ When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, “Will you give me a drink?” ⁸ (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.) ⁹ The Samaritan woman said to him, “You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?” (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.) ¹⁰ Jesus answered her, “If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.” ¹¹ “Sir,” the woman said, “you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can

you get this living water? ¹² Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?"

¹³ Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴ but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life." ¹⁵ The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water." ¹⁶ He told her, "Go, call your husband and come back." ¹⁷ "I have no husband," she replied. Jesus said to her, "You are right when you say you have no husband. ¹⁸ The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true." John 4:5-18 NIV

Step 2.3: Talk about the Bible story

What do we know about this woman so far in this story? (let the group answer)

- She is a Samaritan, an outsider, a half breed, not accepted by Jews
- She is thirsty, and interested in what Jesus can offer her
- She asks to receive the water that Jesus offers
- She has had five failed marriages, and is living with a man she is not married to
- She has looked to men for happiness, but probably just been hurt by men
- She seems to be a thirsty person (physically, emotionally, spiritually)

From what we can read here, let's try to guess what this woman was thirsty for (emotionally, relationally, spiritually). Let's make a list.

- She came for water, so she is probably physically thirsty
- She is probably disappointed and hurting from failed marriages and relationships
- She is probably feeling guilty or distant from God, for living with a man she is not married to especially in that society

What do we discover about Jesus in this story?

- He was tired, but still reached out to this person
- She was an outsider and someone the Jews avoided, but Jesus invited her into a conversation
- Jesus made himself vulnerable, asking for help
- Jesus suggests that he has living water to give her, something she is truly thirsty for
- Jesus claims to have the source of real life, even eternal life
- Jesus knows everything about this woman, her past, her failures, her hurts

Step 2.4: Read more of the Bible story

²⁵ The woman said, “I know that Messiah” (called Christ) “is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.” ²⁶ Then Jesus declared, “I, the one speaking to you—I am he.” ²⁷ Just then his disciples returned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one asked, “What do you want?” or “Why are you talking with her?” ²⁸ Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, ²⁹ “Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?” ³⁰ They came out of the town and made their way toward him. ³⁹ Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, “He told me everything I ever did.” ⁴⁰ So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. ⁴¹ And because of his words many more became believers. ⁴² They said to the woman, “We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world.”

Step 2.5: Talk about the Bible story again

So what huge claim did Jesus make about himself? (I am the Messiah!)

How did the woman respond to that claim? (let the group help answer)

- She left her water jar (after meeting Jesus, some things are no longer important!)
- She went back to town and told people about Jesus
- Many of the people came out to meet Jesus

Did you notice why so many people chose to believe in Jesus?

- “because of the woman’s testimony” (her story) (verse 39)
- “because of his (Jesus) words” (verse 41)
- A whole town was transformed, many becoming believers in Jesus, all because this one woman told her story.

Step 2.6: Read a summary of her “I Am Second” story

A leader reads the following to the group, as though it’s the woman at the well talking. Imagine she left Jesus and the disciples, and ran back to town, and found a friend, and shared these words:

“Jesus somehow looked into my soul and summed up my miserable life. Jesus saw the loneliness, the hurt, the disappointment, the men who had left me and used me and hurt me. Then he offered me something special. Living water, real life, something I had been thirsting for my whole life and didn’t realize how to attain. Not just life now, but Jesus

promised that he could give me eternal life! Jesus offered it to me. And now I'll never be the same. Now I am filled with living water, with hope, with life! For the first time, I know what it feels like to be loved, to be cared for, to be taken care of. It's not a man that gives me that, it's Jesus. So I dropped my water jar, and left it by the well, because I have found what I really needed. Jesus! I will never be thirsty again."

Step 3 DISCUSS: (Chris in the other lessons this has been optional—is that the case here?)

Say: Let's take some time to discuss this in smaller groups with our friends. (*pair up or get into small groups*)

Step 3.1 Discuss Questions

- How do you think she felt, knowing that because she told her story, practically a whole town came to know Jesus?
- What emotions do you experience as you think about her story?

Are you inspired? Overwhelmed? Intimidated? Excited? What?

Can you relate to this woman at the well? How is your life story similar to hers? How is it different?

How can we live out this story in our own lives? How can we become storytellers?

Step 3.2 Teach

If we are really going to become storytellers, the first step is to write out our own "I am Second" stories. So, let's discover how to put our story down on paper! Your story should have 3 parts:

#1 My life before Jesus.

#2 How I came to know and follow Jesus

#3 My life since I began to put Jesus first

It can be a struggle to do this, for a couple different reasons:

First, you may have been a Christian for a long time, since childhood, so you can't recall any life transforming experience. Maybe you have always been a pretty good person, and do not feel that you have an exciting life changing story, like the woman at the well. Still, everyone who puts Jesus first has a story, so let's work out how to express it.

Second, some of us struggle to write out our story because we have actually never made a decision to put Jesus first, so we have no “I am second” story to tell. If that is you, then this can be a time for you to think about your “before Jesus” journey. What are you thirsty for? What experiences in life have caused you pain? What has caused distance between you and God? What is keeping you from putting Jesus first in your life? Maybe right now you are realizing that you want to begin this journey with Jesus, and put him first. If that is the case, let me or someone know, so we can talk with you and pray with you about that!!!

Step 4 ACT:

Step 4.1 Write your story

Okay, let's do this! *(Give your group something to write with and write on, and time to answer these questions.)*

My Life Before Jesus:

- What was I thirsty for?
- What were my struggles?
- What three words best describe what I was missing in my life when Jesus was not first?

How I came to know Jesus

- Who helped me, or invited me, or reached out to me?
- Where was I? What was the situation that led to my decision?
- How did I come to realize that it was important for me to put Jesus first?
-

My Life After Putting Jesus First:

- What impact has Jesus had on your life?
- How has having Jesus helped me in my struggles?
- What three words best describe how my life is different now?

Step 4.3: Practice telling your story

Say: Now that you have all the ingredients to your story, it's time to put it together. Everyone pair up and tell your story to each other, using the information you just wrote down as a guide. Try to include it all, without too much detail, so you can say it in 60 seconds. Your story can lead to deeper, longer conversations with a person later, but for now we want to be able to summarize our story in 60 seconds. Okay. Go!

After everyone shares their story, ask: As you told your story, how did it feel? Was it easier, or more difficult than you thought it would be? After telling it, is there something you want to change about how you tell your story next time?

Let's pair up with someone else, and practice telling your story again!

Step 4.2: Plan

So who are the people in your life who need Jesus? People who are hurting, like the woman at the well. People who are thirsty for the life that Jesus can offer? Who comes to mind?

Is there anything that is holding you back from sharing your story with that person?

Is that person on your 360 list?

Now you have a way to put the “miss 0 opportunities” into action. You can tell your story at any time! So let's be ready to tell our stories!

Step 4.4: Pray

Let's pray for everyone on our 360 list, and also pray for anyone we may have a chance to share with, keeping our eyes open all around us, 360 degrees, for anyone God might bring our way.

Chris is this where the 6 lessons of I am second will be attached? Isn't the first one about sharing your story? Is lesson 4 and lesson 1 of I am second going to be the same?

Additional Resources:

- *Dare2Share (a super useful phone app on why, what, and how to share your faith)*
- *Life in 6 Words (A video to show friends to explain our need for real LIFE) (special thanks to our partnership with Dare 2 Share to share Jesus with the world)*
- *I Am Second (Aids leaders to lead their own “I Am Second” groups, and helps leaders to create a network of connections within those groups)*
- www.iamsecond.com *(Free films where famous and not so famous people tell their faith story)*
- www.somethingamazing.net *(Animated video tells the gospel story, for teens to show friends)*
- *One Minute Apologist (provides quick, credible help for people defending their faith)*

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