

Red Letter Christian

Life Group Leaders Guide

Objective

This guide contains the information and questions you will need to lead a life group study during our current sermon series. Our aim is to spark Spirit-led, Bible-centered conversations that anyone can participate in regardless of how biblically literate they may or may not be. **The win** that we want you to experience is when your group members **connect** more closely with each other and with God so that they are encouraged to move forward in living out their faith.

Directions

The *Purpose* and *Move* sections are for the leader to read to the group to provide clarity. **Do not feel pressured to cover all the questions.** Decide which ones may work best for your group. You will see brief notes interspersed between groups of questions to help give the group context for their answers. The *Notes and Commentary* section (when included) is optional reading for the leader to get background information and better understanding of the passages before leading the discussion.

Series Overview

Sadly, when people think of Jesus-followers it is a far cry from who Jesus actually is. After all that Jesus has done for us, we cannot be content with the picture and representation that we are sharing. We must change the story and perception of who Jesus is. We believe that if people truly met the real Jesus, they would really fall in love with Him. In Red Letter Christian, we will be looking at the words of Jesus, so that we become like Jesus, so the world will see Jesus.

Red Letter Christian Series Schedule

Week	Sermon Date	Topic
1	10/20/19	Foundation
2	10/27/19	Being
3	11/3/19	Socials
4	11/10/19	Serve
5	11/17/19	Go
6	11/24/19	Forgive

The Point Church Life Group Curriculum

Go

The Big Idea

The invitation of Jesus is ours to go and share.

Flow of Study

Icebreaker: What is something you like that you love to tell people about, or something you've recommended to someone recently?

Move #1: If we find it easy to talk to people about these things, let's think about how that relates to talking to people about Jesus.

1. What thought stood out to you from the message this weekend about *going*?

Move #2: Next, let's look at something Jesus said about our mission as his followers.

Read Matthew 4:13-20 (NIV)

13 Leaving Nazareth, he went and lived in Capernaum, which was by the lake in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali— **14** to fulfill what was said through the prophet Isaiah:

15 “Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali,
the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan,
Galilee of the Gentiles—

16 the people living in darkness
have seen a great light;
on those living in the land of the shadow of death
a light has dawned.”

17 From that time on Jesus began to preach, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”

18 As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. **19** “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.” **20** At once they left their nets and followed him.

2. How does the prophecy that Jesus fulfilled here describe what it's like not knowing him? In what sense is that true?
3. According to that same scripture, what is it like for an unbelieving person when they encounter Jesus?
4. What was the main thing that Jesus was communicating to people (verse 17), and what does that mean?

Note to leader: See the commentary note below on that verse.

5. What might it sound like in our own words to communicate that message to the people in our lives who don't know Jesus?
6. What mission does Jesus give to any person who chooses to follow him (verse 19)?
7. Compare fishing for fish to fishing for people. How are they similar? How are they different?

Move #3: St. Francis of Assisi has been quoted as saying, "Preach the Gospel, and if necessary, use words."

8. What are some ways we can "go" by demonstrating the Gospel through our actions?

Read 1 Peter 4:3-5, 11 (NIV)

3 For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do—living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry. 4 They are surprised that you do not join them in their reckless, wild living, and they heap abuse on you. 5 But they will have to give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.

...11 If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

9. Are actions all that are needed to communicate the gospel, or are words still necessary (verse 11)? Why?
10. Consider what Peter says at the beginning of verse 11. How do you feel about the idea that God may speak his words into someone's heart through you?
11. Peter acknowledges that some people will slander you because of your faith (verse 4). How much does the fear of being criticized or mocked affect your willingness to talk about Jesus?
12. How could the truth of verse 5 factor into our decision to speak up or keep silent?

Next Steps: The following are things you could challenge your members to do in order to take what you studied in this curriculum farther.

1. Who's your one? How can you go B.L.E.S.S. them this week? (Begin with prayer. Listen. Eat. Serve. Share.) Pray for courage and tell them about how Jesus has made all the difference in your life.
2. Consider going on one of our short-term mission trips in 2020 (pointchurch.com/missions)
3. Continue reading the 40-day Red Letter Challenge.

Prayer: End your study with a time of praying with and for each other. Take requests, but be sure to pray also about what you've discussed today.

Notes and Commentary

The following are pieces of commentary, facts, and links based on the passages of this study in order. Use them to help supplement your group time or for your personal preparation.

On Matthew 4:15-16

Ever since the Assyrian campaign reduced it to a province under an Assyrian governor in 732 b.c. (2 Kings 15:29), this region had experienced turmoil and forced infiltration of Gentile influence. The inhabitants are called “the people sitting in darkness” (Matt. 4:16), a description of Jews who awaited deliverance while living among the hopelessness of the Gentiles. Here, where the darkness was most dense and so far removed from the center of Jewish religious life in Jerusalem, these Jews are the first to see the great light of God’s deliverance in Jesus. It will bring hope to those who understand most clearly the hopelessness of death. This light presages the universal message of hope, because from this same region Jesus will send the disciples to carry out the commission to make disciples of all the Gentiles (28:18). The message that begins to unfold is of messianic grace, for it comes first to those least expecting it. (Michael Wilkins, *NIV Application Commentary: Matthew*)

On Matthew 4:17

The phrase kingdom of heaven is found thirty-two times in Matthew’s Gospel. The phrase kingdom of God is found only five times (Matt. 6:33; 12:28; 19:24; 21:31, 43). Out of reverence for the holy name of the Lord, the Jews would not mention “God” but would substitute the word “heaven.” The Prodigal Son confessed that he had sinned “against heaven,” meaning, of course, against God. In many places where Matthew uses kingdom of heaven, the parallel passages in Mark and Luke use kingdom of God. In the New Testament, the word kingdom means “rule, reign, authority” rather than a place or a specific realm. The phrase “kingdom of heaven” refers to the rule of God. The Jewish leaders wanted a political leader who would deliver them from Rome; but Jesus came to bring spiritual rule to the hearts of people. This does not deny the reality of a future kingdom as we have already noted. (Warren Wiersbe, *Bible Exposition Commentary*)