

John 1:35–50 • Who is this guy



Starting a Jesus Movement

We want to start a Jesus movement on this campus in which skeptics, seekers and Christians are welcome to come and see Jesus for themselves. Jesus' movement goes viral in this passage (and continues today through us!)

Discuss

1. Jesus invites seekers to spend the day getting to know him. If you spent the day with Jesus, what would you ask him? Why?
2. Andrew and Nathaniel have very different reactions. Would you say you're more curious like Andrew or skeptical like Nathaniel? Why?

Apply

1. What do you like about Jesus in this passage? Jesus interacts with each person uniquely, knowing what each of us needs in order to trust him and follow him with our whole lives. Seeking Jesus is an investment of time and energy. What do you need to know about Jesus in order to follow him with your whole life?

2. Part of seeking Jesus is inviting friends to seek him as well. Why do you think people are so eager to introduce their friends to Jesus? From the very beginning, the movement that Jesus started spread through relationships. Let's live out this John 1 story today! List the name of people you would like to share this story with and invite them to join us next time.

Steps for Leading this Encounter with Jesus

1. Start with a game or activity to get to know each other (15 minutes)

Here are ideas for great bonding activities:

- Food - Bring pizza or pan dulce to share
- Game - Play something quick and fun to draw people in
→ Apples to Apples, HedBanz, UNO, etc.
- Icebreaker - Ask an engaging question to get people talking
→ "What kind of relationships do you want to build by the time you finish college?"

2. Share guidelines for great discussions (2 minutes)

- Everyone try to answer the questions from what you see in the Bible passage.
- Give everyone a chance to talk. It helps if the quick-to-answer people give others a chance to go first sometimes!
- Encourage everyone to ask their own questions about the story. It helps you get better insights!

3. Facilitate a discussion about the story (30 min)

- Share the introduction: "Starting a Jesus Movement"

- Invite someone in the group to read the story aloud.
- Ask them what they have questions about (write these down and ask them to the group along the way)
- Ask the "Discuss" questions.

A few extra questions for going deeper:

- Notice all the different titles that people use to describe Jesus. Why do the titles change as people spend more time with him?
- What's your favorite way to "spend time" with Jesus? What's something you'd like to try this week?

4. Tell a personal story from your life (5 minutes)

- Tell a story of a time you put in effort to seek Jesus. How did he show up for you? -or-
- Tell a story about a time you had news that you just had to share. Relate this to a time you took a risk to introduce a friend to Jesus. How did they respond?

5. Ask both "Apply" questions and invite everyone to respond (10 minutes)

- Spiritual Invitation: In question 1, members are identifying the most important question that if answered would allow them to fully follow Jesus. After they have identified their question help them move deeper by asking how they would like to seek Jesus for his answer to their question. Ask how they can start seeking him for an answer this week.
- Missional Challenge: In question 2, encourage them to text friends on their list right then!

John 2:1–11 • Shocking!



Discuss

In this culture, hospitality was a top value. It would be a great dishonor to run out of food or wine.

1. Turning water into wine is probably the last thing you would expect from someone like Jesus. Interestingly, it caused the disciples to put their trust in him. Why? They likely had new questions about Jesus as a result. What new questions do you have about faith or Jesus?
2. A pool of top-notch wine is more than enough for this wedding. Why do you think Jesus makes so much? And why such excellent wine? What does this reveal about Jesus and his generosity?

Apply

1. Jesus responds to scarcity. Where in your life are you “running out of wine” or feeling empty?
2. Jesus wants to show us how good he is by pouring his Spirit into the places of weakness in our lives. Would you like to ask Jesus to meet a need in your life?

3. As followers of Jesus, we emulate his actions. This week, do one of these 3 acts of generosity (or come up with your own). Invite the people you meet to join you next week.

1. Give out candy and chips.
2. Buy a bunch of blue books or scantrons to give out during midterms.
3. Give out cans of soda and bottles of gatorade on a hot day.

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- Food - Bring some great food to share
- Game - Play something quick and fun to draw people in
→ Apples to Apples, HedBanz, UNO, etc.
- Icebreaker - Ask an engaging question to get people talking
→ “How does your family celebrate? Share about the best party you’ve been to!”

2. Debrief last week’s discussion (5 minutes)

Let’s take a minute to hear from anyone that came last week:

- What did you like about our discussion?
- How did you respond to the story?— What did you do? How did it go?
- What are we learning about becoming a community that follows Jesus on this campus?

3. Facilitate a discussion about the story (25 min)

- Invite someone in the group to read the story aloud.
- Ask them what they have questions about (write these down and ask them to the group along the way)
- Ask the “Discuss” questions.

A few extra questions for going deeper:

- The jars that Jesus filled with wine were meant for ceremonial washing—they symbolized washing the moral dirt off, and becoming clean in God’s eyes. How is Jesus adding new symbolism to this ceremony?
- How did this wedding scene “reveal Jesus’ glory”? What do you like about him?

4. Tell a personal story from your life (5 minutes)

- Tell a story of a time you were “running out of wine” or feeling empty. How did Jesus meet a need for you? -or-
- Tell a story of a time you took a risk to obey Jesus like these servants. How did you end up seeing more of his glory? How did you grow?

5. Ask both “Apply” questions and invite everyone to respond (10 minutes)

- Missional Challenge: Question 3 challenges everyone to take a risk to reveals Jesus’ generosity. Pick an activity from the 3 listed and go try it out as a group right then and there. If people you meet are surprised or ask why you’re doing this then show them this story and invite them to the next Encounter Group!

Luke 19:1–10 • #Micdrop



Discuss

Jesus calls Zacchaeus by name and gets into his world by having lunch with him. Jesus is great at building trust with us. This trust-building lunch is a God moment in Zacchaeus' life. And this moment grows into a movement when Zacchaeus turns away from his selfishness and restores all that he had taken from his community.

1. Imagine the city of Jericho getting back 4x what they gave up. How might the people of Jericho view Jesus after Zacchaeus' transformation?
2. What surprises you about how Jesus interacts with Zacchaeus?

Apply

1. Just like he did with Zacchaeus, Jesus wants to build trust with all of us. He wants to call you by name. This week, ask Jesus daily to build trust with you.
2. Jesus wants to transform all of our selfish habits (including how we spend our money) and make us more like himself. Take a moment for brief listening prayer.

What is one habit you would like Jesus to transform?

3. We are also trust builders. Who do you know on campus with whom you can build trust? Take a risk and be a friend to others. Text someone you know to get a meal this week and build trust with them.

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- Game - Play something quick and fun to draw people in
→ Apples to Apples, HedBanz, UNO, etc.
- Icebreaker - Ask an engaging question to get people talking
→ "If God moved into the dorm/house next door, how would your life change?"

2. Debrief last week's discussion (5 minutes)

Let's take a minute to hear from anyone that came last week:

- What did you like about our discussion?
- How did you experience Jesus meeting a need in your life this week?
- How did you take a risk to display God's generosity on campus?

3. Facilitate a discussion about the story (25 min)

- Invite someone in the group to read the story aloud.

- Ask them what they have questions about (write these down and ask them to the group along the way)

- Ask the "Discuss" questions.

A few extra questions for going deeper:

- Where do you see yourself in this story? (Checking Jesus out from afar, having him over for dinner and getting to know him, changing your life to follow him as Lord) Where do you want to be in this story?
- After Jesus comes to Zacchaeus' house Zac makes a complete spiritual 180! His life change would be visible to everyone he knew. How can you make a spiritual 180?

4. Tell a personal story from your life (5 minutes)

- Tell a story of a time Jesus invited you to make a life change. How did that impact you and others? -or-
- Tell about a time you built trust with someone who was far from God (or when someone built trust with you when you were far from God!) What happened?

5. Ask both "Apply" questions and invite everyone to respond (10 minutes)

- *Spiritual Invitation:* In question 2 you are prompted to lead a brief listening prayer. This is a simple but powerful tool! Here's what you do: Invite everyone to quiet themselves. Pray out loud and invite the Holy Spirit to speak. Ask God to bring a specific personal habit to mind for each person and leave a minute of silence. Then invite anyone who's willing to share what came to mind. Model vulnerability by offering to share first.

Luke 15:11–24 • Searching



Discuss

1. The younger son demands his inheritance while his dad is still alive. How does he view his dad?
2. When he hits rock bottom, he wants to return home, but as a servant. How might a servant get treated?
3. What do you like about how the father responds to his son?
4. Jesus tells this story to describe how much God loves us. Where are you in the story?
 - ☐ Far from God.
 - ☐ Hitting rock bottom and pondering return.
 - ☐ Walking back toward God.
 - ☐ Home in God's arms.

Apply

1. Coming home to the father means becoming a follower of Jesus. Let's take a look at what it means to follow Jesus. (Share the Big Story)
2. We hope our friends experience God's love too! Think of 2 friends with whom you can share this story? Can you text them a photo of it right now?

Steps for Leading this Encounter with Jesus

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- Game - Play something quick and fun to draw people in
→ Apples to Apples, HedBanz, UNO, etc.
- Icebreaker - Ask an engaging question to get people talking
→ "Has anyone ever made a major sacrifice for you that surprised you? (or have you?)"

2. Debrief last week's discussion (5 minutes)

Let's take a minute to debrief last week:

- How did you experience Jesus building trust with you or transforming habits in your life this week?
 - How did you try building trust with friends over food this week?
 - What is Jesus teaching you?
- ### 3. Facilitate a discussion about the story (25 min)
- Invite someone in the group to read the story aloud.
 - Ask them what they have questions about (write these down and ask them to the group along the way)
 - Ask the "Discuss" questions.

A few extra questions for going deeper:

- Who do you identify with more—the son who runs away, or the son who stays? In what way?

- Try this—Close your eyes and imagine yourself in this scene.

What do you want to say to the father? What would he say to you? Give yourself a minute to play it out in your mind. (After a minute, ask if anyone would like to share what they imagined).

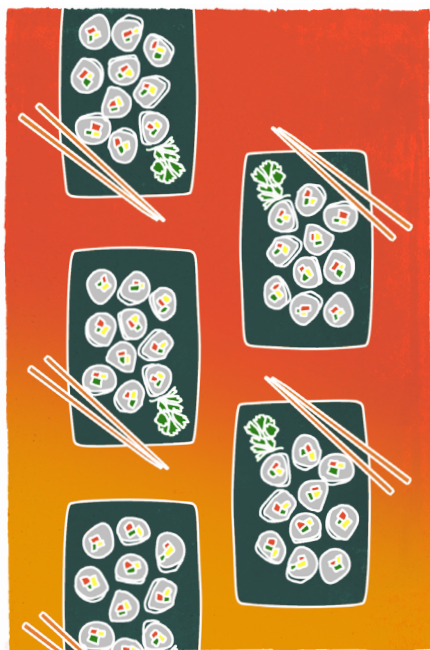
4. Tell a personal story from your life (5 minutes)

- Tell the story of your own spiritual journey back to the Father's house. How did you experience God's love and choose to follow Jesus? How has your life been different since?
- Better yet, coach someone else in the Encounter Group to share their story!

5. Ask both "Apply" questions and invite everyone to respond (10 minutes)

- Share the *Big Story* and make an invitation to follow Jesus! Make sure you practice this in advance. Print out the Big Story and Call to Faith Outline (intervarsity.org/sites/default/files/resources/bigstory.pdf) so everyone can follow along together. Give everyone a copy and read it out loud. Plan what you'll say if no one responds or if someone does. If no one responds say something like, "Thanks everyone for listening and responding honestly. I'm glad we can have honest conversations about what it means to follow Jesus." If someone does respond say, "Thanks for taking a risk and sharing honestly that you are ready to put your trust in Jesus! I'd love to pray and thank God for your new faith. Let's get some time this week to talk more about what this decision means for you."

Luke 14:15–24 • #JustGo



Discuss

1. How do you prepare to host a big party?
2. The servant is sent to call together the guests who already RSVP'd "yes" to the party. Why do you think they say yes and then say no? The oxen will be there tomorrow. How would you feel if you were the master of the party?
3. Why does the master send the servant out two more times to fill the banquet?
4. Some people view themselves as open-minded, but when it comes time to act, they become closed. The first invitees say that they want to go to the banquet, but change their minds. The second round of guests were more open to the invitation, and they experienced all the master had to offer. Why are the second and third round of people more open and responsive?

Apply

1. Are you open to God meeting a real need in your life? What need would you like God to meet?

2. How can you be like the servant, and invite people to check out God? Write down a list of people you know on campus. Do brief listening prayer. Who will you focus on inviting this week?
3. How might you be like the master, and host a new community gathering? Do some listening prayer: what niche community or what friends might God send you to?

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Here are ideas for great bonding activities:

- Food - Bring some great food to share
- Game - Play something quick and fun to draw people in.
- Icebreaker - Ask an engaging question to get people talking → "What's the worst excuse you've ever heard (or made) to get out of something?"

2. Debrief last week's discussion (5 minutes)

Let's take a minute to hear from anyone that's come in the last few weeks:

- What have you seen God do in your life through these Encounters with Jesus?
- What are we learning about being a community that follows Jesus and invites others to follow him too?

3. Facilitate a discussion about the story (20 min)

- Invite someone in the group to read the story aloud.

- Ask them what they have questions about (write these down and ask them to the group along the way)
- Ask the "Discuss" questions.

A few extra questions for going deeper:

- Jesus is telling this parable while sitting at a prominent religious leader's table, with many important guests. What is Jesus teaching them about God and about themselves?
- What do you notice about the second and third groups that get invited into the party? (Roads and country lanes would include foreign travelers.) What does this reveal about the Kingdom of God? Who are the furthest out, most overlooked people on this campus? How can we go out and invite them in and show them hospitality?
- 4. Tell a personal story from your life (5 minutes)
- Tell a story of a time you wrestled with an invitation from Jesus. How did you respond to him and how did you experience his lavish love? -or-
- Tell about a time you invited someone to check out Jesus and were surprised by their response.

5. Ask both "Apply" questions and invite everyone to respond (15 minutes)

- Just like the master of the banquet in this story, we long for InterVarsity to be a community on campus where more and more people from all backgrounds are coming in and meeting Jesus. Now that you've finished the Encounters with Jesus Series, take the next step by planning a party to celebrate what God has done and invite new people in.