

Week Two: WITNESS



We all bear witness to what we love. If you see a movie you like, you talk about it. If you see a video you like, you share it. Same is true for faith in Jesus. As God works in us, we talk about it. We do not need to be “faith experts” in order to talk about what God is doing in our lives. How has this past week of following Jesus been? What practical steps were you able to take this week to share the story of Jesus?

In this session we will grow as witnesses to what God is doing in our lives and in the movement we have started. We will also plan our launch party.

ACTS 1: 8

Jesus has been crucified and raised from the dead. Now he appears to his disciples one last time before ascending back into heaven.

⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. (NIV)

Last words are important. They generally emphasize what you want someone to do or remember. We typically say “I love you” as we leave, we want to remind people about what is important. Jesus’ last words are important as well. He gives those who have chosen to follow him clear instructions about what they are to do. “...and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth ”

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

One way a new believer is a witness in scripture comes from Matt. 9:9- 13. Matthew, a tax collector *(which were generally regarded with disdain) had decided to follow Jesus with his life. Matthew wanted to share his new faith decision with his friends, so he threw a party and invited folks to meet Jesus. Let’s look at the story:

Matthew 9:9-13

⁹As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector’s booth. “Follow me,” he said to him, and Matthew got up and followed him. ¹⁰While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew’s house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples. ¹¹When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?” ¹²On hearing this, Jesus said, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. ¹³But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’ For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.” (NIV)

Why do you think Matthew welcomes others in his home to meet Jesus?

Why did so many folks come out to meet Jesus?

We believe that sharing your story about Jesus with others strengthens your faith and that others are very interested in hearing about Jesus. We believe you have friends that want to join your movement and grow in their faith or are spiritual curious and need a place to explore faith. Our willingness to welcome them to places where they can hear about and experiences can make a significant difference in their lives.

Students at UC Bakersfield-Delano Campus started an InterVarsity movement on their campus. Before their launch party, two students decided to follow Jesus! These new believers and other Christians who were a part of InterVarsity wanted to see a movement of God on their campus. At their launch party, 20 of their friends and classmates heard stories of how God was moving on campus and stories of new faith.

Would you like to take the step that Matthew did in the Bible and the students at Delano did and host a party where your friends can join the movement and explore faith in Jesus?

LET'S PLAN THE PARTY

1. Decide as a group who will share at the launch party. Have a student planter share about why they came to your campus. Have someone from your campus share about how God is using InterVarsity in their life. Or about a risk of faith you have taken to reach the campus in InterVarsity. Finally, if there is a new believer(s), they should share about their new faith. Those who are sharing should take time to add more detail to the story they started writing out last week. Make sure to practice with someone from this group before the party.
2. Let's brainstorm a list of your Christian and non-Christian friends whom you want to invite to the launch party.
3. Where will you have the party?
4. When will you have the party?
5. Will you have food? What will you do to have fun and bond with new people at the party?

PLAN HOW OTHERS CAN GET INVOLVED

After the testimonies comes the most important part of the whole event. At the party you will ask people to get involved. There are two ways people can get involved. How will you share the ways to get involved? Who will share it? Will you have a place to sign up?

1. Help lead the movement. Join a core team of students to lead Encounter groups and reach out to the campus.
2. I want to explore faith/grow in my faith. I want to join an Encounter group.

After you have asked people to join you, you have to collect their responses. First, create a contact card or sign up list where students can write their name, phone, email, and if they want to help lead the movement and/or explore faith. Who will make the contact card or sign up list?

You will want to follow up with each person in 24 hours. Who will follow up?

TEXT TEMPLATES

1. Hey __ I wanted to invite you to come hear me share about a very important event in my life. I recently made a new faith spiritual decision. As one of my closest friends, it would mean a lot if you were able to come. I'll spend some time sharing about my faith journey with God and you'll even be able to meet some of my friends hope you can make it!
2. I wanted to invite you to come hear me talk about a very important event in my life. I will share about a recent spiritual decision I made in my life. I would be honored if you would consider joining me on _____ as I talk about how I've come to understand God and our relationship to him. It will be a fun environment where you can meet new folks and ask questions about spiritual matters if you have them.
3. Hey ___! So tomorrow I will be sharing about my faith journey in the small group bible study I attend, and as I was thinking about who I would want there, your name came to mind. If you're available and free at 3pm, it would mean a lot if you could come hear me share my own story. Is that something you would be down for? Let me know! :D
4. Hi! Guess what? Tonight at the on campus Bible study I attend I'm going to share about a big life decision I made this semester. I would love for my friends and community to be there! It's going to be today at ____pm at _____. I hope to see you there :)

Party Element	Notes	Time
Earlier That day	Buy or order food Gather supplies (plates, plastic ware, clean up supplies, speakers for music, etc.)	
Arrive and Set up	Think about what people will see when they first arrive. Start music. Set out food.	30-60 min
Guests Arrive and Hang Out	Have people ready to welcome.	15 min
Welcome	Have a student officially welcome and transition the group to the next thing	2 min
Fun	Host a game or ice breaker. The goal is to help new folks meet each other and InterVarsity members.	5-20 min
Transition to Testimonies	Welcome and have people get food and take seats	10 min
Testimonies	Introduce Each Testimony. - New Believer - Christian student from the new Campus - Student Planter	15 min.
Invite Guests to Respond	- Invite to Lead the Movement. - Invite to Explore and Grow by joining an Encounter Group	5 min
Collect Contact Cards or Sign Up sheet		5 min.
Thank Everyone for Coming	Invite people to go out after the party to bond with new people.	1 min