

MAKE YOUR MOVE - NOVEMBER 4

Hey Devotional Leaders,

This is your Thursday email to get you thinking about teaching next week's message either in a house or at Junior High. Start thinking about it today and it will help you be creative.

WHERE WE GET THE MAIN POINT FROM

The point of this message is "I can choose Jesus or not. There is no in between." This point comes right out of Peter's call to the people to "repent and be baptized". This is a moment in church history where Jesus has died, risen again, ascended to heaven, sent His Holy Spirit, and now the apostles are speaking in different languages and sharing the message of who Jesus is to thousand of people. These people are "cut to the heart" and want to know what to do. Peter tells them to repent which means to turn away from following their own ways, and turn to Jesus. Repentance is a clear decision and action to follow Jesus. Baptism is the outward public declaration of that following. With both these steps a person decision is not willy-nilly, it's all in.

THE SCRIPTURE

The Scripture itself is pretty straight forward. Feel free to tell the story of what happens leading up to it. I told it last week to the senior high at Illuminate, but it doesn't hurt to heart it again. Maybe get students to picture what that Spiritual moment was like. All these guys speaking in different languages that people understand. People telling about Jesus and thousands listening. People cut to the heart because of the realization that days prior they were yelling "crucify" about the actual Son of God.

CONNECTION FOR TODAY

Today, in our wonderful North American Culture we have not just two choices on things, to be in our out, but we usually have 100+ choices, "do you want fries with that?" It's easy for students to say "ya, I'm a Christian" and then say "but I'm ok with sleeping with my boyfriend or girlfriend." In days passed the term for this was "fence sitting." Students need to understand that there is no fence sitting, there is no middle option. It's not that we're perfect all the time, but rather that we've set our vision on God and following Him and as He transforms us and we pursue Him we are going to look more and more like the people He's called us to be. It's about the direction we're going, away from the old life, forward towards the Christ life.

WAKE UP SECTION IDEAS

The first wakeup game in the curriculum kind of has punch to it, and would be a great lead in to the devo. If you use that first one, remember to ask with each question: "can you like both of these options?" or "can you be in the middle on these?"

LANDING

I would land with a decision. Ask students to choose between following Jesus or not. I know I did this at Illuminate, but it would help to do this again. Send them to their small groups to answer the question as to where they are and how they know for sure.

Finally, if you have any questions, please hit “reply all” or send me a text @ (780) 996-5635. I’ve attached the document that explains our youth devos and also the curriculum for this week. Hope this helps.

Thanks for teaching!

MAKE YOUR MOVE - NOVEMBER 18

Hey Devotional Leaders,

This is your Thursday email to get you thinking about teaching next week’s message either in a house or at Junior High. Start thinking about it today and it will help you be creative.

WHERE WE GET THE MAIN POINT FROM

The main point of “I believe! Watch me now.” comes from this idea in James 2 that faith without works is dead. We don’t want to give students the idea that works is what gets us a relationship with Jesus, but rather that they are evidence that we actually have faith. This main point is to get away from just a head knowledge faith where someone might just ascribe to a few theological points about who God and Jesus are, but not actually live it out.

THE SCRIPTURE

The Scripture is really simple but also profound in James 2:14-26. It hammers the main point from 4 different angles.

1. It uses an allegory of helping a poor hungry person with just well wishes... it doesn’t work, just like faith without works doesn’t work
 2. Then James challenges people to show them their faith without works... Kinda like he’s saying “prove it”
 3. Then he references the story of Abraham in Genesis 22 proving his faith by almost sacrificing his son
 4. And then he uses the story of Rahab in Joshua 2, and how her acts were also in faith
- This is a great example for us of a one point sermon hit from several different angles. The Scripture is pretty clear as to the point. Feel free to use James’ angles on that point.

CONNECTION FOR TODAY

In our post-post modern North American culture, it is quite normal for people to “believe” something (by believe I mean to ascribe to a certain set of head truths) but then live a life that is completely different than what they supposedly believe. Very nice, well believing people, can do really nasty things that are completely opposite to what they believe. You might want to ask students evidences of people “believing” one thing and living another. James saw this in his culture apparently too. When it comes down to it,

our belief is what we live out. It's just lying to ourselves that we believe anything else. That's a hard pill for us to swallow but it is true. One of my past senior pastors would say "You are as close to God right now as you want to be." Our students need to have the blinders lifted off of their eyes to understand that belief does equal action.

WAKE UP SECTION IDEAS

The McDonalds video is brief but good. It basically says, we "believe" in young people, so we trust them. A clear belief and action lining up. The second Wake up section may be a little tougher but could be more significant, especially if you are a little vulnerable with students sharing when your words or beliefs didn't line up with your actions. Remember to stay between and out of the ditches of oversharing and you becoming the hero of your own story.

LANDING

I would end asking the students where they have seen a difference of belief and action in their lives. In the What do I do section in the devotional there are some examples of faith-filled actions that you could ask open-ended rhetorical questions with. In doing so, try and think of the specific issues where belief and action may not line up in the life of a student of the age that you are speaking to.

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Thanks for teaching!

MAKE YOUR MOVE - NOVEMBER 25

Hey Devotional Leaders,

This is your Thursday email to get you thinking about teaching next week's message either in a house or at Junior High. Start thinking about it today and it will help you be creative. I have also attached the devo/small group questions and the description of the headings of our devos to better understand them. For your info, I had Bella, our intern do the study and prepare the email this week. I made a few minor edits, but this is mostly her work:

WHERE WE GET THE MAIN POINT FROM

The main point is "I am God's plan A...there is no plan B" roots from Matthew 28:17-20. God's plan was and still is to send us, his believers into the world to get more people to know him. His mission for us was that WE tell others about Jesus and WE make disciples and WE baptize them in HIS name and WE teach them. This is not person specific, it does not say only the most qualified and the most elect must Go and make disciples. It literally says, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations". It does not matter who you are or what you look like, you are God's plan A. He wants you to GO and MAKE disciples!

THE SCRIPTURE

The scripture is a very popular one. For many Christians they have heard it over and over again, but sometimes we lose our focus with this scripture. Many times we focus on the GO part and ignore the rest. Except when looking at scripture you must look at the scriptures cultural context to be sure we are handling it correctly.

Let's start with verse 18, throughout Matthew's gospel he makes Jesus' authority very clear. Here we see it again, Jesus has ALL authority. Jesus is the beginning and the end and is in complete control. We are then able to go in Jesus's name and in his authority and speak to all who are lost. When Jesus said, "GO" the verb he used actually referred to going; it was a constant present action. The only command in the great commission is that we MAKE DISCIPLES. No matter where we are or where we are going, we are to make disciples. It is important to understand the Greek word for disciple actually refers to a learning believer. It is more than just a convert (a person choosing to follow Jesus for the first time). A disciple is more like an apprentice, the disciple learns not from just listening but also from doing. Once someone is baptized (and has made the publication of their faith) they are then to be taught about the bible so that apprentice can go and become the teacher. Many times we have this dumb idea that going and making disciples is a job for just pastors. The bible is quite clear in saying this is a call and a command for every believer. When you become a Christian you are not to become a spectator who watches on the sidelines. This is an ongoing process, you are constantly learning, you are constantly growing. Throughout this Matthew understands that we must affirm the fact in our minds that God is always with us, he is alongside us and we do not need to be afraid because we are not alone.

CONNECTION FOR TODAY

We are God's plan A...there is no plan B. God is able and willing to work through us, in fact he wants nothing more than to change this world using us. This mission that God has for his believers is something EVERY believer should take part in, and it is greater than any other. In culture today sharing our faith as Christians is not always welcomed. There is often a relativity to truth in people's minds, that truth is different for everyone. Students need to be confident in what they believe as they share that. Encourage students to move from spectators apprentices makers.

WAKE UP SECTION IDEAS

The first Wake Up on the Devo sheet is Nick Vujcic is a world renowned evangelist who was born without limbs. In this video he shares his story, he talks about how God changed his life and how God is using him now to change the lives of many. This video is actually very useful, because it highlights the importance of our stories and how God can use our stories to change the world. You can start off your teaching time with this video (you can stop the video at 4:18, because after that he is just promoting his ministry). After the video you can ask your students, do you think only people with stories like Nick's can change lives? Ask them to be honest. Many times that is the case, we think only the people who have gone through things like Nick have the ability

to change the world. Let them know, that God is able to use all of our stories to impact someone and to impact this world.

Your other option is to share a time when you shared your faith, and the obstacles you came up against and the outcome of it. You can also talk about how someone shared their faith with you and how it impacted you.

LANDING

Ending this all off I would ask our students to really reflect on where God has brought them from. By this I mean what is their story, regardless of how crazy or how lame it might seem I would ask them what their story is like. Here I would share a small statement from my story and focus on what Jesus has done in my life. I would ask them when was the last time they shared their story with a friend or shared Jesus with a friend. I would pray that God would bring opportunities to share his love and to share the good news.

Finally, if you have any questions, please hit “reply all” or send me a text @ (780) 996-5635. I’ve attached the document that explains our youth devos and also the curriculum for this week. Hope this helps.

Thanks for teaching!

-Joel

MAKE YOUR MOVE - DEC 2

Hey Devotional Leaders,

This is your Thursday email to get you thinking about teaching next week’s message either in a house or at Junior High. This is the last house group and Resonate Junior of 2015. The following week we will be all together for an special Illuminate service on December 9th

WHERE WE GET THE MAIN POINT FROM

The main point “ I’ve got one shot at representing God’s compassion to this world.” for this week’s devo comes from the Micah 6:8 passage. In Micah it doesn’t specifically say that line, but it calls to account our level of compassion, our heart for those in need. Will we do what is good and God requires? If we do, we’ll represent His compassion for this world. If we do the opposite or simply do nothing, than we will miss out on the opportunity God has given us.

THE SCRIPTURE

We get our key Scripture from the book of Micah, that guess what? ... Micah wrote. It is a formal accusation against the Israelite people. They were put on “trial” and finally were given judgement. The Israelites were convicted of being unjust, uncompassionate,

and disobedient. God showed them (during the previous chapters) how he had provided for them over and over again and yet they still chose to disobey him. God asked them earlier in the verses to stand up against his claims, and they knew they were unable to. God made it clear after he passed judgement, that not even the most extreme sacrifice could atone their sin. The reason he was saying this was not because he wanted them to pay him back with a sacrifice, but it was because he wanted them to change their hearts and minds. It went beyond rituals, and more rules...he wanted an internal change. He wanted them to want to obey him not to do it because they had to. He is saying in this verse that, what man must do, what the Lord requires of them is not new news, its not ground breaking earth shattering discoveries, it has been told to them many times over. They must;

Do Justice

- To choose to do what is right and to not do what is wrong
- To not treat people as less than human
- To value life

Love Mercy

- When considering how to treat others, err on the side of mercy
- If there's an issue or circumstance where we can be rigid or generous, be generous

Walk Humbly

- Don't look down on others
- Have an honest assessment of oneself
- Remember that "There is a God... and I am not Him"

CONNECTION FOR TODAY

It really easy for us to read Micah and the other prophets and look at how bad Israel was and go "I'm glad I'm not them." The reality is we really are financially blessed, living in North America means we are in the top 20% of the richest. We have been given great responsibility with our money, or time and our freedom. We can waste it, like the Israelites did. Or we can show this world a different kind of way to live.

WAKE UP SECTION IDEAS

The suggested wake up ideas have some great stats and a video that may be discussion provoking. If you've had any personal encounters with those in need of justice, mercy or some humility a story from you personally may be helpful as well.

LANDING

Really get students to question what they have, and how responsible they are with it. You may even encourage them to say their own name in the Scripture like this:

"He has told you, **Joel**, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?"

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Thanks for teaching!