



HOPE WEEKLY



THE CONVERSATION WITH BEST FRIENDS

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Planning Guide


Help Week:

 Promo:


 Welcome:
Have Help Tool ready and pass out.


 Host:


 Speaker:


 Follow-Up:


Overcome Week:

 Promo:


 Welcome:


 Host:
Choose game or video.


 Speaker:


 Follow-Up:


Prepare Week:

 Promo:


 Welcome:
Have Faith Story Sheets ready and pass out.


 Host:


 Student Speakers:


 Follow-Up:


Engage Week:

 Promo:

 Welcome:
Have response cards ready and hand out.

 Host:
Have game or video ready.

 Speaker:

 Follow-Up:

NOTES

HELP WEEK “THE CONVERSATION WITH BEST FRIENDS”



Help Week

Helping each other believe and share the Gospel story.

Practice being with Jesus through Scripture, prayer, and a practical way to believe and share the Gospel in everyday life.

Promo:

Remember to invite people.

Welcome:

Remember to create a welcoming environment.



Host

“Welcome to First Priority, we are glad you are here! This week is Help Week and our goal is to use Scripture and a tool to help us share our faith. Let’s start things off with prayer.”



Pray

Introduce Speaker: “We are glad you are here! Today my friend _____ is going to share how a group of friends brought their friend to Jesus.”



Speaker

Help Tool: Salvation Bracelet (Handout and/or Kit)

Look over the Help Tool before club. Pass out the Salvation Bracelet Handout and/or kit to everyone who comes in. The Gospel discussion and Help Tool are designed to give you a basic understanding to believe, live, and share the Gospel.



Gospel Discussion

“The Conversation with Best Friends”



Host



Announcements

Next week is Overcome Week! Start thinking now about who you can invite to join you as we continue this conversation.



Pray



Follow-Up

Be available to talk or pray with people.
Ask how you can walk with them on their Jesus journey.



Leader Tip

Make sure you understand the Help Tool and Gospel discussion ahead of time.



Gospel Discussion

"The Conversation with Best Friends"



Highlight Scripture

Mark 2:5

"And when Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven."



Explain (Give context)

Do you remember meeting your best friend for the first time? You probably started talking because you had something in common. Eventually you trusted one another and shared personal stuff, the stuff only best friends know, right? There is probably nothing you wouldn't do for each other. How about sharing your faith? Have you had THAT conversation with them yet? In Mark chapter 2, we read about four friends that went to great lengths to bring their paralyzed friend to Jesus. " And many were gathered together, so that there was no more room, not even at the door. And He was preaching the Word to them. And they came, bringing to Him a paralytic carried by four men. And when they could not get near Him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him, and when they had made an opening, they let down the bed on which the paralytic lay."

What! Don't you want to surround yourself with best friends like that? Are you willing to push past your fears, doubts, and insecurities so your best friend can get a glimpse of Jesus? Here is Jesus' response in verse 5: "And when Jesus saw THEIR faith, He said to the paralytic, " Son, your sins are forgiven." It wasn't their faith in each other that Jesus saw, it was their faith in Him that forgave their friend's sin. Wow! So, what is keeping you from grabbing your best friend by the hand and leading them through the crowd to Jesus? (Give students a chance to respond). Friends tell friends about Jesus and today we will use a new tool to start the conversation. Instead of making "friendship bracelets" we are going to make "salvation bracelets" to share the Gospel with our friends.



Apply

(See "Salvation Bracelet" handout for details)

Now that we read what our faith in Jesus can do, let's make a bracelet to share with others. Start with a piece of string. Tie a knot 2 inches away from the end and begin building your bracelet starting with the yellow bead. (The bead represents the highlighted word). Follow along with the instructions and make it conversational as you add each bead.



Respond (Groups of 3-5)

Pair up and practice sharing the Gospel with the salvation bracelets and if time allows, make a second one to give to your best friend.



Bottom Line

Best friends tell their best friends about Jesus.



Disciple Tip

Who we become is shaped by who we befriend.

OVERCOME WEEK “THE CONVERSATION WITH BEST FRIENDS”



Overcome Week

Overcoming your fear of sharing the Gospel story.

Practice becoming like Jesus

by letting Him transform you from the inside out.



Promo:

Remember to invite people.



Welcome:

Remember to create a welcoming environment.



Host

Welcome to First Priority! Today is Overcome Week. Our goal is to learn how to overcome things that keep us from believing and sharing the Gospel in everyday life.



Pray



Game Choose a game or funny video to play for 3-5 minutes to get people laughing and talking.

Say something like: We are glad you are here! Today my friend _____ is going to talk about how we can overcome fears of having a conversation with Best Friends.



Speaker

Gospel Discussion

“Overcoming Fear of the Conversation with Best Friends”



Host



Announcements

Next week is Prepare Week! Start thinking now who you can invite to join you as we continue this conversation.



Pray



Follow-Up

Be available to talk or pray with people. Ask how you can walk with them on their Jesus journey.



Leader Tip

Leaders turn obstacles into opportunities.



Gospel Discussion

“Overcoming Fear of the Conversation with Best Friends”



Highlight Scripture

Mark 5:19

“And He did not permit him but said to him, ‘Go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how He has had mercy on you.’”



Explain (Give context)

Best friends pretty much share just about everything right? We know each other far better than most people – and our best friends see us on our worst days and our best days. If you’ve ever been on a mission trip sharing the Gospel with strangers, you may have noticed that in some cases it was actually less stressful to share with a complete stranger than with someone who knows you extremely well. That’s because we have memories and history with our best friends, and sometimes that history doesn’t reflect Jesus, which makes the idea of sharing the Gospel awkward. In Mark 5, Jesus sets a man free who was possessed by evil. Seriously, this guy had more than just a few bad days – and even his friends couldn’t be around him. We know that he still had friends, but he had to live alone because of his condition. When Jesus set him free, the guy was so excited that he committed his life to LITERALLY follow Jesus everywhere. I guess he was excited that Jesus was willing to befriend him and set him free. Jesus, however, doesn’t give him the OK to travel changing the world by sharing the Good News with strangers. He tells him to go home and tell his FRIENDS what happened. Jesus knew that if people could see the difference between his current life and his former life that his story would be far more impactful to the people who knew him best.



Apply

Here are a few questions to ask yourself to make sure you are living up to your responsibility as a best friend. After all, why would you keep the BEST news from them?

#1 – Do my best friends know the truth about Jesus? Have I even asked them?

#2 – If not, have I ever taken the time to bravely share the Gospel with them?

#3 – What is keeping me from sharing? Am I afraid that they will point out something about my life that does not reflect the Gospel?

The challenge here is not to base your message on your own perfection, but on His mercy. That’s exactly what Jesus told the guy to say – “tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how He has had mercy on you.”



Respond (Groups of 3-5)

Here is an example of how you could start a conversation with your closest friends.

(Best friend) “I was just thinking the other day that we’ve know each other a really long time. I’d feel really bad if I didn’t share with you the best thing that ever happened to me, but I want to do that because you’re super important to me. The truth is, I’m really trying to follow Jesus these days and a lot about me is changing because of Him. Jesus forgives, heals, saves, and sets people free, and honestly I just felt like I had so much to hide, but now I’m living totally different because of how amazing His love is. I don’t know everything yet but I’m learning and I just wanted to sort of invite you to know Him like I do. Maybe we could do that together?” (This would be a good time to explain your salvation bracelet).



Bottom Line

Your best friends need to hear the best news - the Gospel of Jesus.



Disciple Tip

The Holy Spirit is shaping your decisions and actions to become like Jesus.



PREPARE WEEK “THE CONVERSATION WITH BEST FRIENDS”



Prepare Week

Preparing your story of receiving the Gospel.

Understand the value of your faith story and **practice** sharing it.



Promo:

Remember to invite people.



Welcome:

Remember to create a welcoming environment.



Host

"Welcome to First Priority, we are glad that you are here! This week is Prepare Week, so our goal is to hear faith stories about how others came to know Christ and get insight about how we tell our own story. Let's kick things off in prayer."



Pray

Cardboard Testimonies

Say something like: "Everyone get a piece of cardboard (or a blank sheet of paper) and a pencil, pen, or marker. Today we are going to write down a phrase that describes a personal struggle on one side, and another phrase that describes that struggle you have overcome. All of the words need to be written big and bold enough that people can read them from a distance. Also, you can include Scripture or simple drawings to decorate more personally if you like."

Option #1 - Everyone holds up their cardboard with the struggle side displayed while someone gets their smartphone and films each person holding their sign. During this part, make sure the expression on your face is serious. Then, everyone turn their sign over to display the other part of your testimony. Film each person smiling and displaying their cardboard. You can edit your video later and show it to the club next Prepare Week!

Option #2 – Going around the room, each person shows their sign to the club and talks about why they chose their phrases and how God worked in their lives.



Announcements

Thank you everyone for being here today! Next week is Engage Week so invite as many people as you can to come and hear the Good News of Jesus.



Pray



Follow-Up

Be available to talk or pray with people.
Ask how you can walk with them on their Jesus journey.



Leader Tip

Everyone on the leader team should be intentional about connecting with new people who come in.



ENGAGE WEEK “THE CONVERSATION WITH BEST FRIENDS”



Engage Week

Engage your school with the Gospel story.

Do what Jesus did by sharing the Gospel story with your friends through words and actions.



Promo:

Remember to invite people.



Welcome:

Remember to create a welcoming environment.



Host

"Welcome to First Priority, we are glad you joined us! Today we are going to start off with a game to get to know each other better."



Game

Choose a game or funny video to play for 3-5 minutes to get people laughing and talking.

Say something like: "Today, my friend, _____, is going to share something that is very important to them. Please listen respectfully as it takes a lot of courage to speak in front of others. You all were given a "student response card" that looks like this (hold up a sample card) when you came in. Hold on to it and we will explain what it is for later."



Speaker

Gospel Discussion

“My Life As A Jesus Follower”



Host

Invitation Options

1. Response Cards: If everyone would take a minute and think about what was shared today. If you decided to begin a relationship with Jesus today, then on your response card, simply check that box. Let us know so that we can connect with you and answer any questions you may have. If you have questions or would like us to help you find a youth group to go to, check that box and we would love to connect with you.

2. Talk/Pray with Someone: If you would like to talk to a Student Leader or have them pray with you, they would be glad to! Just catch one of them before you leave and let them know what impacted you today and how they can pray for you.



Announcements

Next week is Help Week! Start thinking now who you can invite to join you as we continue the conversation



Pray



Follow Up

Be available to talk or pray with people.
Ask how you can walk with them on their Jesus journey.



Leader Tip

Meet before Engage Week to make sure everything is planned and you have everything you need.





Gospel Discussion

“My Life As A Jesus Follower”

Your Life Before Meeting Jesus

Question to Answer: What was my life like before I was changed by Jesus?

This time is spent introducing yourself to your audience. Tell them your name, where you're from, what are some of your favorite hobbies, what is your most embarrassing moment, etc. This time could also be a chance to share a hardship or difficult time in your life. Being vulnerable to share the darkest moments of your story helps connect you to the audience. More than likely, there are people listening to you that have been through the same thing or even worse. Be transparent as you share.

Meeting Jesus

Question to Answer: How did I come to know Jesus?

Meeting Jesus is more than just going to a church. What was the moment like when you realized that you needed Jesus? Was there someone that helped you with that decision? Was there a song or certain passage from the Bible that really helped you? What did your decision to follow Jesus actually look like? How did you feel in that moment?

Your Life After Meeting Jesus

Question to Answer: What is your life like now that Jesus is in your life?

2 Corinthians 5:17 says that if anyone is in Christ, they are a new creation. So, what is new about you? What has drastically changed in your life? Use this time to reference the things you talked about in the first section. What are you currently pursuing in your life that helps you follow Jesus? Were there any relationships that changed because of the Gospel? What is different about you? If there is one thing you'd like your audience to know about Jesus, what would it be?

Things to Remember

1. Be sure to clearly state your understanding of the Gospel through your story (ex: Jesus came to earth, He died as a man for me, He rose to life and lives in me today).
2. Write out what you want to say. Read it. Edit. Repeat. This will help you simplify and clearly communicate what you want to do.
3. Be bold. Allow God to speak through you.



Disciple Tip

Doing what Jesus did means meeting people where they are.

STUDENT RESPONSE CARD

My response to the gospel message today
(please only check one):

- I want to start following Jesus **today**.
- I have **questions** about following Jesus.
- I am **already** a follower of Jesus.

My Name _____

Cell # _____

Do you attend a church? _____

Who invited you to First Priority today? _____

The information you put on this card will be given to a student leader to follow up with you. Your information will not be stored or given to anyone else.

STUDENT RESPONSE CARD

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(please only check one):

- I want to start following Jesus **today**.
- I have **questions** about following Jesus.
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- I am **already** a follower of Jesus.

My Name _____

Cell # _____

Do you attend a church? _____

Who invited you to First Priority today? _____

The information you put on this card will be given to a student leader to follow up with you. Your information will not be stored or given to anyone else.

FOLLOW-UP GUIDE

Following up with those who just committed their lives to Jesus or have questions is equally as important as sharing the Gospel! This guide will give you a few pointers on how to follow-up correctly.

SIX THINGS TO DO WHEN FOLLOWING UP

1. Determine how many and what kind of follow-up has been requested.

As soon as possible, read through the response cards after you have collected them and let your Coach know how many people committed their lives to Christ and how many students have questions or want someone to follow up with them.

2. Organize the response card information.

Write down on the follow-up chart the names, response, and contact info of everyone who made decisions and requested to talk with someone.

3. Make contact within 24 hours with everyone who responded to the Gospel on Engage Week. This can be done by text message, personal conversation at school, or social media, just remember to check with your parents for permission before contacting someone you do not know. The initial message should be something like this:

"Hello ____! My name is _____ and I saw that you came to First Priority club this week! We are really excited you came, and we hope you'll come back next week. I also noticed that you marked on your response card that you [prayed to begin a relationship with Christ] -or- [wanted to talk with someone about the Gospel] so I wanted to ask how I could help you. If you have questions about their responses, you can contact your Campus Coach for guidance.

4. Invite them to church! If they were invited by a friend to First Priority...

Ask that friend to invite them to youth group this week, since they are more likely to attend church with someone they know. If they plan to go to church for the first time, you can also ask your Coach to notify the Student Pastor that they will be having a new guest this week! Make sure to discard any response cards that you will not be needing for follow-up.

5. Offer a free Bible to those who prayed to receive Christ if Bibles are available through your First Priority club or church.

Make sure one is available before you offer and make sure they receive it if they ask for one.

6. Share Stories

Share any cool new salvation stories and new local youth group members with your Coach! He or she will want to celebrate with you about what God is doing through your club!

Student Name	Started following Jesus today.	Questions about following Jesus.	Wants to connect to youth group.	Follow-up dates and notes.
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				
11.				
12.				